

WARRINGAH COUNCIL

annual report

2009 - 2010



Bringing our vision to life



Warringah
Council

How to read this report

This Annual Report compares our performance against what we said we'd do in the 2009 – 2010 financial year, which was outlined in our *Strategic Community Plan 2009: 140,000 residents one shared vision*.

Key

To ensure we meet our community's vision for Warringah we need to plan for and perform against our five Strategic Community Outcomes, which are outlined below. These provide a clear strategic direction and help ensure we are delivering real outcomes for our community and Warringah in the short, medium and long term.



Living Environment



Living Communities



Living Spaces



Living Enterprises



Living Organisation

Status

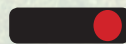
Our progress against each of our commitments is illustrated by the following symbols:



– at least 90% of completion target achieved



– between 70% - 90% of completion target achieved



– less than 70% of completion target achieved



– action has been completed

Deferred – Council has deferred action for consideration in future planning

Detailed information about each action's progress, including commentary, can be found by viewing our Quarterly Business and Budget Reports online www.warringah.nsw.gov.au.

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About us

Who we are

We are Warringah Council, a local government organisation that administers 152 square kilometres on Sydney's northern beaches.

Our history

Originally home to the Guringai people, Warringah is thought to mean 'middle harbour'. Warringah Council was established in 1906.

Our home

We are home to over 140,000 residents. We are a coastal community bordered by 14 kilometres of stunning coastline, which is the gateway to large estuaries and a further 6,000 hectares of natural bushland and open space. Vivid shades of native green blanket steep slopes, giving way to grassy lowlands and popular waterways.

What we do

We are responsible for delivering 16 key services to our community:

- Certification Services
- Childcare Services
- Community and Safety Services
- Compliance Services
- Cultural Services
- Development Assessment Services
- Glen Street Theatre
- Information and Library Services
- Kimbriki Environmental Enterprises Pty Ltd
- Natural Environment
- Parks, Reserves and Foreshores
- Roads, Traffic and Waste
- Strategic Planning
- Warringah Aquatic Centre
- Corporate Support Services
- Good Governance

Our purpose

You don't need eyes to see you need **vision**.

Our business is serving our community. We are not an organisation merely driven by box ticking – we aim to create added value through a strong commitment to everyday excellence.

At Warringah it's all about keeping a balanced perspective. One eye focuses on delivering high quality services to our community day in and day out. The other focuses on the bigger picture, using a holistic and integrated approach to planning and reporting.

Together they help bring our vision to **life**.

Our Corporate Vision

- Lead our community
- Protect our environment
- Create our future

Our Corporate Mission

A better and exciting Warringah through innovative leadership, partnerships and outstanding service.

Our Corporate Values

- Respect
- Integrity
- Teamwork
- Excellence
- Responsibility


Community Vision

A vibrant community, improving our quality of life by living and working in balance with our special bush and beach environment.

Strategic Community Outcomes



Living Environment

 [Read more on page 38](#)




Living Communities

 [Read more on page 48](#)



Living Spaces

 [Read more on page 60](#)



Living Enterprises

 [Read more on page 74](#)



Living Organisation

 [Read more on page 80](#)

At a glance

Total expenditure

\$152.65m

2008 - 2009 \$136.65m

Total capital spend

\$30.58m

2008 - 2009 \$20.03m

Net operating result*

\$7.938m

2008 - 2009 \$2.278m

* before capital grants and contributions

% actions completed*

93%

2008 - 2009 97%

* includes actions listed in Strategic Community Plan 2009 that were either completed or on schedule for completion at 30 June 2010.

No. actions completed*

164

2008 - 2009 170

* includes actions listed in Strategic Community Plan 2009 that were either completed or on schedule for completion at 30 June 2010.

Capital vs. operational



Capital - 20% Operational - 80%

Warringah's housing future

The NSW Government's Metropolitan Strategy and the draft North East Subregional Plan has set specific growth targets for Warringah, which means we need to plan for an additional 12,500 new jobs and 10,300 dwellings by 2031.

On Sunday 23 May 2010 we undertook a major piece of community engagement to help inform future housing options for Warringah – over 440 residents and ratepayers attended Warringah's Housing Future 'Talk of the Town' Community Summit.

The aim of the event was to invite members of our community to discuss preferred housing options for Warringah's future – participants were randomly selected to ensure a representative sample of Warringah's current demographics. Participants were seated at tables of up to ten plus an independent facilitator discussing key issues and questions on Warringah's housing future before voting individually with keypad technology. There were also other opportunities for participants to have their say including an 'Opinions Wall', individual and group sticker sessions and notes taken by facilitators.

We used innovative keypad technology for participants to vote on a variety of questions, issues and topics, with the results of voting displayed on screens in real time. This allowed participants to see how their preferred housing options compared with those of their fellow community participants.

Read more on pages 143 to 147.



Warringah's
Housing Future
Talk of the Town 2010



Warringah
Council

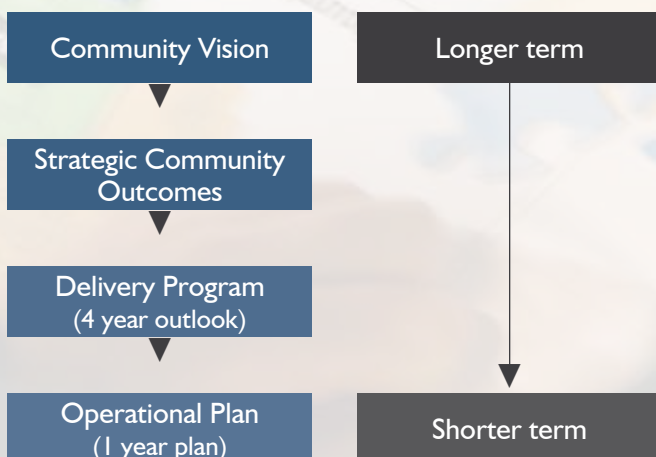
Purpose of Annual Report

What is an Annual Report?

Far from being a mere legislative requirement the Annual Report is an opportunity for us to communicate our story, a snapshot of how we have performed over the 2009 – 2010 financial year. It's a medium that allows us to report back to our community how we performed against what we said we'd do.

In this way, the Annual Report is the chief reference document for our community, stakeholders, Councillors and employees – it's not a mere statutory obligation. At Warringah we leverage the Annual Report to help build greater community capacity, informing our community through increased transparency, accountability and disclosure. We believe having knowledge of what Council has done and what it plans to do helps empower our community within the decision making process and helps encourage participatory democracy.

Internationally, better practice standards have evolved. Private and public organisations exhibiting better practice are using more transparent, accountable and meaningful approaches to build a more comprehensive picture of their annual performance – both financial and non-financial.



What is a Strategic Community Plan?

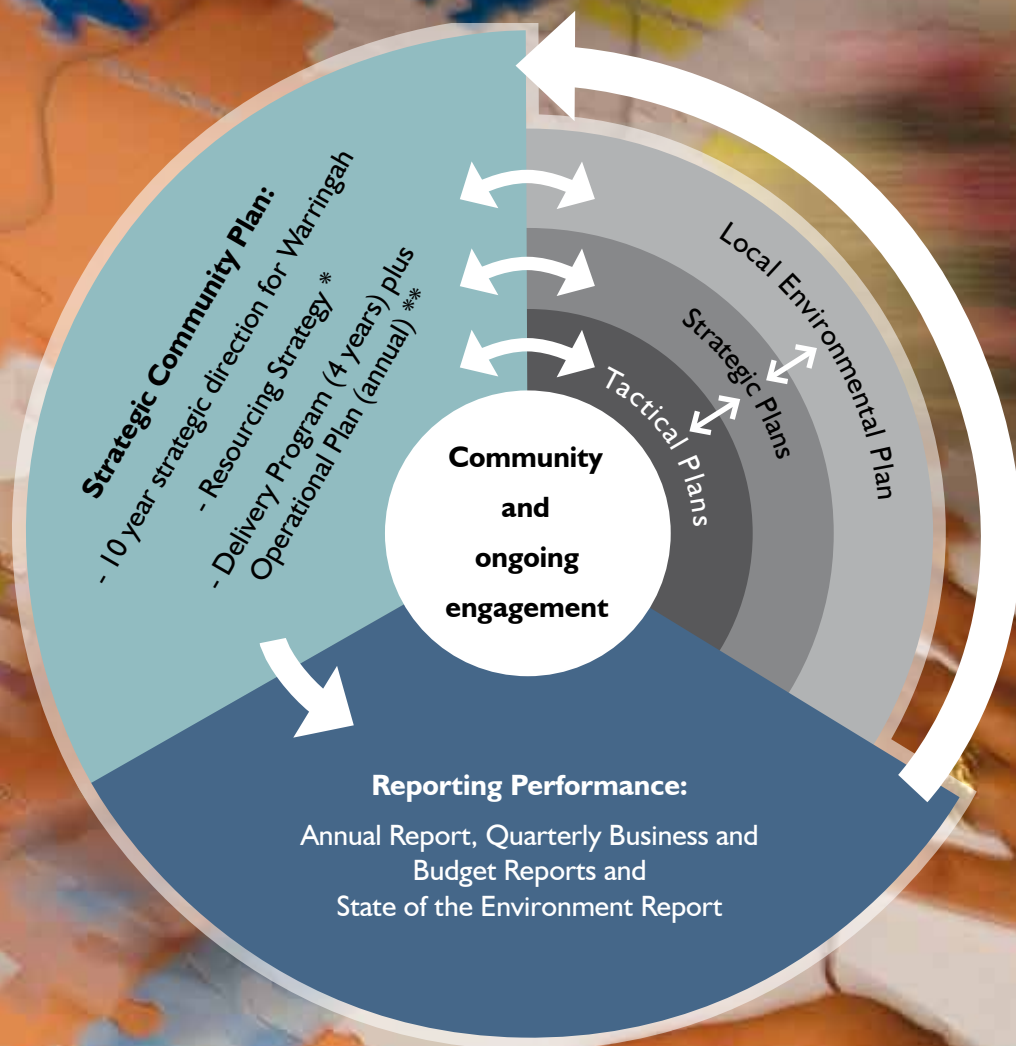
While the purpose of the Annual Report is to tell the story in retrospect, the Strategic Community Plan (SCP) is responsible for planning ahead. The SCP is our primary forward planning document and aligns our community's vision with a clear strategic direction for Warringah's long term future. So what's in it?

- a ten year strategic direction for Warringah,
- a Resourcing Strategy (including Asset Management Planning, Workforce Plan and Ten Year Financial Plan)
- detailed four year delivery programs for each service, including budgets

Produced annually, the SCP brings our strategic and tactical planning documents together. Significant social, cultural, economic, environmental and political factors – including regional, State and Federal plans and policies – are also considered, which helps position our planning within a much broader context, considers current and emerging community needs, and identifies key stakeholders and interdependencies which may affect delivery of appropriate services to our community over time.

Importantly, the SCP negotiates a range of internal and external factors unique to local government. This helps us plan for the long term by prioritising and determining actions and funding for each of our key services. The SCP acts as a central repository, helping to ensure various planning documents complement and speak directly to each other in more integrated, meaningful and streamlined ways to become more holistic, manageable and effective.

Put simply, the SCP outlines what we plan to do while the Annual Report discusses our progress against this at the end of each financial year.



* Financial Planning
 Workforce Planning
 Asset Management Planning
 Risk Management

** Outlines how each of our 16 services will contribute towards achieving our Strategic Community Outcomes, Goals and Strategies. Includes: Key Activities and Programs, Key Initiatives, Budget, Capital Works and Key Performance Measures.

Strategic Plans, eg: Environmental Sustainability Strategy, Recreation Strategy, Social Plan, Bike Plan, Cultural Plan and other key strategies.

Tactical Plans, eg: Asset Management Plans, Capital Works Program, Plans of Management, Estuary and Flood Plain Management Plans, and other key tactical plans.

Mayor's message

Sustaining our future

In the Strategic Community Plan 2009 your Councillors and I indicated that global economic uncertainty and other challenges unique to local government were having a compounding impact on our ability to maintain existing service levels.

Amid these pressures we resolved to be proactive and take decisive action – the strategic outlook we promised you, our community, was that we were well positioned to continue to deliver high quality services throughout 2009 – 2010 and beyond.

We were not afraid to speak openly and honestly about the issues we were facing as a local government organisation. We understood some discussions and proposed service changes might be unpopular, but we wanted to know what you – our community – wanted for Warringah and its future and the wealth of information received from various community engagement initiatives will help inform future planning.

In reflecting on the year that has been, 2009 – 2010 was a year of high quality service delivery, robust financial management and ensuring long term sustainability for Warringah, its community and residents. Despite external economic pressures we have consolidated a strong position for 2010 – 2011 and beyond.

Infrastructure

Our program of capital works continued to address crucial infrastructure needs for our community, including: \$3,266,740 resheeting local and regional roads, over \$520,000 on traffic management and calming devices (eg roundabouts and wombat crossings), \$490,994 renewing existing footpaths, \$222,753 building new footpaths and \$436,016 on bus shelters.

Freshwater Village

During the financial year we completed revitalisation works at Freshwater Village, totalling \$2,950,000. This has resulted in a more vibrant, active and safe public domain. The works have created a strong and clear streetscape identity to reinforce the village as the hub of the suburb, beautifying the street and creating a more pedestrian friendly environment.

Major improvements include: wider footpaths, new paving, new street furniture, devices to slow traffic, more trees and landscaping, improved access to off street parking, and opportunities for increased outdoor eating areas.

Warringah Aquatic Centre

Warringah Aquatic Centre (WAC) has continued its progress towards improved environmental sustainability which was recognised by coming runner up in the state wide "Sustainable Cities Award" for Water Conservation. In November 2009, the installation of a backwash recycling plant, funded by a Federal Government Infrastructure Grant, was the latest in a string of water and energy savings projects and will save the WAC approximately 3 million litres of water annually. The WAC was also one of only 20 facilities in NSW to be awarded the new Five Star Water Safety Partner Venue by the Royal Life Saving Society – Australia.

Your Council



Mayor
Michael Regan



Michelle Ray
Deputy Mayor



Vincent De Luca OAM



Jason Falinski

W
A
R
D
A



Bob Giltinan



Dr Christina Kirsch



Dr Helen Wilkins

W
A
R
D
B



Dr Conny Harris



Virginia Laugesen



Julie Sutton

W
A
R
D
C

Community centres

A variety of refurbishments were undertaken at our community centres throughout the financial year, with a total of \$1,321,501 being spent on much needed upgrades. Improvements were made to accessibility and lighting controls, kitchen and bathroom upgrades, security, new carpets, paving, softfall, storage and places of public entertainment. Centres that benefited from the various upgrades include Curl Curl Youth and Community Centre, Forestville Senior Citizens Centre, Forestville Memorial Hall, Forestville Community Art Centre, Terry Hills Community Centre, Harbord Literary Institute, Collaroy Plateau Youth and Community Centre, Belrose Community Centre, Cromer Community Centre. These upgrades have been coupled with a marketing campaign to increase the usage of the community centres by members of the public.

Parks, reserves and foreshores

Major sportsfield rectification works have been undertaken at Weldon Reserve, Adams Street Reserve and Rueb Hudson as well as minor works at other sportsfields, costing a total of \$2,064,592. A further \$1,529,253 has been invested in upgrading the John Fisher Park netball courts, including 10 new hard courts and the re-surfacing of 15 of the old courts. Major upgrades to Dee Why rock pool as well as smaller works at South Curl Curl and Freshwater rock pools, saw a total investment of \$311,665 into repairing the pools that were deteriorating due to continued exposure to coastal conditions. A further \$253,005 was invested in upgrading the Fishermans Beach boat ramp.

Future outlook

The focus for 2010 – 2011 and beyond remains balancing immediate community needs with those of the future to ensure we deliver real value and create longer term sustainability. We have a clear strategic direction for the future, which is outlined in our Strategic Community Plan 2010.

View it online! www.warringah.nsw.gov.au



Mayor Michael Regan

Community engagement

Talk of the town

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Read more on pages 143 to 147.

Online community forum

In early March we launched our first online discussion forum allowing the community to have its say about key issues in the local area – yoursaywarringah is a dedicated community consultation website which allows us to post discussions, detailed plans and surveys and seek input and feedback from our community and residents.

Strategic Community Plan

Over the last two years we have received an unprecedented number of submissions to our Draft Strategic Community Plans (SCP) – 2,319 in 2009 and 1,010 in 2010. The feedback we received has been invaluable, it will continue to be used to inform future decision making and it also helps identify priorities for our community.

Brookvale Oval

We continued to consult the community on the future of Brookvale Oval. During the year different ideas and possibilities for the oval and park were explored through Brekkie at Brookie, information stalls at Warringah Mall and an online discussion forum where participants could identify their preference for the future of this facility.

General Manager's message

The state of play going into 2009 – 2010

During the first half of 2009 local impacts of the global economic downturn and other issues unique to local government were having a combined and adverse affect on our finances and ability to maintain existing service levels.

At the time we developed our Strategic Community Plan 2009 the outlook for organisations across the globe was grim and the strong performance results we achieved in 2009 – 2010 should be viewed in light of this. The volatility and unpredictability of global markets shook investor and consumer confidence in 2008 – 2009 and forced a significant number of corporations to report disappointing annual results – share price and profit and loss accounts no longer held their sway as true indicators of a company's long term sustainability or future growth. While long term strategies may have remained the same, more companies were also shifting their short term goals to focus on cost reduction, debt reduction and capital expenditure reduction to help their organisation weather the financial storm.

Our aim going into the 2009 – 2010 financial year was to adopt a clear and sustainable strategic direction that would ensure we were in a strong position to continue to deliver high quality services to Warringah, its residents and community well into the future.

While a total financial meltdown did not materialise and a feared 1930's style depression was avoided, 2009 – 2010 remained a challenging year – major world economies were in recession, local economic growth was slowing, consumer confidence was down and employment was weakening, which delivered recessions in the United States, the United Kingdom, Japan and Europe.

Our approach

We knew our approach had to be clear, decisive and focused on the quadruple bottom line – our strategy and performance needed to fulfil our social, economic, environmental and governance duties if we were to achieve real outcomes for our community.

Strong performance in challenging year

In 2009 – 2010 we achieved commendable results amid trying times and, like most organisations operating in what can only be described as a significant state of flux, we have learnt lessons along the way. I can say with confidence, as demonstrated by our results, that we did not stray from the five Strategic Community Outcomes we needed to achieve for our community, we adopted a sustainable approach with the long term and prosperity of future generations in mind, we exercised prudent financial management to ensure we were well capitalised to resource required service delivery and we had the right people in our organisation to deliver what we said we would.

We achieved a better than expected operating result (before capital grants and contributions) of \$7.938 million. Total expenditure and total capital spend came in at \$152.65m and \$30.58m respectively. We also completed 93% of all actions listed in our Strategic Community Plan 2009, which is above our performance target of 90%.



Future outlook

The actions we undertake today will lay the foundation for a more sustainable tomorrow. Despite being well positioned we remain a multi-faceted business that operates a broad range of services across a range of industry sectors. There are many economic factors outside of our control that we will have to monitor closely, but have our eyes are firmly on the task at hand.

While we are well positioned to continue to deliver high quality service into the future, the outdated system of rate capping remains a key challenge for all local government organisations throughout NSW. The fact that rates have been capped at 2.6% in 2010 – 2011 by the State Government is simply unsustainable – this fails to keep pace with inflation (3.1%) or the expected growth in wages (3.2%) and materials and contracts (3%) for the same financial year. The disastrous effects of rate capping in NSW is at odds with more our realistic counterparts – the Victorian and Tasmanian State Governments have advised that rate increases are kept at around 4%. In an attempt to remain financially sustainable we achieved \$3.9 million savings through internal efficiencies during the 2009 – 2010 financial year, with the view to reduce our corporate costs by a further \$800,000 in 2010 – 2011. While these achievements are commendable the long term impact of rate capping means that the only viable solutions for councils in NSW is to find additional revenue streams and or apply for special rate increases to ensure quality service delivery to local communities.

Despite these challenges our resolve remains strong – as an organisation we are energised to deliver high quality services to our community in the most effective, efficient and sustainable way possible. We will continue to be sustainable in what we do, fulfilling our social, environmental, economic and governance duties to achieve real outcomes for our community.



General Manager, Rik Hart

Excellence in operations

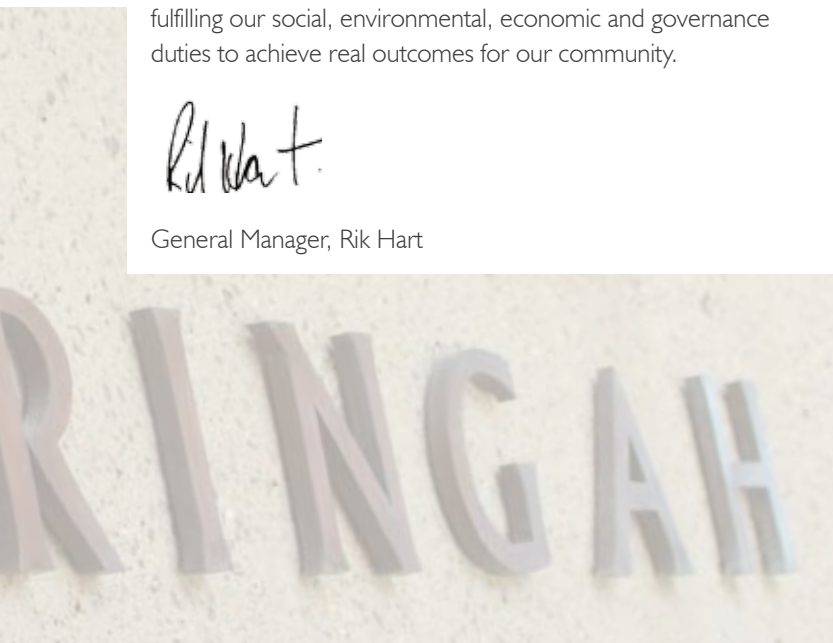
We are a Business Excellence Council. Business Excellence is a way of leading and managing an organisation to achieve sustainable organisational excellence. At Warringah we subscribe to the Australian Business Excellence Framework (ABEF). This is Australia's framework for innovation, improvement and long-term success and is internationally recognised for improving organisational performance in order to deliver value to customers.

Why are we a Business Excellence Council?

We adopted the ABEF because it is all about delivering better public value across all of our services. Our organisational values and the Business Excellence framework underpin our Strategic Community Outcomes, Goals and Strategies, providing an integrated model that assists us to continuously improve. The focus of Business Excellence is on managing public value and understanding how to improve services - better services lead to greater efficiencies and better outcomes for our community.

A values driven approach

Our values enable us to deliver on what we said we would do with greater effectiveness and efficiency. Our values develop supporting behaviours and a culture of continuous improvement, innovation and learning. Our values are: Respect, Integrity, Teamwork, Excellence and Responsibility.



How we govern

Mayor and Councillors: roles and responsibilities

'Dear resident,

As the elected Council our primary responsibilities are to represent the interests of the community, provide leadership and good governance for Warringah and facilitate communication between the community and the Council. It is our responsibility to set the strategic direction for Warringah Council and deliver a clear vision: a vibrant community, improving our quality of life by living and working in balance with our special bush and beach environment.

It is our job to review Warringah Council's performance, delivery of services, Strategic Community Plan and financial planning policies to ensure funding, strategies and the allocation of resources best meet the needs of our local community. We also play a key role in the development and review of public policy.'



Mayor Michael Regan

How are Councillors elected?

Elections are held every four years to determine who will represent the interests of Warringah, its residents and ratepayers.

In 2004 a referendum was held to determine a preferred voting system - results determined that a popularly elected Mayor and three Councillors, for each of the three wards that make up Warringah, would be the new election method.

On 13 September 2008 Councillor Michael Regan was voted Warringah's first popularly elected Mayor.

Who stands for Council?

Put simply, anyone who lives in Warringah or is a non-resident land owner can stand for Council. As in State Government elections, a Local Government Councillor can identify either as a candidate of a registered political party or as an independent.

What happens at Council meetings and who can attend?

Meetings, chaired by the Mayor, allow members of the public to see their Council in action. Councillors debate and vote on a variety of issues affecting Warringah and our local community.

Members of the public also have an opportunity to address the Council Meeting during Public Forum.

Anyone may submit a question, comment or statement to the Public Forum Session of Ordinary Council Meetings, provided a written request is submitted before 3pm on the day prior to the meeting. If the day before is a public holiday, the request can be submitted on the day of the meeting (no later than 9.30am). Questions may relate to general policy matters, matters before Council or any other issue relevant to Warringah. Further details or questions relating to Public Forum can be directed to the Coordinator Governance on 9942 2737.

When are Council meetings held?

Council meetings are held monthly with the exception of January. Meetings begin at 6pm at the Civic Centre, Dee Why, in the Council Chambers.

Where can I find out more?

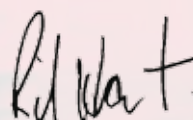
Council's Business Papers, including all Agenda items, can be viewed online at www.warringah.nsw.gov.au. Hard copies of the agenda are also available at our libraries and Customer Service Centre at the Civic Centre in Dee Why, on the Thursday prior to the meeting. Limited copies of the Agenda and Agenda items are available at Council Meetings. Council Meetings are screened live via webcast and archived online at www.warringah.nsw.gov.au.

General Manager: roles and responsibilities

'Dear resident,

As General Manager I am responsible for ensuring day-to-day operations are efficient and effective. I am committed to ensuring we have the right people for the right job. It is my duty to make sure Council as an organisation delivers on the goals, responsibilities and targets set out in the Strategic Community Plan.

I ensure the Councillors decisions are implemented without undue delay and will continue to lead Council employees toward our Corporate Mission: A better and exciting Warringah through innovative leadership, partnerships and outstanding service.'



General Manager, Rik Hart

Executive leadership

The Executive Management Team (EMT) comprises the General Manager and Directors. This is a forum to discuss strategic and operational issues material to good governance. The General Manager's role is supported and underpinned by EMT, which helps direct the implementation of Council decisions and drive organisational wellbeing.

Office of the Internal Ombudsman

The Office of the Internal Ombudsman was established in 2003 to improve Warringah Council's accountability. An initial review of the Office of the Internal Ombudsman was conducted in 2009 – 2010. This resulted in the office being maintained, with a further review of operations after twelve months.

Warringah is one of seven Councils in NSW which has instituted an Internal Ombudsman function. The Internal Ombudsman reports directly to the General Manager and operates completely independently of the rest of Warringah Council.

The Office of the Internal Ombudsman's main purpose is to ensure that all Council's dealings with the community are fair, transparent and accountable.

It seeks to ensure that Council acts in the public interest and carries out all its business in an ethical and accountable manner.

The mission of the Office of the Internal Ombudsman is to: champion excellence in probity and accountability through independent and professional complaint handling, investigations and audit.

The Office of the Internal Ombudsman gives guidance and advice to the General Manager and Council officers about how to improve probity and reduce the likelihood of maladministration or misconduct. This is done by both addressing requests for advice and by proactively educating Council in relation to ethical standards and the Code of Conduct.

