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A broader look at the context
we operate in.

Regulatory and operating environment

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Our regulatory and operating environment

In the following pages we take a step back and provide an overview of the environment we operated in during the financial year. In setting our strategic direction for 2009 – 2010 and beyond we considered a range of social, cultural, political and economic factors. We also monitored these factors closely throughout the year to ensure our organisation remained well positioned to execute its strategic direction and deliver what we said we would to our community - on time, within budget and with the most effective and efficient use of our resources.

We believe this contextual information helps our community and stakeholders assess our performance and also provide some insight into the factors we need to consider in planning for our future - we needed to abide by certain regulatory obligations, but some of the issues unique to local government and Warringah required us to find sustainable solutions for the immediate and longer term.

Global

- Global economy
- Climate change and environmental sustainability

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Federal and State

- Social justice principles
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Local

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Global economy

Developing our SCP 2009

We developed our Strategic Community Plan 2009 amid significant global economic uncertainty.

Terms such as “global financial crisis” dominated the news and world financial markets continued to deteriorate at the time we were finalising our budget and determining appropriate levels of service for our community for the 2009 – 2010 financial year.

Major world economies were in recession, local economic growth was slowing, consumer confidence was down and employment was weakening. This produced the worst economic crisis since the Second World War and delivered recessions in the United States, the United Kingdom, Japan and Europe. Growth also slowed dramatically in key emerging economies, in particular China.

While Australia remained largely resilient in comparison to most developed nations the Australian share market plunged significantly and global impacts of the financial downturn were also felt locally.

How did we respond?

As a government organisation we were not immune to local impacts of a fragile global economy. The instability in international markets translated into uncertain economic forecasts, a realisation conceded by governments across the globe and even by the world’s largest corporations. At the time, the global downturn was making it increasingly difficult for us to maintain existing service levels because our costs were rising as our sources of income fell.

Amid such uncertainty we chose to have an open and honest discussion with our community about some of the issues we were facing and also future service levels – we conducted community engagement.

Ultimately, we chose to exercise prudent financial management and were prepared to make difficult decisions to ensure we maintained long term financial sustainability for the benefit of current and future generations. In 2009 – 2010 we delivered a tough budget to tackle local impacts of the global financial crisis and other challenges unique to local government.

How did the Federal Government respond?

In 2008 governments all over the world enacted urgent measures to stabilise financial markets, restore the flow of credit and support global economic growth. In response to slowing domestic activity the Australian Government implemented several measures throughout 2008 – 2009 to stimulate national economic growth, including the announcement in February 2009 of a \$42 billion Nation Building and Jobs Plan and One-Off Cash Payments for low and middle income households and individuals.

How did private corporations respond?

While the majority of governments increased spending in 2008 – 2009 to stimulate the economy, the majority of corporations throughout the world concentrated on streamlining and cutting costs during the economic downturn. 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 – it could be argued that investors and stakeholders now scrutinise the integrity of information now more than ever.

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.

Climate change and environmental sustainability

What have we done?

Our approach to climate change has three elements:

1. Reducing emissions from Council's services and operations
2. Partnering with the community to reduce emissions from our residential sector
3. Preparing Council and the community to better adapt to the impacts from projected climate change

Our corporate performance in energy and water consumption indicates ongoing improvements. Overall water consumption since 2004 – 2005 has declined by 31%. This places us ahead of our corporate target of a 30% reduction by 2011 and reflects investment in water savings such as efficiencies in plant and operating practices and greater attention to leaks. This includes the commissioning of a backwash recycling system at the Warringah Aquatic Centre.

Between 1995 and 2000 greenhouse gas emissions from Council's activities increased markedly, largely as a result of an increase in energy consumption from our buildings. These emissions began to stabilise and then decrease after 2000 with early measures to reduce energy consumption such as the installation of heat pumps and power factor correction at the Warringah Aquatic Centre. From 2006 reductions were achieved through changes to fleet management which both decreased the size of the fleet and increased fuel efficiency. Since 2008 we have achieved further reductions expected with the implementation of the Energy Performance Contract (EPC) and the purchase of GreenPower at our major facilities. Our electricity consumption from our buildings and facilities in 2009 – 2010 was 1.6% below consumption in 2008 – 2009.

We are also undertaking a program to install solar hot water and photovoltaic electricity generation installations at a number of community buildings including community centres and surf clubs. In 2009 – 2010 a program commenced to install nearly 30kW of solar power. Further installation of photovoltaics will be undertaken in 2010 – 2011.

We also recognise that climate change adaptation is as important an issue as greenhouse gas emissions. We have therefore commenced adaptation planning to ensure that we as an organisation and our community are informed about and prepared for the changes which will occur to our natural and social environment. These changes will impact on a wide range of our services including planning and development control, emergency response, asset management, protection of the natural environment and support to vulnerable sections of our community.

In 2009 we undertook an initial climate change risk assessment. This was the first step in the development of an adaptation action plan. There are climate change risks for our organisation and community which are essentially unavoidable and adaptation planning will ensure that risks to our assets and services are identified and managed. The risk assessment was prepared using guidelines developed by the Commonwealth Government and involved a series of workshops with key staff to identify priority risks for further investigation and subsequent development of an adaptation action plan. Further work on integrating adaptation actions into our operations and services will progress over 2010 – 2011.

Our Environmental Sustainability Strategy

We started developing a new Environmental Sustainability Strategy in 2009 to replace our 2001 Strategy. In line with current organisational planning and reporting frameworks, it is envisaged that the new Strategy will be a higher level strategic document rather than a detailed action plan. As such, it is expected that the Environmental Sustainability Strategy will outline and balance key priorities as well as identify management challenges and any project risks to be considered in the implementation of the Strategy.

The objectives of the Strategy are to:

1. Establish environmental targets for our organisation over the next 5-10 years
2. Identify environmental priorities
3. Achieve commitment throughout our organisation for achieving targets

During 2009 - 2010 a series of community consultations including focus group meetings assisted in identifying issues and priorities for the Strategy.

A draft of the Strategy has now been completed and is currently being reviewed by Council staff prior to its release for further community comment in 2010 - 2011.

Social justice principles

What are social justice principles?

To meet the diverse needs, wants and aspirations of our community we ensure social justice principles inform our planning. The NSW Government's social justice strategy identifies these principles as follows:

Equity – there should be fairness in decision making, prioritising and allocation of resources, particularly for those in need. Everyone should have a fair opportunity to participate in the future of the community. The planning process should take particular care to involve and protect the interests of people in vulnerable circumstances.

Access – all people should have fair access to services, resources and opportunities to improve their quality of life.

Participation – everyone should have the maximum opportunity to genuinely participate in decisions which affect their lives.

Rights – equal rights should be established and promoted, with opportunities provided for people from diverse linguistic, cultural and religious backgrounds to participate in community life.

How do they inform our planning?

To help us understand and plan for the diverse needs, wants and aspirations of our community we produced, our Social Plan 2010 during the financial year. The Social Plan provides valuable demographic information and analyses key issues relevant to the following target groups:

- Children and families
- Women and men
- Young people
- Older people
- People with disabilities, including those with chronic illness
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- People from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds

General subject areas relevant to Warringah are also analysed, including:

- Community connectedness and community capacity building
- Community and safety
- Health and wellbeing
- Transport
- Community information provision
- Housing
- Recreation and cultural provision and development

Continuing and emerging needs

For the purposes of our Annual Report 2009 – 2010 we have summarised some of the key findings of our Social Plan below:

Young people – There are more issues identified in the Social Plan for young people than for any other target group. These include accessibility of entertainment, limited recreational venues and transport options, behaviours jeopardising health, declining enrolment in tertiary education, alcohol use, improved social needs, and decreasing youth population.

Carers – There are many people in Warringah caring for children, older people and people with a disability, however there is limited recognition of carers (particularly of informal carers, ie non-regulated and home-based care). There needs to be improved service information and provision in collaboration with state and federal departments and community sectors to enhance the lives of carers and those being cared for.

Older People – Warringah's population is ageing at a higher rate than the national average and residents are generally living longer. It is important to ensure services and infrastructure support our ageing population (eg catering for those with additional needs such as homebased or residential care).

Cultural and Linguistically Diverse Communities – Although Warringah has a smaller proportion of people born overseas or from a non-English speaking background than the Sydney average, Warringah is becoming increasingly diverse and there are growing numbers of people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds residing in the area. There are a range of languages spoken, different cultural perspectives and a multiplicity of needs that will inform the way we plan for our future and build partnerships with other government and community agencies.

Children and Families – The number of children in Warringah has increased and it is important to ensure that the needs of children and their families are considered. Significant changes in government policy approaches to children and families present opportunities for us to further enhance services for children of all ages and their families. There are also opportunities to improve social outcomes for Indigenous children and families in Warringah. Addressing the needs of children and families can also assist in further improving the social outcomes of our young people now and in the future.

Community connectedness, capacity building and the importance of place – Our community is changing and this has significant implications for how we plan for our future. Identifying with a community, feeling connected and having a sense of belonging is fundamental. Community capacity building is also essential – individuals, organisations and communities need to manage their own affairs and work collectively to foster and sustain positive change. Community capacity building is about:

- Strengthening our community's capacity to meet its own needs;
- Improving the ability of our community to enhance their quality of life; and
- Assisting disadvantaged groups to participate in community life and to obtain a fair share of the benefits

We need to continue to ensure our approach to planning and reporting is integrated, holistic and streamlined. This helps align our services with the diverse and changing needs of our community.

What's the next step?

Our Social Plan provides a wealth of information which can help inform future decision making. It defines 'how' we propose to improve social outcomes for Warringah and therefore helps guide 'what' we are going to do in the future. It also forms part of our broader integrated and holistic approach to planning and reporting, helping us to negotiate often complex interdependencies for the benefit of our community. Take a look at the Social Plan on our website for a comprehensive account of local community needs and the kinds of strategies we have in mind to address these.



State and regional directions

State and regional directions

In recent years the NSW Government prepared major plans and strategies to help guide state and regional planning, which we carefully considered in developing our strategic direction for the 2009 – 2010 financial year – some of these are outlined below.

State Plan 2006

At the time of developing our Strategic Community Plan 2009 the NSW Government had in place a State Plan 2006. This plan defined the overarching goals and outcomes shaping state policy over a ten year period. It established priorities and targets to drive the actions of various NSW Government agencies. The Plan covered all major State responsibilities including health, education and transport and referenced a number of other key strategic plans that drove State services.

During the financial year the NSW Government released the State Plan 2009, which updated and built upon the objectives and directions stated above.

State Infrastructure Strategy 2008 – 2018

The State Infrastructure Strategy is a rolling 10-year plan for infrastructure projects to support service delivery. First published in 2006, it is updated every two years. The Strategy maps infrastructure projects by six broad regions – Sydney, Central Coast, Hunter, North Coast, Illawarra - South East and Inland NSW.

In February 2010 the State Government released a plan to 2036 for transport across Sydney, Metropolitan Transport Plan – Connecting the City of Cities, with a 10 year funding guarantee. The Metropolitan Transport Plan links additional dwelling and employment targets (Warringah's share is 12,500 new jobs and 10,300 new dwellings by 2031) with the transport network.

Metropolitan Strategy City of Cities (2005)

The Metropolitan Strategy was prepared by the NSW Department of Planning as a broad framework to facilitate and manage growth and development in Sydney over a 25 year period. Primarily, it indicates how Sydney will accommodate 640,000 new homes by 2031. The Metropolitan Strategy creates 10 subregions each with individual dwelling and employment targets. The North East Subregional Strategy, still in draft form, translates the objectives of the Metropolitan Strategy to the local government areas of Manly, Warringah and Pittwater. It acts as a broad framework for the long-term development of the area, guiding government investment and linking local and state planning issues. More specifically, it plans for the Northern Beaches Hospital at Frenchs Forest and establishes a framework for strategic and local centres in each area. Finally, the subregional strategy sets targets for housing and employment for Warringah of 12,500 new jobs and 10,300 new dwellings by 2031.

During the 2009 – 2010 financial year we were mindful that The Metropolitan Strategy was due to be reviewed in 2010.

SHOROC Regional Directions

SHOROC councils including Warringah, Pittwater, Manly and Mosman undertake collaborative planning (and service delivery) for the mutual benefit of both the councils and their communities. We provide a contribution of \$120,000 per year to the running of SHOROC. During the 2009 – 2010 financial year a Regional Directions publication was in the final planning stages and due for completion in 2010.

State and Local Government responsibilities

Key responsibilities

To help contextualise our regulatory and operating environment we have put together this table. It identifies key issues for our community and outlines the roles of the State Government alongside our own.

Traffic and transport	State	Local
Strategic transport planning to accommodate projected housing and population growth on the peninsula (eg designated bus lanes).	✓	✓
Plan for and improve the efficiency of the state road network (eg Spit Bridge improvements).	✓	
Advocate for efficiency of the state road network.		✓
Provide grant funding for local roads.	✓	
Maintenance of state roads (eg Warringah Road, Mona Vale Road, Pittwater Road, Forest Way, Condamine Road) and planning to reduce congestion.	✓	
Maintenance of local roads and planning to reduce congestion.		✓
Provision and maintenance of traffic lights and road regulatory signage (eg give way, speed limits).	✓	
Construct traffic calming devices on regional and local roads (eg speed humps, pedestrian crossings etc) to reduce speed and improve safety for pedestrians and other road users as approved by the Traffic Committee.		✓
Road safety education.	✓	✓
Liaise with the Roads and Traffic Authority, the police and other key agencies to improve road safety and the efficiency of the road network.		✓
Operate Sydney Buses and manage regional bus contracts (eg Forest Coach Lines).	✓	
Liaise with State Government and bus operators about service gaps in public transport.		✓
Provision and maintenance of infrastructure that supports the efficiency of the bus network ie provision of bus shelters and seats.		✓
Promote public transport as a way of reducing congestion and impact on the environment.	✓	✓
Enforcement of road rules eg speeding, load limits.	✓	
Enforcement of load limits in local streets (eg 4 tonne load limit).		✓
Enforcement of on and off-street parking restrictions.		✓
Provision and maintenance of Council off street car parks .		✓

State and Local Government responsibilities

Bike paths / cycle ways / footpaths	State	Local
Provide grant funding for bike paths, cycle ways and footpaths.	✓	
Promote and plan for cycle ways, bike paths and footpaths as alternate modes of transport.	✓	✓
Plan for interconnected networks of cycle ways, bike paths and footpaths across Warringah and the region ie Bike Plan and Pedestrian Access and Mobility Plan.		✓
Maintain and build new cycle ways, bike paths and footpaths associated with state roads.	✓	
Maintain existing pavements and bike infrastructure.		✓
Build new sections of bike paths, footpaths, cycle ways and associated bike infrastructure.		✓

Utilities – energy (electricity and gas), water and sewerage	State	Local
Plan and deliver new energy, water, and sewerage infrastructure to meet service gaps and/or increased loads from business, housing and population growth.	✓	
Plan for improvements to the stormwater network in response to local flooding or development.		✓
Maintenance and renewal of the stormwater network including sweeping of streets and clearing of pits and pipes.		✓
Operation of public corporations that provide energy, water, and sewerage.	✓	
Education programs and incentives to reduce consumption of energy and water.	✓	
Information and education programs for households to reduce energy and water consumption that complement the state's program.		✓
Water and energy savings initiatives to reduce our overall usage ie installation of water tanks at the Warringah Aquatic Centre.		✓
Paying for street lighting and lighting in public places.		✓
Installation and maintenance of street lighting and lighting in public places.	✓	
Working with the energy provider to determine safety lighting needs in streets and public places.		✓
Lopping of street trees under power lines ie trimming.	✓	
Removal and trimming of trees on public land.		✓

Health services	State	Local
Development of public health policy .	✓	
Provision and planning for state wide public health services and infrastructure (eg public hospitals, ambulance service, the new Northern Beaches Hospital).	✓	
Work with the community to identify gaps in health service / emerging health needs within Warringah and advocate for solutions on behalf of our community.		✓
Ensure land use plans provide appropriate locations for health services.		✓
Health promotion and education.	✓	
Provide an information and referral service on health issues to target groups in the community (eg youth and aged).		✓

Law enforcement	State	Local
Provision and management of NSW Police Force (primary law enforcement agency in NSW) to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • prevent, detect and investigate crime • monitor and promote road safety • maintain social order (eg dealing with noisy parties and drunk and disorderly conduct) • perform and coordinate emergency and rescue operations. 	✓	
Provision of Council Rangers, Building Surveyors, Environmental Health Officers and development Control Officers who enforce compliance and issue infringement notices relating to: illegal parking (on and off street parking), abandoned vehicles on public streets, dog attacks, illegal building work, unauthorised land uses, environmental, public health and safety breaches.		✓
Issuing and revoking licences for restaurants, clubs and pubs to serve alcohol, including conditions of operation.	✓	
Working with relevant agencies to develop and implement crime prevention initiatives .		✓



State and Local Government responsibilities

Residential and commercial development	State	Local
Development of state, regional and subregional planning strategies .	✓	
Provide growth targets for residential and commercial developments (eg Metropolitan Strategy).	✓	
Establish State Environmental Planning Policies (SEPP) to address significant issues of the state and for the people of NSW. SEPPs override council local environmental plans.	✓	
Approve development applications that are significant to the state of NSW and its residents.	✓	
Assess and determine development applications in accordance with the Local Environmental Plan, Development Control Plan and SEPPs.		✓
Hear appeals against Council decisions on development applications (Land and Environment Court).	✓	
Provide a standard framework for councils to develop local land use plans (eg Local Environment Plan and Development Control Plan).	✓	
Approve local land use plans (eg Warringah Local Environmental Plan).	✓	
Develop local land use plans for Warringah (eg Local Environmental Plan and Development Control Plan) that define the activities (eg residential, commercial uses etc) and the structures that can be built on the land. The Local Environmental Plan needs to accommodate growth targets for business, housing and population growth set by the State Government.		✓
Adopt Development Control Plans.		✓
Accredit private certifiers to oversee compliance with development conditions and construction certificates (Building Professionals Board). Investigate non compliance with approvals that they have been appointed to oversee.	✓	
Ensure compliance with development consent conditions when Council is appointed the principal certifying authority. Where a private certifier is appointed principal certifying authority Council reports any breaches of approval to the Building Professionals Board – State Government.		✓

Changing communities and housing needs

The trends: now and then

Warringah's community and housing needs have been and will continue to undergo further change.

At the national level, Australia's population is ageing – people are living longer due to improved health care. Since the late 1960s families on average have had fewer children. The proportion of Australians aged over 65 years has grown from 8% in 1970 – 1971 to 13% in 2001 – 2002 and is expected to double to around 25% by 2042.

In Warringah the number of residents aged 65 years and older is 2% above the national average and the percentage of seniors over 85 years is significantly above the state average. On the flip side, our younger adult population is declining – census data shows that our young working age population has progressively decreased in the last decade.

While the two parent family remains the most significant in Warringah, the emerging trend is for smaller households – since 2001 there have been increases in one person, two person and four person households while other household sizes have either stabilised or decreased. There has also been an increased preference for people to live alone or as a couple without children as reflected in Warringah's occupancy rate, which is 2.58 people per dwelling. Although detached separate houses remain the most preferred housing type (57% of households in 2006), ABS Census data reveals that medium and high density households have also increased (13.4% medium density and 22.1% high density households in 2006 compared to 12.7% and 20.8% respectively in 2001).

Housing affordability is another consideration when planning for Warringah's future and our changing population. Housing affordability is commonly measured in relation to the proportion of income spent on housing costs. When a low-to-moderate income household is spending more than 35% of their net income on housing costs, they are likely to be in housing stress. According to the 2006 Census, 64% of total renters in Warringah were in housing stress. This compares to 56% across the greater metropolitan areas of Sydney. The 2006 Census also found that 64.5% of low-to-moderate income households in the SHOROC area who had a mortgage were considered to be in housing stress.

NSW State Government initiatives

The NSW State Government's draft North East Subregional Strategy set specific growth targets for Warringah, which meant that at the time we were developing our Strategic Community Plan 2009 we needed to ensure we were continuing to plan within the context of an additional 12,500 new jobs and 10,300 new dwellings by 2031.

What does this mean for Warringah?

Since Warringah's demographics are changing so too are the needs of our residents – the type of housing people want for themselves and their families is also changing. Throughout people's lives their lifestyles and housing needs change and we need to accommodate this through appropriate planning. We need to respond to our changing demographics and facilitate housing types to meet the different household needs associated with an ageing population, single parent families and families with fewer (or no) children. For example, attractive, medium density dwellings (such as courtyard homes, villas and row dwellings) may be a suitable option for smaller household types.

During 2009 – 2010 work commenced on the development of a new Housing Strategy for Warringah. The Strategy will identify the locations and types of houses needed to accommodate 10,300 new dwellings in Warringah by 2031 – you can read more about the extensive community engagement we undertook during the year on pages 143 to 147.

During 2009 – 2010 planning for an additional 12,500 new jobs by 2031 was already well underway with the Brookvale Employment Lands Study being finalised.

Transport

What's the challenge?

Traffic congestion and transportation have been and continue to be major local issues. Residents overwhelmingly singled this out as the major challenge for Warringah over the next five to ten years in the 2007, 2008 and 2009 Community Surveys.

The congestion on our roads reflects our heavy reliance on motor vehicles – 74% of residents commute to work by motor vehicle (2006 ABS census). At present our road network struggles to accommodate this level of private vehicle use. While there is a range of contributing factors people choose to commute by private vehicle in part because there is a lack of alternative forms of transportation. Improvements have been made to increase the efficiency of the public transportation system on major arterial roads, including works at busy intersections and bus priority lanes. However, the current system does not adequately service all of Warringah nor operate at times convenient to commuters.

Another important factor is our geography. With only three entry and exit points to the northern beaches peninsula (Mona Vale Road, Warringah Road and the Spit Bridge), appropriate and regionally-supported approaches to long-term traffic and transport management are essential.

Warringah's target of 10,300 new dwellings by 2031 adds a new dimension to our already existing transport challenges. More people mean more movement and increasing pressure on existing transport networks.

Meeting the challenge

We share responsibility for various aspects of transport and infrastructure with the Federal and State governments and with the private sector. Solutions regarding our congested roads and inadequate public transport system are therefore limited by jurisdiction as well as geography – you can read more about State and Local Government responsibilities on pages 23 to 24, which cover a range of issues including transport.

In February 2010 the State Government released a plan to 2036 for transport across Sydney, the Metropolitan Transport Plan – Connecting the City of Cities with a 10 year funding guarantee. The Metropolitan Transport Plan links additional dwelling and employment targets (Warringah's share is 12,500 new jobs and 10,300 new dwellings by 2031) with the transport network. For the northern beaches the focus is on improving the efficiency of the bus system through more frequent services, longer peak and off peak service periods, more bus services and connections to rail and ferry networks and centres, and transport information and priority to improve average bus speeds. Four Strategic Bus Corridors are recognised in the Plan:

- Brookvale to City via Roseville (Warringah Road)
- Chatswood to Dee Why/Brookvale (Warringah Road)
- Mona Vale to City (Pittwater Road)
- Mona Vale to Macquarie (Mona Vale Road)

We will continue to lobby the appropriate organisations for longer-term solutions to the peninsula's increasing transport challenges. In our budget 2010-2011 a range of initiatives have been funded and you can find out more by reading our Strategic Community Plan 2010, which is available on our website www.warringah.nsw.gov.au.

Northern Beaches Hospital

Northern Beaches Hospital

In March 2006 the NSW Government announced that Frenchs Forest would be the home for a new hospital. The Northern Beaches Hospital is proposed to be constructed on the north-west corner of Warringah Road and Wakehurst Parkway. Since the announcement progress on planning for the hospital has been slow. The 2010 – 2011 State Budget allocated \$5 million to enable the commencement of stage one of the Northern Beaches Health Service on the Frenchs Forest site and associated works at Manly and Mona Vale Hospitals; however, the allocated \$5 million is well below the estimated total cost to complete these works.

We will continue to monitor the progress of the Northern Beaches Hospital and seek a genuine whole-of-government approach to planning and project delivery. This includes improvements to the Warringah Road – Wakehurst Parkway intersection.



Annual community survey

What and why?

Each year we conduct a community survey to measure residents' overall satisfaction and identify which services the community believes are the most important. Annually, some 600 Warringah residents are randomly selected to take part. We see this as an integral part of our decision making process as this helps ensure that the views and perceptions of our community inform our strategic planning, quality improvement processes and ultimately the delivery of services.

The most recent community survey was conducted in June 2010, involving 600 randomly selected Warringah residents. This information provides valuable insights into the needs and priorities of our residents, and is a good basis for further engagement, consultation and research.

Major issues of concern

- Transport / Traffic management / Congestion (44.8% of residents)
- Over development / Poor planning (36.5%)
- Population growth (15.1%)
- Road and footpath maintenance (14.2%)
- Environment (14.0%)

Overall satisfaction

Overall satisfaction declined from 69% in 2009 to 57% in 2010. The table below shows trends in overall satisfaction over time. In the broad historical context overall satisfaction is back to the same performance level as the 2002 survey.

Survey	% Satisfied
2002	60%
2007	69%
2008	67%
2009	69%
2010	57%

In relative terms, the Warringah result is on par when compared to similar sized and resourced councils throughout NSW. Warringah's mean score for overall satisfaction of 5.9 out of 10 is on par with the NSW Metropolitan average of 5.8.

Survey	Mean Score
Warringah	5.9
Metropolitan average	5.8
NSW - best	7.8
NSW - worst	3.9

Individual council services and facilities

Overall, the 2010 results indicate that we are providing many of the services and facilities rated as important by residents at a satisfactory level or above. However, in-depth analysis of importance and satisfaction ratings for our services and facilities revealed a number of priorities for improvement including:

- Council responsiveness to community needs
- Managing development (commercial, residential and the DA process)
- Condition of public toilets
- Consultation with the community by Council
- Traffic management
- Facilities and services for youth

Staff and Councillor performance

Three quarters of residents (75%) who had contact with Council staff indicated that they were satisfied with their overall performance. The overall mean satisfaction rating for staff was 7.1 (out of 10), which was on a par with the 2009 result and above the external benchmark mean of 6.55 for the Metropolitan comparison group.

Nearly half of all respondents (45%) were satisfied with the Councillor's performance however this has declined from 56% in 2009. The overall mean satisfaction rating with Councillors was 5.4 (out of 10), below the external benchmark for Councillors of 5.67.

Community connectedness

Warringah residents continue to feel they live in a safe community. The vast majority of survey respondents (94%) stated that they feel safe in their own homes. Furthermore, 89% felt that they could call on a neighbour or nearby relative if they needed assistance.

Warringah residents appear to have a relatively strong sense of community connectedness. More than four in five respondents (88%) agreed that their neighbourhood is a friendly place to live, whilst 82% of survey participants felt strongly that they belonged within the Warringah community.

Warringah residents also have a strong sense of local identity, with 87% of survey respondents agreeing that residents in their area are proud of where they live.

Future outlook

The results of the survey will be considered as part of Council's ongoing strategic planning and quality improvement processes.



Strategic Community Plan 2010

Community engagement

Each year we engage our community and stakeholders during the development of our Strategic Community Plan – in planning for our future we need to ensure we get it right and that means using a variety of engagement methods to better our understanding of the specific wants, needs and aspirations of our local community and key stakeholders.

During the 2009 – 2010 financial year we developed our Strategic Community Plan for the 2010 – 2011 financial year and beyond. We placed our Draft Strategic Community Plan on exhibition for public comment between 24 March and 14 May 2010. Our Draft Plan was displayed at Council's Civic Centre, libraries, Warringah Aquatic Centre and on our website.

During the period of exhibition the Draft Plan was extensively promoted to enable our community to have their say on Warringah's future. We consulted our community and distributed information through a variety of ways, including:

- Distributing a summary brochure and feedback form to Warringah households.
- Providing an online summary brochure, questionnaire and discussion forum.
- Advertising on four separate occasions in The Manly Daily and in several Warringah Updates (also in the Manly Daily).
- Promoting the Draft Plan in all libraries, at the Civic Centre, Warringah Aquatic Centre and on Council's website.
- Hosting four community meetings on the Draft Plan. One was held in each of the three Wards during the evenings of 28 April, 5 May and 10 May 2010 and another was held in the afternoon of 11 May 2010 at Council's Civic Centre.
- A Community Plan Hearing held on 20 May 2010 gave residents an opportunity to address Councillors regarding their submission, with a total of 8 people choosing to do so.

Submissions

We received a total of 1,010 submissions, including:

- 890 Summary Brochure feedback forms (hard copies received via post)
- 86 online forms
- 34 letters and emails

We read each written submission. Where appropriate responses to questions in the feedback forms were collated and other issues raised, in both feedback forms and separate submissions, were assessed.

We conducted a qualitative analysis of all individual comments and like comments/issues were grouped for staff comment. This helped us identify reoccurring themes and issues raised by our community, assisting also to determine Warringah's strategic direction over the next four years.

Service levels and underlying budget assumptions

To help ensure our community was informed about what Council was proposing for 2010 – 2011 and had an opportunity to have their say we distributed a Summary Brochure and feedback form to households in Warringah. In this Summary Brochure we asked residents to complete a survey regarding our key services – alternatively, this Summary Brochure and survey was also available online and could be accessed via our website.

In the Summary Brochure we provided information on key assumptions underlying our draft budget – growth in rates, employee expenses and materials and contracts – and how negative trends of 0.5% per annum in any one of the assumptions could have a material and compounding impact on our long term financial sustainability. In the survey we asked residents to consider what services they would be prepared to reduce in the medium term to maintain existing service levels and to ensure their Council could remain financially healthy. Of the 16 key service areas Kimbriki Environmental Services Pty Ltd was excluded as it operates with a profit, and Corporate Support was excluded as it only exists to support other services and will automatically downsize according to reductions in those other areas.

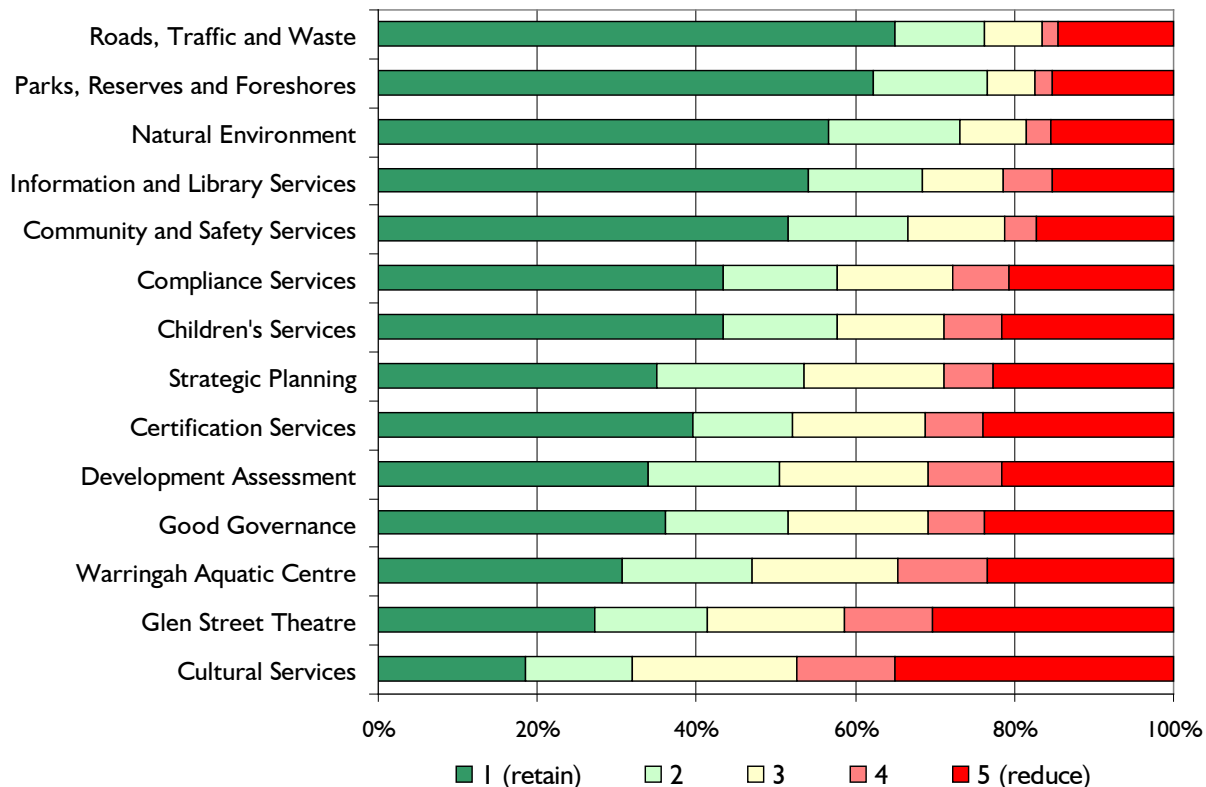
Survey results

Our community was asked to consider 14 Key Service Areas included in the Draft Strategic Community Plan 2010 and rate each service on a scale of 1 to 5 showing their level of support for either retaining or reducing each service. The rating scale retain reduce is shown below:



Of the 1,010 submissions received 952 responded to the survey, with respondents overall indicating their support for retaining services rather than reducing them.

The graph below shows support to retain current service levels was strongest for services that are enjoyed by the majority of the community such as Roads, Traffic and Waste, Parks, Reserves and Foreshores and Natural Environment. Respondents indicated some support for reducing services regarding Cultural Services, Glen Street Theatre and the Warringah Aquatic Centre. These results broadly reflect the results of the annual Community Survey in terms of the relative importance the community places on each service.

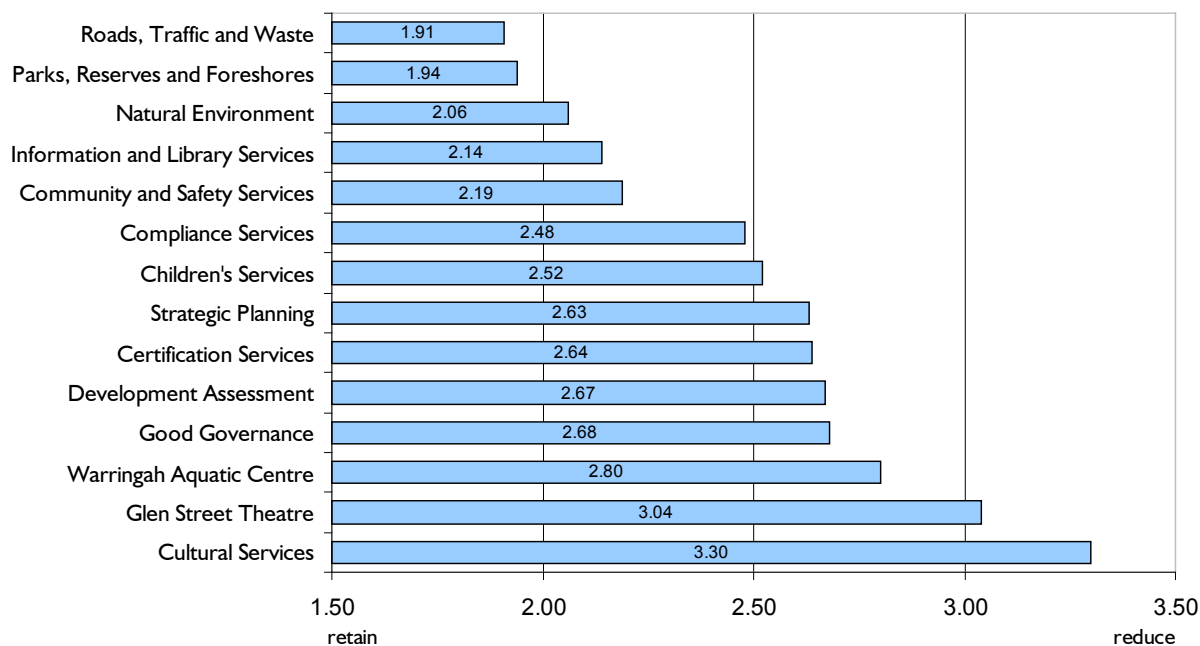


Strategic Community Plan 2010

A simplified way of viewing the results is the mean score. The mean score is the average score respondents gave a service on the scale of 1 (retain) to 5 (reduce). The mean score given by respondents was 2.50, indicating an overall reluctance to nominate service reductions.

The mean scores per service are graphed below. The lower the mean score (shorter bar) the stronger the support for retaining a service, while a higher mean score (longer bar) indicates more support for reducing the service.

Mean scores



Other Key Themes

We received 479 free commentary submissions through the feedback form, online submissions, email or letter. This means that 47% of all submissions received included free commentary, whereas the remaining 53% only included the completed survey.

In order to summarise these free commentary submissions and list the main issues for Councillor's consideration, all submissions were summarised and categorised. Where possible submissions were grouped together to indicate the number of residents raising particular issues.

Our analysis identified the following key themes of common interest and/or concern for our community:

- Suggesting to continue implementing internal efficiencies
- Opposition to (over)development without more / improved public transport and infrastructure
- Opposition to parking sticker reduction
- Opposition to expenditure on Brookvale Oval
- Various comments about parking: meters, enforcement etc.
- Support for more cycling infrastructure
- Support for more footpaths
- Support for protecting our natural environment
- Prioritise services according to statutory obligations / core business vs. user pays / outsourcing
- Support for retaining existing service levels
- Support for increasing rates and fees to retain service levels
- Praise for consultation
- Support for draft plan and budget

Future Planning

Submissions received helped inform Council's decision making in finalising the Draft Plan and formally adopting the final Strategic Community Plan 2010. To read more about specific changes made to the Draft Plan visit our website www.warringah.nsw.gov.au.

Due to the number and range of submissions received from the community as a result of the Draft Strategic Community Plan exhibition we now possess a wealth of ideas and suggestions that will assist future operational and strategic planning. We will continue to use this information to inform our future decision making and bring forward specific issues for further consideration where appropriate.

