

# **ATTACHMENT BOOKLET COMMUNITY & BELONGING AND CORPORATE & LEGAL**

**ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING**

**TUESDAY 26 APRIL 2022**

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**(Draft)**  
**Council Policy**  
**Councillor Expenses and**  
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## Policy Summary

Council is required to adopt a policy concerning the payment of expenses incurred by, and the provision of facilities to, the mayor, deputy mayor and councillors. These supports assist the mayor and councillors to undertake their respective roles under the *Local Government Act 1993* (the Act) and provide reasonable recompense for expenses they incur in undertaking their civic duties.

The policy ensures accountability and transparency and seeks to align councillor expenses and facilities with community expectations. Councillors must not obtain private or political benefit from any expense or facility provided under this policy.

The policy has been prepared in accordance with the [Local Government Act 1993](#) and [Local Government \(General\) Regulation 2021](#), and complies with the Office of Local Government's [Guidelines for the payment of expenses and provision of facilities to mayors and councillors in NSW](#).

The maximum amounts Council will provide for specific expenses and facilities is set out in the policy. Expenses not explicitly addressed in this policy will not be paid or reimbursed. The main expenses and facilities are summarised in the table below. All monetary amounts are exclusive of GST.

Clause	Expense or facility	Maximum amount (per councillor)	Frequency
6.2 6.16 6.17 6.19 6.34 10.23	Expenses relating to civic duties including attendance at non-Council functions and events and travel (excluding private use vehicle) – includes local, long distance and interstate	\$10,000 (councillor) \$15,000 (mayor)	Per financial year
6.3	Vehicle – private use (includes mileage claims for private vehicle use for official business)	Allowances for the use of a private vehicle will be reimbursed at the rate contained in the <a href="#">Local Government (State) Award</a>	
6.23	Training, educational and professional body memberships as relevant to councillor duties and functions	\$2,000	Per financial year
6.28	Seminars and conferences, including registration costs and accommodation and other related out of pocket expenses (note: travel expenses and meals are excluded)	\$6,500	Per financial year
6.34.3 6.36	Meals and refreshments while attending council events, meetings and conferences	Of a standard and level as set out in Part B Monetary Rates of the NSW Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Reviewed Award 2009 (adjusted annually)	Per Award
6.21	Professional development	\$10,000	Per term
6.21	Professional development – specific allocation to undertake directors course	\$10,000	Per term
6.38	Subscriptions, publications and access to resource material	\$1,200	Per year
6.54	Off-site or home office and stationery	\$1,500	Per year
6.51	Child care and/or family member care	\$6,000	Per year

Clause	Expense or facility	Maximum amount (per councillor)	Frequency
6.41	Technology and telecommunications equipment, including a mobile phone, tablet and/or laptop	\$6,500	Provided and maintained upon election for duration of term
6.43	Download applications (apps) to devices above	\$100	Per year
6.46	International data roaming	\$500	Maximum of 30 days per year
6.39	Home internet	\$80 per month – internet service	Total of \$960
6.39	Mobile phone (if mobile not supplied by Council – BYOD)	\$75 per month – standard mobile phone service	Total of \$900

Additional costs incurred by a councillor in excess of these limits are considered a personal expense and the responsibility of the councillor.

Councillors must provide claims for reimbursement within three months of an expense being incurred. The reimbursement of claims made after this time must be considered and approved by the Chief Executive Officer.

A report on the provision of expenses and facilities to councillors will be publicly tabled at a Council meeting every twelve months and published on Council's website. These reports will include expenditure summarised by individual councillor and as a total for all councillors.

## Part A – Introduction

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The provision of expenses and facilities enables councillors to fulfil their civic duties as the elected representatives of Northern Beaches Council.
- 1.2 The community is entitled to know the extent of expenses paid to councillors, as well as the facilities provided.
- 1.3 The purpose of this policy is to clearly state the facilities and support that is available to councillors to assist them in fulfilling their civic duties.
- 1.4 Expenses and facilities provided by this policy are in addition to fees paid to councillors. The minimum and maximum fee range a council may pay each councillor is set by the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal in accordance with section 241 of the [Local Government Act 1993](#) and reviewed annually. Council must adopt its annual fees within this set range.
- 1.5 The Chief Executive Officer or their delegate is empowered to question or refuse a request for payment from a councillor when it does not accord with this policy.

### 2 Policy objectives

The objectives of this policy are to:

- 2.1 enable the reasonable and appropriate reimbursement of expenses incurred by councillors while undertaking their civic duties
- 2.2 enable facilities of a reasonable and appropriate standard to be provided to councillors to support them in undertaking their civic duties

- 2.3 ensure accountability and transparency in reimbursement of expenses and provision of facilities to councillors
- 2.4 ensure facilities and expenses provided to councillors meet community expectations
- 2.5 support a diversity of representation
- 2.6 fulfil Council's statutory responsibilities.

### 3 Principles

Council commits to the following principles:

- 3.1 **Proper conduct:** Councillors and staff acting lawfully and honestly, exercising care and diligence in carrying out their functions
- 3.2 **Reasonable expenses:** Providing for councillors to be reimbursed for expenses reasonably incurred as part of their role as councillor
- 3.3 **Participation and access:** Enabling people from diverse backgrounds, under-represented groups, those in carer roles and those with special needs to serve as councillors
- 3.4 **Equity:** There must be equitable access to expenses and facilities for all councillors
- 3.5 **Appropriate use of resources:** Providing clear direction on the appropriate use of council resources in accordance with legal requirements and community expectations
- 3.6 **Accountability and transparency:** Clearly stating and reporting on the expenses and facilities provided to councillors.

### 4 Private or political benefit

- 4.1 Councillors must not obtain private or political benefit from any expense or facility provided under this policy.
- 4.2 Private use of Council equipment and facilities by councillors may occur from time to time. For example, telephoning home to advise that a Council meeting will run later than expected is acceptable under the policy.
- 4.3 Such incidental private use does not require a compensatory payment back to Council.
- 4.4 Councillors should avoid obtaining any greater private benefit from Council than an incidental benefit. Where there are unavoidable circumstances and more substantial private use of Council facilities does occur, councillors must reimburse Council.
- 4.5 Campaigns for re-election are considered to be a private interest. The following are examples of what is considered to be a private interest during a re-election campaign:
  - production of election material
  - use of Council resources for campaigning
  - use of official Council letterhead, publications, websites or services for political benefit
  - fundraising activities of political parties or individuals, including political fundraising events.

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**Part B – Expenses**

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**5 General expenses**

- 5.1 All expenses provided under this policy will be for a purpose specific to the functions of holding civic office.
- 5.2 Expenses not explicitly addressed in this policy will not be paid or reimbursed.

**6 Specific expenses****Expenses related to civic duties including travel, attendance at events**

- 6.1 All travel by councillors should be undertaken using the most direct route and the most practicable and economical mode of transport.
- 6.2 Each councillor may be reimbursed up to a total of \$10,000 per year for expenses (excluding private use vehicle reimbursements which are outlined below) incurred in association with undertaking professional development, attending approved conferences and seminars within NSW and interstate, representing Council at official meetings, and attending to matters related to the fulfilment of a councillor's civic duties. This includes:
- public transport fares
  - parking costs for Council and other meetings
  - tolls incurred on private E-tags
  - documented ride-share programs, such as Uber
  - the provision of a Cabcharge card (or an equivalent) if required.

**Use of private vehicle**

- 6.3 In addition to the above clause 6.2, allowances for the use of a private vehicle to attend meetings on official business will be reimbursed at the rate contained in the [Local Government \(State\) Award](#). This rate shall be deemed to cover and include any claims for accidental damage or repairs to the councillor's own vehicle and any loss of no claim bonus and any excess not covered by any insurance.
- 6.4 Councillors seeking to be reimbursed for use of a private vehicle under clause 6.3 must keep a log book recording the date, distance and purpose of travel being claimed. The relevant Council claim form (*Councillor Private Vehicle for Official Events Claim*) must be completed and submitted for reimbursement to the Councillor Services Office.

**Interstate, overseas and long distance intrastate travel expenses**

- 6.5 This section includes reference to long distance intrastate travel. At Northern Beaches Council long distance intrastate travel is travel that is estimated to take more than two hours from the councillor's residence.
- 6.6 In accordance with Section 4, Council will scrutinise the value and need for Councillors to undertake overseas travel. Councils should avoid interstate, overseas and long distance intrastate trips unless direct and tangible benefits can be established for the Council and the local community. This includes travel to cities where diplomatic ties exist.
- 6.7 Councillors seeking approval for any interstate and long distance intrastate travel must submit a business case to, and obtain the approval of, the Chief Executive Officer prior to travel.

- 6.8 Councillors seeking approval for any overseas travel must submit a request to, and obtain the approval of, Council at a Council meeting prior to travel.
- 6.9 The request should include:
  - 6.9.1 objectives to be achieved in travel, including an explanation of how the travel aligns with current Council priorities and business, the community benefits which will accrue as a result and its relevance to the exercise of the councillor's civic duties
  - 6.9.2 who is to take part in the travel
  - 6.9.3 duration and itinerary of travel
  - 6.9.4 a detailed budget including a statement of any amounts expected to be reimbursed by the participant/s.
- 6.10 For interstate and long distance intrastate journeys by air of less than two hours the class of air travel is to be economy class.
- 6.11 For interstate journeys by air of more than two hours, the class of air travel may be premium economy where it is available.
- 6.12 For international travel, the class of air travel is to be premium economy if available. Otherwise, the class of travel is to be economy.
- 6.13 Bookings for approved air travel are to be made by the Mayor's Office on behalf of the mayor or the Councillor Services team on behalf of a councillor.
- 6.14 Councillors shall not be entitled to claim frequent flyer or other loyalty points relating to air travel or other expenses incurred by them under this policy. In circumstances where the mayor or a councillor has no option but to incur any expenditure for which loyalty points accrue to his/her personal account, the mayor or councillor must surrender the points to the airline or service provider before reimbursement of the expense by the Council.

**Travel expenses not paid by Council**

- 6.15 Council will not pay any traffic or parking fines or administrative charges for toll road accounts.

**Representing Council at non-Council functions/events**

- 6.16 The reasonable cost for councillors who have been invited to officially attend events/functions to represent the Council may be met within the allocated expenses cap of \$10,000 for expenses related to civic duties.
- 6.17 Council will pay the entry fee/ticket cost associated with the attendance of a councillor for events and functions which may include lunches/dinners, non-council functions and community, corporate or industry events where councillor attendance would be expected, such as award nights.
- 6.18 The Chief Executive Officer or their delegate is to approve the cost of such an event/function where it exceeds \$500.
- 6.19 Where a mayor's/councillor's spouse, partner or accompanying person accompanies them to a non-Council function or event, the expenses of the spouse/partner/accompanying person shall be met by Council within the allocated expenses cap of \$10,000 for expenses related to civic duties in the following circumstances:
  - 6.19.1 The mayor's/councillor's spouse/partner/ accompanying person has been officially invited to and has accompanied the mayor/councillor to a function/event



- 6.19.2 The function/event relates to the discharge of the civic functions of the mayor/councillor
- 6.19.3 The attendance of the spouse/partner/accompanying person at the function is considered reasonably necessary or appropriate in order for the mayor/councillor to fulfil his/her statutory role.
- 6.20 This reimbursement does not extend to functions where the attendance of the councillor's spouse, partner or accompanying person may be convenient, but could not be properly seen as relating to the discharge of functions of civic office. Examples of the types of functions that could be reimbursed under this clause include charitable functions to which the mayor/councillors have been invited and award ceremonies and other functions to which the mayor/councillors are invited to represent the Council. The payment for spouses, partners and accompanying persons for attending appropriate functions will be confined specifically to the ticket, meal and/or the direct cost of attending the function. Peripheral expenses incurred by spouse, partners or accompanying persons such as grooming, special clothing and transport are not considered reimbursable expenses.

### **Professional development**

- 6.21 Council will set aside \$10,000 per councillor per term in its budget to facilitate the relevant professional development of councillors, with an additional \$10,000 set aside for the term for councillors to specifically undertake a director's course.
- 6.22 Within the first 12 months of a new Council term, Council will provide a comprehensive induction program for all councillors which considers any guidelines issued by the Office of Local Government (OLG). Council will cover the cost of the induction program and it will be in addition to ongoing professional development funding allocated to councillors.
- 6.23 Annual membership of professional bodies will be covered to a maximum limit of \$2,000 per year where the membership is relevant to the exercise of the councillor's civic duties, the councillor actively participates in the body and the cost of membership is likely to be substantially offset by savings from attending events or the membership provides information of relevance and value to the role of councillors.
- 6.24 Approval for professional development activities is subject to a prior written request to the Chief Executive Officer outlining the:
- details of the proposed professional development
  - relevance to Council priorities and business
  - relevance to the exercise of the councillor's civic duties.
- 6.25 In assessing a councillor request for a professional development activity, the Chief Executive Officer must consider the factors set out in clauses 6.21 and 6.24 of this policy, as well as the cost of the professional development in relation to the councillor's remaining budget.
- 6.26 In-house program expenses, including a councillor induction program will be borne by Council outside of the allocated budget for councillors outlined in this Policy.
- 6.27 On occasion Council will engage external providers (as appropriate) to undertake specific training in-house as part of the ongoing professional development program for councillors. Councillors will be invited to attend and the cost of engaging the provider will be covered by Council outside of the allocated budget for councillors outlined in this policy.

### **Conferences and seminars**

- 6.28 Council is committed to ensuring its councillors are up to date with contemporary issues facing Council, the community and local government in NSW and will

provide up to \$6,500 annually to facilitate councillor attendance at conferences and seminars.

- 6.29 Approval to attend a conference or seminar is subject to a written request to the Chief Executive Officer by way of the *Councillor Request to Attend Conference or Professional Development Form*. In assessing a councillor request, the Chief Executive Officer must consider factors including the:
- relevance of the topics and presenters to current Council priorities and business and the exercise of the councillor's civic duties
  - cost of the conference or seminar in relation to the total remaining budget.
- 6.30 Council will meet the reasonable cost of registration fees, transportation, out of pocket expenses and accommodation associated with attendance at conferences approved by the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate.
- 6.31 Where a councillor is accompanied at a conference all costs for, or incurred by, the accompanying person, including travel, any additional accommodation costs, breakfast, meals, registration and/or participation in any conference programs, are to be borne by the councillor/accompanying person and not by the Council. Council may by resolution, and in exceptional circumstances, pay the expenses of a spouse/partner/carer while travelling on Council business. Exceptional circumstances would only be where the councillor is prevented by health reasons from travelling alone.
- 6.32 The registration and program fees of the accompanying person are to be paid directly to the conference organiser and paid at time of registration. The Council is prepared to receive reimbursement for such registration and payments and to forward them on to the conference organiser, etc. with any Council delegates' registration.
- 6.33 Where the Council meets, on account, any expenditure or cost on behalf of an accompanying person attending a conference, such expenditure must be repaid to the Council by the councillor/accompanying person within seven (7) days of being invoiced for such expenditure following the conclusion of the conference.

**Accommodation and meals while attending conferences, seminars and training courses**

- 6.34 Reasonable out-of-pocket or incidental expenses incurred by councillors associated with attendance at a conference, seminars, training courses shall be reimbursed for the following:
- 6.34.1 any hotel/motel conference related charges associated with conferences/seminars, other than accommodation
  - 6.34.2 all telephone, internet or data related to Council business
  - 6.34.3 reasonable lunches, dinners and other meals incurred whilst travelling to or from the conferences, seminars, training courses and other lunches, dinners or meals occurring during the conference but not included in the conference registration fee, as set out in Part B *Monetary Rates of the NSW Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Reviewed Award, 2009*, as adjusted annually
  - 6.34.4 incidental expenses including taxi fares, parking fees, bridge tolls, refreshments, newspapers, laundry and dry cleaning
  - 6.34.5 any optional activity in a conference program, excluding any pre or post conference activities.
- 6.35 Where requested by a councillor, consideration will be given to the provision of an advance payment of up to \$200 to cover anticipated out-of-pocket expenses. Following attendance at a conference (and no more than one [1] month after the

conference concludes) the advance payment must be fully reconciled with receipts for costs associated as above.

#### **Refreshments for Council related meetings**

- 6.36 Appropriate refreshments will be available for Council meetings, Council committee meetings, councillor briefings, approved meetings and engagements, and official Council functions as approved by the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate.
- 6.37 As an indicative guide for the standard of refreshments to be provided at Council related meetings, the Chief Executive Officer must be mindful of Part B Monetary Rates of the *NSW Crown Employees (Public Service Conditions of Employment) Reviewed Award 2009*, as adjusted annually.

#### **Subscriptions**

- 6.38 Councillors are entitled to subscriptions and publications and any resource material related to the exercise of civic duties for which a fee is required up to an amount of \$1,200 per year.

#### **Technology, telecommunications and other related expenses**

- 6.39 Council will provide or reimburse councillors for expenses associated with appropriate technology and telecommunications devices and services up to \$1,860 per financial year. This includes:
- \$75 per month –mobile service (provided by Council or reimbursed BYOD)
  - \$80 per month – internet service
- 6.40 In addition, Council will provide a mobile phone, tablet/iPad and/or a lap-top or equivalent which will be provided on a standard monthly plan as arranged by Council for the purposes of receiving communications and business papers from Council by electronic means and carrying out civic duties.
- 6.41 Council may provide appropriate technology equipment up to a limit of \$6,500 per councillor upon the commencement of the term of office (this is inclusive of tablets/iPads and accessories issued under 6.39/6.40. The determination as to what equipment will be provided will be made by the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate based upon Council's general technology and telecommunications program and identified business needs.
- 6.42 Reimbursements will be made only for communications devices and services used for councillors to undertake their civic duties, such as receiving and reading Council business papers and relevant phone calls and correspondence.
- 6.43 Councillors may seek reimbursement for applications (apps) on their Council issued mobile or electronic devices that are directly related to their duties as a councillor, within the maximum limit of \$100 per year.
- 6.44 Council may from time to time provide councillors with upgraded equipment or new facilities, where doing so will result in efficiencies and aligns to Council's general technology and telecommunications program.
- 6.45 All equipment provided to councillors by Council shall remain in the possession of the councillor during their term of office and shall remain the property of Council and returned in good operational order and condition upon ceasing to be an elected member of Northern Beaches Council.
- 6.46 Council will provide international roaming packages on a Council provided mobile phone plan, to the maximum value of \$500 for data, voice and messaging for up to 30 days per year. This amount is in addition to the maximum monthly usage limits outlined in clause 6.39.

- 6.47 Where the councillor uses their own mobile phone plan, a reimbursement to the maximum value of \$500 for data, voice and messaging for up to 30 days per year will only be provided for international roaming where the reconciliation is supported by a detailed account itemising Council usage.

#### **Special requirements and child care and/or family member care**

- 6.48 Council encourages wide participation and interest in civic office. It will seek to ensure Council premises and associated facilities are accessible, including provision for sight or hearing impaired councillors and those with other disabilities.
- 6.49 Transportation provisions as outlined in this policy, such as access to Cabcharge and Uber will also assist councillors who may be unable or unwilling to drive a vehicle.
- 6.50 In addition to the provisions above, the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate may authorise the provision of reasonable additional facilities and expenses in order to allow a councillor with disability to perform their civic duties.
- 6.51 Councillors who are the principal carer of a child or other immediate family member who is an older adult, has disability and/or is sick will be entitled to re-imbursement of carer's expenses up to a maximum of \$6,000 per annum for attendance to official business, plus reasonable travel from the principal place of residence.
- 6.52 Child care expenses may be claimed for children up to and including the age of 16 years where the carer is not the children's parent.
- 6.53 In the event of caring for an adult person, councillors will need to provide suitable evidence to the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate that reimbursement is applicable. This may take the form of advice from a medical practitioner.

#### **Off-site office expenses**

- 6.54 Each councillor may be reimbursed up to \$1,500 per year for costs associated with the maintenance of a home or off-site office, such as minor items of consumable stationery and printer ink cartridges and furniture.

#### **Health and wellbeing services**

- 6.55 Council aims to provide a working environment that promotes and supports the health and wellbeing of both staff and councillors.
- 6.56 Councillors will have access to Council's relevant employee Assistance Program.
- 6.57 Councillors will have free entry to Council's Aquatic Centres.

### **7 Insurances**

- 7.1 In accordance with section 382 of the [Local Government Act 1993](#), Council has in place public liability and professional indemnity insurance. Council also obtains Councillors and Officers insurance in the course of its annual insurance renewal program.
- 7.2 Insurance protection is only provided if a claim arises out of, or in connection with, the councillor's performance of their civic duties, or exercise of his or her functions as a councillor. All insurances are subject to any limitations or conditions set out in Council's policies of insurance.
- 7.3 Council shall pay the insurance policy excess in respect of any claim accepted by Council's insurers, whether defended or not.
- 7.4 Appropriate travel insurances are to be included for any councillors travelling on approved interstate and overseas travel on Council business.

## 8 Legal assistance

- 8.1 Council may, if requested, indemnify or reimburse the reasonable legal expenses of:
- 8.1.1 a councillor defending an action arising from the performance in good faith of a function under the [Local Government Act 1993](#);
  - 8.1.2 a councillor defending an action in defamation, provided the statements complained of were made in good faith in the course of exercising a function under the Act; and
  - 8.1.3 a councillor for proceedings before an appropriate investigative or review body, provided the subject of the proceedings arises from the performance in good faith of a function under the [Local Government Act 1993](#) and the matter has proceeded past any initial assessment phase to a formal investigation or review and the investigative or review body makes a finding substantially favourable to the councillor.
- 8.2 In the case of a conduct complaint made against a councillor, legal costs will only be made available where the matter has been referred by the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate to a conduct reviewer or conduct review panel and the conduct reviewer has commenced a formal investigation of the matter and makes a finding substantially favourable to the councillor.
- 8.3 Legal expenses incurred in relation to proceedings arising out of the performance by a councillor of their functions under the [Local Government Act 1993](#) are distinguished from expenses incurred in relation to proceedings arising merely from something that a councillor has done during their term in office. For example, expenses arising from an investigation as to whether a councillor acted corruptly would not be covered by this section.
- 8.4 Council will not meet the legal costs:
- 8.4.1 of legal proceedings initiated by a councillor under any circumstances
  - 8.4.2 of a councillor seeking advice in respect of possible defamation, or in seeking a non-litigious remedy for possible defamation
  - 8.4.3 for legal proceedings that do not involve a councillor performing their role as a councillor.
- 8.5 Reimbursement of expenses for reasonable legal expenses must have Council approval by way of a resolution at a Council meeting prior to costs being incurred.

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**Part C – Facilities**

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**9 General facilities for all Councillors****Facilities**

- 9.1 Council will provide the following facilities to councillors to assist them to effectively discharge their civic duties:
- 9.1.1 A councillor common room appropriately furnished which includes photocopier, printer, meeting space, letterboxes and appropriate refreshments
  - 9.1.2 Each councillor will receive a security card to access the three central administration offices of Mona Vale, Dee Why and Manly, allowing them appropriate access as determined by the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate
  - 9.1.3 Free parking access to shared car parking spaces while attending Council offices on official business at both the Manly and Dee Why administration offices
  - 9.1.4 A name badge which may be worn at official functions, indicating that the wearer holds the office of a councillor and/or mayor or deputy mayor
  - 9.1.5 Appropriate meeting spaces to allow councillors to meet with community members as determined by the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate. Meeting rooms can be booked through the Office of the Mayor or the Councillor Services team.
  - 9.1.6 Daily media reports and updates on media releases issued by Council by email.
- 9.2 The provision of facilities will be of a standard deemed by the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate as appropriate for the purpose.
- 9.3 Council may from time to time provide additional facilities for councillor use such as protective equipment for use during site visits.

**Stationery**

- 9.4 Council will provide the following to councillors:
- 9.4.1 Electronic letterhead template, to be used only for correspondence associated with civic duties
  - 9.4.2 Electronic Christmas or festive message (if requested)
  - 9.4.3 Business cards (printed in-house).
- 9.5 Council will also from time to time provide additional stationery or branded items for councillor use.
- 9.6 The provision of other stationery required to furnish an off-site or home office is outlined in clause 7.54 of this policy.

**Administrative support**

- 9.7 Council will provide administrative support to councillors to assist them with carrying out their civic duties. Administrative support is provided to councillors by the Councillor Services team and support for the mayor is provided by the Mayor's Office.

- 9.8 As outlined in section 4, Council staff are to assist councillors with civic duties only and must not assist with matters of personal or political interest, including campaigning.

**Glen Street Theatre Complimentary Tickets**

- 9.9 Tickets to productions at Glen Street Theatre will be issued to councillors in accordance with the Glen Street Theatre Complimentary Tickets Policy.

**10 Additional facilities and/or expenses for the Mayor**

**Provision and use of a mayoral vehicle**

- 10.1 The mayor has the option of using and maintaining a private vehicle in accordance with the provisions of clauses 6.3 and 6.4 of this policy or Council may provide the option to the mayor of a suitable and appropriate vehicle (excluding any vehicle subject to the Australian Taxation Office's luxury car tax) for use by the mayor for all official, executive and social duties connected with the office of mayor and for occasional or full private use.
- 10.2 The Council cannot make a motor vehicle, owned or leased by the Council, available for the exclusive or primary use or disposition of a particular councillor other than a mayor.
- 10.3 The Council will:
- 10.3.1 provide servicing, maintenance, registration and insurance of a suitable vehicle
  - 10.3.2 provide all fuel, which may be charged against a fuel card, whilst the vehicle is used for Council business.
- 10.4 The vehicle will be registered and comprehensively insured by the Northern Beaches Council.
- 10.5 Special accessories where required, shall be provided, fitted, installed and removed at Council's cost.
- 10.6 The vehicle shall be available for the exclusive use of the mayor, and where available by any councillor attending council business and as approved by the mayor subject to the conditions of this policy.
- 10.7 Where private or personal use is on an occasional basis, the mayoral allowance will be reduced on a per kilometre basis, by the rate set by the Local Government (State) Award, and in accordance with a log submitted by the mayor on a monthly basis. Where full private or personal use is chosen, the mayoral allowance will be reduced, in accordance with Council's *Management Standard for Provision of Private and Take Home Use Vehicles (amended)*.
- 10.8 The following restriction shall apply to the use of the mayoral vehicle:
- 10.8.1 The vehicle shall only be driven by a properly licensed person, being:
    - the mayor
    - Council employee
    - a councillor of the Northern Beaches Council, with the mayor's consent
    - a member of the mayor's immediate family or nominated person so long as the mayor is a passenger in the car.
  - 10.8.2 The mayor shall not use, or allow the vehicle to be used, to compete in any car rally or competition



- 10.8.3 The vehicle is not to be used for any trading undertaking or for any activity where remuneration is received which is not directly related to Council business or activities of the office of mayor.
- 10.9 The mayor, if they intend to drive the vehicle, must show evidence of a current New South Wales driver's licence of an appropriate class, or equivalent, and be the holder of a licence for the duration of their use of the vehicle. If the mayor loses his/her licence or is suspended from driving, they must immediately forfeit use of or access to the mayoral vehicle or provide evidence of a properly licensed person who will be the driver of the vehicle whenever used by the mayor during such period.
- 10.10 Whenever the mayor has the control of the vehicle, the mayor must ensure that it is driven only by a responsible properly licensed person.
- 10.11 If the mayor drives or allows another person to drive the vehicle without a current driver's licence, or whilst disqualified for any reason, the Council may withdraw the vehicle from access by the mayor.
- 10.12 All traffic fines and penalties incurred by the mayoral vehicle will be paid by the driver. The mayor must keep a record of any drivers of the vehicle, other than the mayor, whom the mayor permits to drive the vehicle.
- 10.13 If the mayor or a properly licensed person, by their action, negates any motor vehicle insurance, that person will be responsible for the payment of costs as a consequence thereof.
- 10.14 The mayor always remains responsible for ensuring proper and adequate care and usage of the vehicle at all times including garaging and vehicle maintenance
- 10.15 The mayor must ensure all accidents /maintenance/repair issues are reported to Council's Fleet Management without delay.
- 10.16 If the mayor or a properly licensed person, whilst driving the vehicle, is convicted of drink-driving or an offence leading to licence suspension or loss in association with an accident involving the mayoral vehicle, the mayor will be required to pay the cost of associated repairs in the event that Council's insurers disclaim responsibilities on the grounds of such conviction, suspension or loss.
- 10.17 A parking space at Council's offices will be reserved for the mayor for use on official business, professional development and attendance at the mayor's office.

#### **Accommodation and office support**

- 10.18 Council will provide the mayor with a furnished office incorporating a computer configured to Council's standard operating environment, telephone and a meeting room.
- 10.19 In performing their civic duties, the mayor will be assisted by a small number of staff providing administrative and secretarial support, as determined by the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate.
- 10.20 The number of exclusive staff provided to support the mayor and councillors will not exceed the number of full time equivalent staff identified in the adopted organisational structure and as provided in the adopted budget.
- 10.21 As outlined in section 4, staff who are appointed to the Mayor's Office or Councillor Services team are required to work on official business only, and not for matters of personal or political interest, including campaigns.



**Industry conferences**

- 10.22 The mayor has an allocation to attend and represent Council at the Local Government NSW Annual Conference (this entitlement is available to all councillors) and the Australian Local Government Association Annual Conference each year. The costs associated with attending both conferences will be in addition to the allocated councillor limits.

**Expenses related to civic duties including travel, attendance at events**

- 10.23 The mayor has an additional allocation of \$5000 for expenses incurred in association with undertaking professional development, attending approved conferences and seminars within NSW and interstate, representing Council at official meetings, and attending to matters related to the fulfilment of a councillor's civic duties. Refer to section 6.2.

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**Part D – Processes**

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**11 Approval, payment and reimbursement arrangements**

- 11.1 Expenses should only be incurred by councillors in accordance with the provisions of this policy.
- 11.2 Approval for incurring expenses, or for the reimbursement of such expenses, should be obtained before the expense is incurred where possible.
- 11.3 Up to the maximum limits specified in this policy, approval for the following may be sought after the expense is incurred for:
- 11.3.1 private vehicle use and local travel relating to civic duties and official business
  - 11.3.2 office expenses and out of pocket expenses
  - 11.3.3 carer costs
  - 11.3.4 technology and telecommunications expenditure.
- 11.4 Final approval for payments made under this policy will be granted by the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate.
- 11.5 All requests for reimbursement will be processed by a staff member and then reviewed and authorised by the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate.
- 11.6 The Chief Executive Officer or their delegate will provide a system for the request of reimbursements for councillors. This may include appropriate forms where councillors will be required to provide the relevant details required.

**Direct payment**

- 11.7 Council may approve and directly pay expenses. Requests for direct payment must be submitted through the appropriate system for assessment against this policy using the appropriate Council forms, with sufficient information and time to allow for the claim to be assessed and processed.

**Reimbursement**

- 11.8 All claims for reimbursement of expenses incurred must be made on the system or forms prescribed, supported by relevant information, appropriate receipts and/or tax invoices and be submitted to the Mayor's Office (for mayoral expenses) or the Councillor Services team (for councillors) for processing. There are two payments runs per month for the reimbursements of expenses.

**Advance payment**

- 11.9 Council may pay a cash advance for councillors attending approved conferences, seminars or professional development.
- 11.10 The maximum daily value of a cash advance is \$200 for a conference, seminar or professional development undertaking, up to a maximum of \$600.
- 11.11 Requests for advance payment must be submitted to the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate for assessment against this policy with sufficient information and time to allow for the claim to be assessed and processed.
- 11.12 Councillors must fully reconcile all expenses against the cost of the advance within one month of incurring the cost and/or returning home. This includes providing to Council:
- 11.12.1 a full reconciliation against the provisions of this policy of all expenses including appropriate receipts and/or tax invoices; and
  - 11.12.2 reimbursement of any amount of the advance payment not spent in attending to official business or professional development.

**Notification**

- 11.13 If a claim is approved, Council will make payment directly or reimburse the councillor through accounts payable.
- 11.14 If a claim is refused, Council will inform the councillor in writing that the claim has been refused and the reason for the refusal.

**Reimbursement to Council**

- 11.15 If Council has incurred an expense on behalf of a councillor that exceeds a maximum limit, exceeds reasonable incidental private use or is not provided for in this policy:
- Council may, with the approval of the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate, invoice the councillor for the expense; and
  - the councillor will be required to reimburse Council for that expense within 14 days of the invoice date.
- 11.16 If the councillor cannot reimburse Council within 14 days of the invoice date, they are to submit a written explanation to the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate. The Chief Executive Officer or their delegate may elect to deduct the amount from the councillor's allowance (councillor fee).

**Timeframe for reimbursement**

- 11.17 Unless otherwise specified in this policy, councillors must provide all claims for reimbursement within three months of an expense being incurred. The acceptance of claims made after this time must be considered and approved by the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate.

**12 Disputes**

- 12.1 If the councillor disputes a determination under this policy, the councillor should discuss the matter with the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate.

- 12.2 If the councillor and the Chief Executive Officer (or their delegate) cannot resolve the dispute, the councillor may submit a notice of motion to Council seeking to have the dispute resolved.

### **13 Return or retention of facilities**

- 13.1 All unexpended facilities or equipment supplied under this policy are to be relinquished immediately upon a councillor or the mayor ceasing to hold office.

### **14 Publication**

- 14.1 This policy will be published on Council's website.

### **15 Reporting**

- 15.1 Council will report on the provision of expenses and facilities to councillors as required in the [Local Government Act 1993](#) and [Local Government \(General\) Regulation 2021](#).
- 15.2 Detailed reports on the provision of expenses and facilities to councillors will be publicly tabled at a Council meeting every twelve months and published in full on Council's website.

### **16 Auditing**

- 16.1 The operation of this policy, including claims made under the policy, will be included in Council's audit program with a regular audit to be scheduled within the Northern Beaches Council Strategic Internal Audit Plan.

### **17 Breaches**

- 17.1 Suspected breaches of this policy are to be reported to the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate.
- 17.2 In accordance with the Northern Beaches Council Code of Conduct this Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policy is a policy of Council and must not be contravened.
- 17.3 Alleged breaches of this policy shall be dealt with by the processes outlined for breaches of the Northern Beaches Council Code of Conduct as detailed in the Code and in the Procedures for the Administration of the Code.

## PART E – Appendices

### Appendix I: Related legislation, guidance and policies

#### Relevant legislation and guidance:

- [Local Government Act 1993](#), sections 252 and 253
- [Local Government \(General\) Regulation 2021](#), Clauses 217 and 403
- Office of Local Government's [Guidelines for the payment of expenses and provision of facilities to Mayors and councillors in NSW](#)
- Office of Local Government Circular 09-36 Guidelines for Payment of Expenses and Facilities
- Office of Local Government Circular 05-08 Legal Assistance for Councillors and Council Employees.

#### Related Council policies:

- Northern Beaches Council Code of Conduct
- Northern Beaches Council Management Standard for Provision of Private and Take Home Use Vehicles (amended)
- Northern Beaches Council Glen Street Theatre Complimentary Tickets Policy

### Appendix II: Definitions

The following definitions apply throughout this policy.

Term	Definition
accompanying person	a spouse, partner or de facto or other person who has a close personal relationship with or provides carer support to a councillor
appropriate refreshments	food and beverages, excluding alcohol, provided by Council to support councillors undertaking official business
Act	the <a href="#">Local Government Act 1993</a> (NSW)
Annual Conference	Local Government NSW Annual Conference
clause	Unless stated otherwise, a reference to a clause is a reference to a clause of this policy
Code of Conduct	the Code of Conduct adopted by Council or the Model Code if none is adopted
councillor	a person elected or appointed to civic office as a member of the governing body of Council who is not suspended, including the mayor
Chief Executive Officer	the person referred to in the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i> as the general manager of a council and, in the case of the Northern Beaches Council, means the person referred to as the Chief Executive Officer of the Northern Beaches Council and includes their delegate or authorised representative
incidental personal use	use that is infrequent and brief and use that does not breach this policy or the Code of Conduct
long distance intrastate travel	travel to other parts of NSW of more than two hours duration by private vehicle
maximum limit	the maximum limit for an expense or facility provided in the text and summarised in Appendix 1
NSW	New South Wales

nominated person	the holder of a current NSW driver's licence who is nominated by the mayor, in writing to the Chief Executive Officer or their delegate, as a person who may regularly drive the mayoral vehicle whilst the mayor is a passenger in the vehicle.
official business	functions that the mayor or councillors are required or invited to attend to fulfil their legislated role and responsibilities for Council or result in a direct benefit for Council and/or for the local government area, and includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>meetings of Council and committees of the whole</li> <li>meetings of committees facilitated by Council</li> <li>civic receptions hosted or sponsored by Council</li> <li>meetings, functions, workshops and other events to which attendance by a councillor has been requested or approved by Council.</li> </ul>
professional development	a seminar, conference, training course or other development opportunity relevant to the role of a councillor or the mayor
Regulation	the <a href="#">Local Government (General) Regulation 2021</a> (NSW)
term	the period from which a councillor or the mayor is in office – usually commencing from the councillor's inauguration and concluding on the day prior to the local government election – the term includes a caretaker period
year	the financial year, that is the 12 month period commencing on 1 July each year

#### Version Control

Version	Date	Version	Ref
1	22 November 2016	Northern Beaches Council Policy for Payment and Reimbursement of Expenses Incurred by, and the Provision of Facilities to the mayor, deputy mayor and Councillors - adopted	2016/358418
2	26 June 2018	Draft Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policy for Public Exhibition	2018/353965
3	28 August 2018	Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policy for adoption including minor amendment to include applications in ICT expenses	2018/534619
4	(TBC)	Draft revision of allocations based on review of comparable councils in large metropolitan category as determined through the Local Government Remuneration Tribunal, clarification and update of clause interpretations and some administrative formatting	2022/093113



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## Community and Stakeholder Engagement Report

### Draft Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policy

Consultation period: 28 February – 27 March 2022

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## 1. Summary

This report outlines the outcomes of community and stakeholder engagement as part of the drafting of Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policy. The feedback collected during consultation revealed that residents of the Northern Beaches were in support of minor changes to the policy, mostly surrounding an increase in budget.

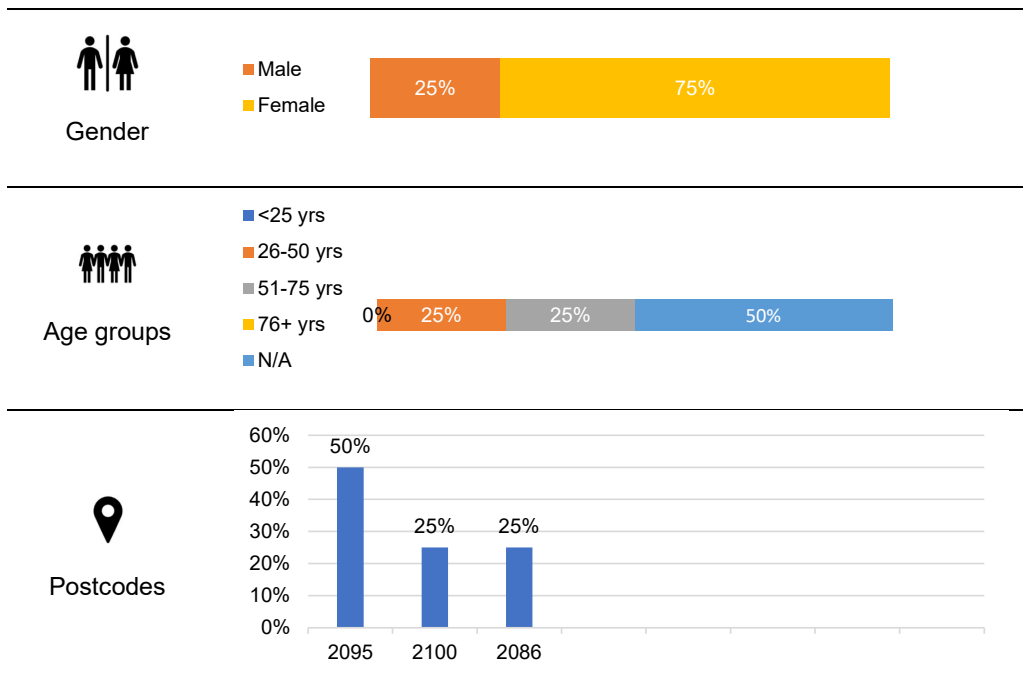
### 1.1. Key outcomes

	4	
Total unique responses		
	Comment form Written responses (email/letter)	Completions: 4 Number received:
How responses were received		
	Childcare. Diversity and accessibility. Non-priority project.	
Feedback themes		

### 1.2. How we engaged

	Visitors: 137	Visits: 158	Av. time onsite: 50 seconds
Have Your Say: visitation stats			
<hr/>			
	Community Engagement (fortnightly) newsletter: 2 editions	Distribution: 22,995 subscribers	
Electronic direct mail (EDM)			

### 1.3. Who responded<sup>1</sup>



## 2. Background

Under Section 252 of the Local Government Act 1993, Council is required to adopt a policy concerning the payment of expenses and the provision of facilities to the Mayor and Councillors within the first 12 months of each term of Council.

Expenses and facilities provided by the policy are in addition to fees paid to Councillors.

The draft policy seeks to provide for reasonable and appropriate support to Councillors and the Mayor to assist in fulfilling civic duties.

The current standing policy and a template provided by the Office of Local Government were used to guide the development of this new draft policy.

## 3. Engagement objectives

Community and stakeholder engagement aimed to:

- build community and stakeholder awareness of the project and how to provide comment.
- provide accessible information so community and stakeholders can participate in a meaningful way.

<sup>1</sup> Demographic data was gathered by request only. The data represented only includes those respondents who provided this detail.



## 4. Engagement approach

The Draft Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policy was publicly exhibited between 28 February and 27 March 2022.

The engagement was planned, implemented and reported in accordance with Council's [Community Engagement Matrix](#) (2017).

A project page was established on our have your say platform with information provided in an accessible and easy to read format.

The project was primarily promoted through our fortnightly e-newsletter.

Feedback was captured through an online submission form embedded onto the have your say project page.

Email and written comments were also invited.

## 5. Responses received

Number	Submission (verbatim)	Council's response
1	Childcare expenses should be increased to a more realistic amount commensurate with the number of hours a Councillor is expected to attend meetings, Council and Committee as well as briefings out of normal business hours (9 to 5).	Noted. The draft Policy proposes a \$6,000 threshold for childcare / family member care expenses. This is an increase of \$4,000 a year on the current policy (which provides \$2,000).
2	<p>Our councillors and mayor do not get paid anywhere near enough for the contribution they make. I see this as a major barrier for diverse groups within the community to put their hands up as you have to effectively be independently wealthy for it to make sense. I would love for people my age to be able to consider it as a legitimate option and not have to juggle it with another full time job! Councillors should be paid an equivalent of an officer salary at a minimum and mayor an exec manager level Salary at a minimum plus super.</p> <p>Think about the contribution these individuals make to our community - to properly read and understand all agenda papers, to advocate with state and federal stakeholders and to be actively engaged with the community is a full time job and should be remunerated accordingly.</p> <p>In lieu of constraints set by legislation to what we can pay them, we should seek to be as generous as possible in other areas to compensate. \$70 no longer covers a high quality broadband internet connection with 4g backup - that costs more like \$90-95 per month as an example - councillors struggling with poor quality internet during a meeting is not</p>	Noted. The draft Policy proposes reasonable increases in the thresholds for a number of expense categories (civic duties, professional development, home office and stationary, subscriptions and resource material, childcare) and a \$10 a month increase to internet expenses on the current policy. Whilst a high-speed home internet connection may ultimately cost more than the policy provides, it is anticipated the policy provides an adequate amount taking into consideration the anticipated proportion of use for council business.

	appropriate. \$1-3,000 for events is pretty low for a whole year, this should be doubled.	
3	I believe it's essential that the details of each individual Councillor's expenses be transparent and available to the community. In the former term of Council there was major inequity in the amount each Councillor claimed.	Noted. The draft Policy proposes a report detailing the expenses provided to councillors. Councillor expenses are also published on Council's website and linked to individual councillor profiles for increased transparency. It is a matter for individual councillors to expense eligible items as they are incurred in line with the Policy. There will be a natural variance in the expenses incurred by individual councillors for a variety of factors including the uptake of professional development, attendance at civic functions or community events, childcare requirements, etc. All expenses are processed in accordance with the thresholds in the Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policy set by Council.
4	Why are you wasting time on a policy which should be handed down by the Dept of Local Government? The policy should be the same throughout NSW. You have more important things to consider which have a far greater impact on the residents of the Northern Beaches.	Noted. This is a matter for the NSW Government. Council is required under <a href="#">section 252 of the Local Government Act 1993</a> , to adopt a policy concerning the payment of expenses and the provision of facilities to the mayor, deputy mayor and councillors in relation to discharging the functions of civic office within the first 12 months of each term of council. The Office of Local Government's (OLG) template policy does not stipulate standard financial thresholds leaving individual councils to set these and a policy according to their needs and community's expectations. Council's draft Policy was developed from the OLG template.

Document administration	
Version	1.0
Date	28 March 2022
Status	Draft
Notes	Community and stakeholder views contained in this report do not necessarily reflect the views of the Northern Beaches Council or indicate a commitment to a particular course of action.



# MINUTES

## **AUDIT, RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING**

held via audio-visual link

**TUESDAY 14 DECEMBER 2021**

**Minutes of the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee Meeting**  
**held on Tuesday 14 December 2021**  
**via audio-visual link**  
**Commencing at 2:06pm**

**ATTENDANCE:**

**Voting Members of the Committee**

Mr Stephen Horne (Chair)  
Mr Mark McCoy  
Ms Sarah Richardson  
Ms Julie Walton  
Ms Sarah Grattan  
Ms Sue Heins  
Mr Rory Amon

**Council Officers (non-voting)**

Mr Ray Brownlee PSM	Chief Executive Officer
Mr Jeff Smith	Director Corporate and Legal
Mr David Walsh	Chief Financial Officer
Ms Caroline Foley	Executive Manager Financial Planning and Systems
Ms Deirdre Cooper	Executive Manager Internal Audit and Complaints Resolution
Ms Sarah Dunstan	Executive Manager Governance and Risk
Mr Mark Jones	Executive Manager Strategy Performance and Improvement
Mr Rob Koopman	Manager Insurance and Risk
Mr Michael McDermid	Manager Corporate Strategy
Mr Campbell Pfeiffer	Executive Manager, Property
Ms Aline Fernandes	Internal Auditor
Ms Lesley Milbourne	Manager Governance
Ms Katie Kirwan	Senior Advisor Governance

**Council Auditors (non-voting)**

Ms Sarah Cain	Internal Audit, Partner, KPMG
Ms Adriana Marques	Internal Audit, Manager, KPMG
Ms Karen Taylor	Director of Financial Audit Services, Audit Office of NSW

**Visitors**

Ms Charlotte Rimmer	President, Manly Chamber of Commerce
Ms Tracey Mietzke	Athas
Mr Bob Smith	Halix
Mr Con Nicola	Henroth
Mr Blair Courtney-O'Connor	Aspiring Properties

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Note: The Chair gave an Acknowledgement of Country.

## 1.0 APOLOGIES

Nil.

## 2.0 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

Nil.

## 3.0 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

### 3.1 MINUTES OF AUDIT, RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 14 SEPTEMBER 2021

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#### COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

That the Minutes of the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee meeting held 14 September 2021, copies of which were previously circulated to all Members, are hereby confirmed as a true and correct record of the proceedings of that meeting.

---

### 3.2 MINUTES OF EXTRAORDINARY AUDIT, RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE HELD 14 SEPTEMBER 2021

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#### COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

That the Minutes of the Extraordinary Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee held 14 September 2021, copies of which were previously circulated to all Members, are hereby confirmed as a true and correct record of the proceedings of that meeting.

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## 4.0 ITEMS RESOLVED BY EXCEPTION

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Nil.

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## 5.0 ACTION ITEMS FROM MINUTES

### 5.1 ACTION ITEMS UPDATE

#### PURPOSE

To provide the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee with a progress update on the actions arising from the Minutes of previous meetings of the Committee.

#### DISCUSSION

The Chair addressed the meeting.

The Committee noted that the review of risks above tolerance to inform the internal audit program was in progress and expected to conclude in March 2022.

---

#### COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

That the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee note the progress on actions arising from the Minutes of previous meetings.

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*Note: The order of business was changed to allow external members of the Manly Chamber of Commerce to attend for part of the discussion of 11.1 – Internal Audit Update Report (Manly CBD Special Levy Audit)*

### 11.1 INTERNAL AUDIT UPDATE

*Note: Charlotte Rimmer, Tracey Mietzke, Bob Smith, Con Nicola and Blair Courtney-Wood joined the meeting.*

#### PURPOSE

To provide an update to the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee on all aspects of Internal Audit work since the September meeting.

#### DISCUSSION

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) addressed the meeting providing background to the Manly Special Levy. The Chair noted the purpose of the discussion was to provide clarity to the Committee and the Chamber members on the purpose of the Special Levy, and assurance regarding the transparency of the process for which the audit findings are determined.

Members of the Chamber addressed the Committee and acknowledged the independence and integrity of the audit process. Some Chamber members expressed disappointment that what they had been told in 2005 as to how the money would be spent and how long the levy would remain in place was different to what the former Manly Council ultimately resolved and received approval for.

Members suggested that going forward, expenditure is separated to ensure transparency. The CEO advised that a cost analysis and comparison of other town centre locations throughout the LGA will be provided at a Councillor Briefing before going to Council. The CEO invited the Chamber Members to provide any further feedback to him on the report.



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## 6.0 STANDING ITEMS

### 6.1 VERBAL UPDATE BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

#### PURPOSE

To provide the Committee with a brief update on current issues, particularly those relating to areas of potential risk for Council.

#### DISCUSSION

The Chief Executive Officer raised the following matters for discussion:

- Council has engaged an advisor to develop a negotiation protocol with its waste contractor and sought advice from the Office of Local Government and Independent Commission Against Corruption to ensure all probity issues are addressed.
- As the majority shareholder of Kimbriki, Council has engaged a firm to support a board recruitment and appointment process with a view to refresh the board membership. The current board has been in place since 2011.
- A status update on the vaccination policy, employee vaccination status and Council's work health and safety measures in place to protect employees and the community at its sites.
- The impact of the NSW Government's reduction of the rate peg.

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#### COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

The Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee noted the verbal update by the Chief Executive Officer.

---

### 6.2 FINANCE UPDATE

Note: Sarah Grattan left the meeting at 3:04pm

#### PURPOSE

To provide an update on the financial performance of the Council as at 30 September 2021.

#### DISCUSSION

Caroline Foley, Executive Manager Financial Planning addressed the meeting.

The Committee discussed the reduction of unrestricted funds forecast at June 2022 and the movements driving that reduction.

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#### COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

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The Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee noted the finance update as at 30 September 2021.

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## **7.0 IMPROVEMENT**

### **7.1 PERFORMANCE REPORTING UPDATE – SEPTEMBER 2021**

#### **PURPOSE**

To report on performance as at September 2021 against measures in Council's Operational Plan 2021/22.

#### **DISCUSSION**

Mark Jones, Executive Manager Strategy and Performance addressed the meeting.

The Committee discussed projections post-COVID. M Jones noted that the expectation is that trends we currently see with carparks and pools will pick up once restrictions ease on 15 December 2021.

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#### **COMMITTEE RESOLUTION**

The Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee noted the report.

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### **7.2 CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT**

#### **PURPOSE**

To provide the Committee with an update on the Northern Beaches Council's continuous improvement program and the roll out of the new governance structure to oversee and improve project, strategy and program initiation and management across Council.

#### **DISCUSSION**

Mark Jones, Executive Manager Strategy and Performance addressed the meeting.

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#### **COMMITTEE RESOLUTION**

The Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee noted the progress of Council's continuous improvement programs and roll out of the new Governance Structure for projects.

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### **7.3 REVIEW OF COUNCIL'S INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK**

#### **PURPOSE**

To advise the committee of the Office of Local Government's new requirements for Integrated Planning and Reporting (IPR), and the process being undertaken by Council to review its suite of IPR documents for the incoming Council term.

#### **DISCUSSION**

Michael McDermid, Manager Corporate Strategy addressed the meeting.

The Committee discussed the challenges of implementing the new framework and what this would mean for the incoming Council. M McDermid noted that although there were more reporting headings, there was no change in the volume of documentation that Council has to deliver.

M McDermid noted that this piece of work had been factored into the councillor induction program, a new engagement framework is already on public exhibition, and the existing framework is in place making Council well positioned to meet the May 2022 deadline.

---

#### **COMMITTEE RESOLUTION**

The Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee noted the report.

---

### **8.0 FRAUD AND RISK MANAGEMENT**

#### **8.1 GOVERNANCE AND RISK MANAGEMENT UPDATE**

##### **PURPOSE**

To provide the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC) with an update on governance, risk management, and compliance activities.

##### **DISCUSSION**

Sarah Dunstan, Executive Manager Governance and Risk, and Rob Koopman, Manager Insurance and Risk addressed the meeting.

The Committee discussed the compliance system and subscription service and whether it covered the broad obligations placed on Council. S Dunstan provided details of the subscription service and risk based approach Council took for inclusion in the centralised system. R Koopman confirmed the unit also produced a monthly compliance update sourced from public information and government websites.

The Committee provided feedback on the draft Legislative Compliance Policy for consideration in particular to reduce the review cycle from 4 years to provide for an earlier review if circumstances changed. S Dunstan noted that could be accommodated under Council's Policy Framework which provides a Council policy must be reviewed at least every 4 years or earlier if required.

---

**COMMITTEE RESOLUTION**

The Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee:

1. Noted the governance, risk management and compliance update.
  2. Approved the extension to 30 June 2022 to conclude the management actions relating to the Compliance Framework audit, being, a review of the Legislative Compliance Policy.
  3. Approved the extension to 30 June 2022 to conclude the management actions relating to the Councillor Expenses audit, being, a review of the Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policy.
- 

Note: The meeting adjourned at 3:32pm until 3:40pm

**9.0 SPECIAL AGENDA ITEMS****9.1 ANNUAL INVESTMENT POLICY REVIEW****PURPOSE**

To provide the Investment Policy to the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee for review in accordance with that Policy.

**DISCUSSION**

David Walsh, Chief Financial Officer addressed the meeting on the item. D Walsh discussed proposed minor amendments to the Policy that were raised by the public regarding unrelated investments and the Ministerial Investment Order. He noted that the changes proposed are permitted under the Ministerial Order.

The Committee discussed the Investment Policy with regard to the investment information provided in the report, in particular:

- levels / amounts invested with single institutions – M McCoy and R Amon expressed strong concern the portfolio was not conservative enough
- phasing of investments
- the reduction in unrated funds in the portfolio
- performance of term deposits
- returns on capital

D Walsh provided detailed advice in relation to the matters raised and the CEO noted Council would discuss the comments raised by the Committee with Council's investment advisors.

Cr Amon & Mr McCoy noted while they were not in support of the Investment Policy in its current form it would be a matter for the Council to determine.

---

**COMMITTEE RESOLUTION**

The Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee:

1. Noted the review of the Investment Policy.
  2. Approved the proposed minor amendments to the Policy.
  3. Requested that the ARIC's concerns be relayed to the Council to assist its deliberations.
-

- 
4. Endorsed a report to Council detailing the proposed changes to the revised policy and placing it on public exhibition to ensure appropriate community consultation.
- 

## **9.2 WORK HEALTH & SAFETY AND INJURY MANAGEMENT UPDATE JULY 2020 TO JUNE 2021**

### **PURPOSE**

To provide the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee with an update on Work Health & Safety and Workers Compensation at Northern Beaches Council.

### **DISCUSSION**

Amy Noakes, Executive Manager Human Resources addressed the meeting.

A Noakes provided advice regarding the drivers behind Workers Compensation Performance being over budget in 2020-21 including an increase in complex claims, psychological injury claims, resourcing challenges (which have been addressed) and COVID related delays to treatment which impacted return to work dates.

A Noakes noted that work is underway for an improvement plan for claims management and an audit is scheduled.

The Committee queried whether the psychological injury claims were an indication of a systemic issue. The CEO noted that the Chief Executive Team routinely review all claims and no pattern has been identified.

---

### **COMMITTEE RESOLUTION**

That the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee noted the update as at June 2021.

---

## **10.0 EXTERNAL AUDIT**

### **10.1 AUDIT OFFICE CLOSING REPORT AND MANAGEMENT LETTER FOR THE 2020/21 FINANCIAL YEAR**

#### **PURPOSE**

To provide the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee with the Audit Office of NSW Engagement Closing Report and Management Letter for the year ended 30 June 2021 for their review.

#### **DISCUSSION**

Karen Taylor, Director of NSW Financial Audit Services addressed the meeting.

K Taylor advised that there were no new matters relating to the closing report and all financial management points have been addressed. K Taylor commended Council for doing an excellent job.

K Taylor provided the Committee with an overview of the Audit Office's next Performance Audit Program including a focus on business continuity and service, grants administration, development application processes in local councils, the E-Planning portal and building regulation relating to

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cladding.

---

### COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

The Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee noted the Audit Office of NSW Management Letter on the Audit for the year ended 30 June 2021 and the 2021 Engagement Closing Report.

---

## 11.0 INTERNAL AUDIT

### 11.1 INTERNAL AUDIT UPDATE REPORT

#### PURPOSE

To provide an update to the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee on all aspects of Internal Audit work since the September meeting.

#### DISCUSSION

Deirdre Cooper, Executive Manager Internal Audit and Complaints Resolution, and Campbell Pfeiffer, Executive Manager Property addressed the meeting.

#### Temporary Staff Contingent

The Committee discussed the number of temporary staff noting contingency hires are an expensive way to source staff for a significant period of time. The CEO advised that some of those roles can be challenging to recruit permanently and the incoming Council will be given the opportunity to review this as part of the service review and will have input into which of the roles can be made permanent in accordance with the service levels they wish to adopt.

#### Outdoor Dining Compliance

The Committee sought clarification of the management response in relation to the report, in particular the degree of residual risk. C Pfeiffer provided background to the response including resourcing and the systems in place respond to the non-compliance complaints via rangers and other means. C Pfeiffer advised the vast majority of licensees are compliant. He noted issues can arise with new applicants where they may misunderstand requirements but respond positively when approached by Council.

#### Golf Course

S Cain-Frost provided an update on the audit regarding contracts for golf courses and Lakeside Holiday Park.

---

### COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

The Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee noted the report.

---

**11.2 UPDATE ON ACTIONS FROM INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT ON COUNCIL'S  
DEVELOPMENT CONTRIBUTIONS (AUG 2020)****PURPOSE**

To update the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee on the status of the thirteen recommendations from the Audit Report on Council's Development Contributions Area (August 2020) and to seek an extension to complete one recommendation as a consequence of new reforms by the Department of Planning, Industry & Environment.

**DISCUSSION**

Deirdre Cooper, Executive Manager Internal Audit and Complaints Resolution addressed the meeting.

The Committee noted the report.

---

**COMMITTEE RESOLUTION**

The Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee noted the completion of twelve recommendations of the Audit Report on Council's Development Contributions Area (August 2020) and supported the request for an extension in time for Recommendation 3 to be completed by 30 June 2022.

---

**11.3 COMPLAINTS RESOLUTION TEAM UPDATE REPORT****PURPOSE**

To present to the Audit Risk and Improvement Committee information relating to complaints received, including alleged breaches of the Code of Conduct, complaints made under the Public Interest Disclosures Act 1994 (PID), and referrals to or from the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) and the NSW Ombudsman.

**DISCUSSION**

Jeff Smith, Director Corporate and Legal, and Deirdre Cooper, Executive Manager Internal Audit and Complaints Resolution addressed the meeting.

D Cooper noted a slight rise in staff related complaints, and potential drivers of the increase.

J Smith presented an analysis of complaint numbers and categories for complaints reported directly to the Office of Local Government (OLG). The analysis included a comparison of Northern Beaches Council and other local Councils. 1.7% of complaints to OLG related to Northern Beaches Council.

---

**COMMITTEE RESOLUTION**

The Audit Risk and Improvement Committee noted the report from the Executive Manager Internal Audit & Complaints Resolution.

---

## 12.0 GENERAL BUSINESS

### 12.1 PROPOSED MEETING SCHEDULE - 2022

#### PURPOSE

To seek adoption of the proposed meeting schedule for 2022 for the Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee.

#### DISCUSSION

Alternative dates for the 1 March and 6 December are to be circulated out of session.

#### ACTION ITEMS

*That the Executive Manager Governance & Risk settle times out of session for the March and December 2022 meetings.*

---

#### COMMITTEE RESOLUTION

The Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee confirmed the 2022 meeting schedule for the June and September meetings with dates to be settled out of session for March and December.

Meeting Date	Business Papers Available	Time
7 June	31 May	2pm
An extraordinary meeting in early September is to be determined		
13 September	6 September	2pm

---

### 12.2 AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

#### PURPOSE

To discuss with the Committee the proposed agenda items for the next meeting.

#### DISCUSSION

Noted.

## 13.0 NEXT MEETING

To be confirmed.

Note: The meeting closed at 4:57pm



We are a local community  
organisation that fosters  
future well-being and  
supports people in need.

COMMUNITY NORTHERN BEACHES  
**ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021**



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Clockwise from top: **Health Minister, Brad Hazzard's** visit with James Griffin, Member for Manly, Adele Heasman (President) and **Community Northern Beaches** and Taldemunde Staff; **NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian** with James Griffin, Member for Manly, John Kelly and Anona Le Page; **Jacqui Smith**, previous Community Northern Beaches Manager with **Adele Heasman** (President).

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## INTRODUCTION

### OUR ABC'S

#### WE ARE AVAILABLE

We're available and willing to help. We give face-to-face, quality time to guests of our drop-in centre. We have an open door policy that allows anyone to access our services. This is what communities should be like: inclusive, regardless of background or circumstance. To make this possible, the majority of services are free. This allows us to reach out to those doing it tough, and support the most marginalised members of our community.

#### WE ARE BUILDERS

We are builders of community, committed to growing and strengthening relationships amongst people and organisations. A huge part of this work involves targeted early intervention and empowering people to have more positive pathways in life. It's a big, long-term task we cannot do by ourselves and the reason we work collaboratively with members of the community and other organisations.

#### WE CARE ABOUT COMMUNITY

We do what we do because we care about people and believe that individuals flourish within community. We are all worthy of love and belonging. A resilient and healthy community empowers its members, sees strength in diversity, preserves people from isolation, creates a safety net and protects the vulnerable.

## INTRODUCTION

### EXECUTIVE



Patron James Griffin  
MP for Manly



Patron Michael Regan  
Mayor of Northern Beaches Council

INTRODUCTION  
**EXECUTIVE**



**Adele Heasman**  
President



**Caroline Pearce**  
Secretary



**Phyl Jelinek**  
Volunteer Representative



**Paula James**  
Counselling Representative



**Kandy Tagg**  
Vice President



**Bill Barnes**  
Treasurer



**Sally Cornelius**  
Committee Member



**Peter Wood**  
Committee Member

Executive not pictured  
**John O'Connor**  
Public Officer

## INTRODUCTION

### OUR STAFF

#### Executive Director

John Kelly

#### Executive Manager Domestic Violence & Welfare

Anona Le Page

#### Case Manager Domestic Violence & Mental Health

Dani Allen

#### Domestic Violence & Welfare Officer

Belinda Verhagen

#### Manager Homeless Services

Daniel Peterson

#### Homeless Outreach Worker

Rebecca Harris

#### Homeless Outreach Worker

Amy Williams

#### Manager Volunteer Services

Jaz Smith

#### Manager Family, Child and Youth

Jan Schatz

#### Manager Community Engagement

Sera Kumeroa

#### Manager Multicultural Services

Sandra Simendic

#### Manager Venue Hire and Administration

Tina Hicks

#### Settlement Case Worker

Dhondup Yultse

#### Bookkeeper

Carlie Risk

### VOLUNTEERS

#### Volunteer Representative

Phyl Jelinek

#### Specialist Volunteers

Jan Houghton – Grants & fundraising

Carmel McCarney – Social Media

Julia Denne – Multicultural support

Jennifer Herring – Homework club

Paul Hobkirk – Homework club

Tara McConnell – Homework club

Caitlin Bennett – Homework club

Lynda Stokes – OzHarvest

Sally Gilmore – OzHarvest

Bee Smith – OzHarvest

Kym Fowler – Corporate Support

Eve Harvey – Supported Playgroup

Phyl Jelinek – ESL Mentoring Coordinator

ESL Mentors x 40 (a wonderful contribution)

Choedak Gyatso - Multicultural

Paul Groen - Driving Program

Eric Jelinek - Driving Program

Derek Crocker - Driving Program

Ron Campanaro - Driving Program

Ravinder Soin - Driving Program

Samdrup Jehru - Driving Program

Chris Meehan - Driving Program

Jason Ho - Tax Help

Anne Kennedy - General

## INTRODUCTION

#### Front Desk Volunteers Manly

Amy Williams

Angela Reid

Barbara Gallacher

Bonnie Redman

Carol Paterson

Carmen Russo

Chrissie King

Colleen Miller

Helen Wilding

Jean Nass

Jeannette Lambert

Jennifer Richards

Jess Meadows

Jill Milford

Katrine Whittle

Kellie van Stratum

Kerri Lenehan

Nora Takats

Pip Bakker

Robyn Gold

Sarah Day

Sarah Freeman

Shelly Bates

Sue Kenney

Tara McConnell

Tess Tracy

Vanessa Hilliard

Verity Nolan

Vivianne Band

#### Front Desk Volunteers Brookvale

Gilbert East

Jasmine Nicholson

Maisa Rodrigues

Sarah Bradley

Sue Fraser

#### The Clontarf Sisterhood including

Carmel McCarney

Bonnie Redman

Pippa Stuart

Meriel Frost

Sarah Day

Phyl Jelinek (ESL Programme)

#### Students

TAFE

Northern Beaches Community College



Volunteer Jasmine and Volunteer Manager Jaz at Brookvale Multicultural Service reception



## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND MANAGEMENT

### PRESIDENT'S REPORT

#### ADELE HEASMAN PRESIDENT

It is with great pride that I present to you my President's Report for the Financial Year of 2020/2021 for Community Northern Beaches.

This past financial year has been the most tumultuous in the history of Community Northern Beaches since we began in the humblest of beginnings more than 40 years ago as the Manly Community Centre.

Not only have we consolidated our move to 52 Raglan Street and settled in very well, but the staff and volunteers have responded to not one but two lockdowns in response to the COVID-19 pandemic during this financial year. The Management Committee is indebted to our amazing staff led by the indefatigable Executive Director John Kelly, and his Deputy Director Anona Le Page, combined with the dedication of our ever-compassionate volunteers. This has meant our clients (including victims of Domestic Violence and the homeless) whom we serve, have not missed a day of service as Community Northern Beaches has remained open to assist their needs.

Nonnie and Dani Allen have been instrumental in supporting an increasing level of complex domestic violence cases on the Beaches. This work is confronting and often faces many institutional barriers. I know that Nonnie is deeply grateful for the expertise and diligence of Dani in her role, which also supports homelessness and mental health.

Could I also acknowledge the dedication of the Management Committee and thank our Treasurer Bill Barnes for his extraordinary work (with Carlie Risk our bookkeeper) juggling the various Jobkeeper programs during the pandemic; the support of my Vice President Kandy Tagg and our Secretary Caroline Pearce, as well as the remaining members of the Committee. You will be pleased to know we work hard together to provide the leadership and a governance model so necessary for an organisation such as Community Northern Beaches.

I would like to particularly acknowledge this year the work of our volunteers, especially in these challenging times, supported by the Manager, Volunteering - Jaz Smith. No task is too large or difficult – they work with a smile and cheerful disposition to all who enter 52 Raglan Street. This year we said farewell to two volunteers with a combined 26 years' service between them; Jill Milford and Barbara Gallacher. A special thanks to those other volunteers who have also left us.

Our Homeless Outreach team led by Daniel Peterson, and ably supported by Rebecca Harris and Amy Williams, has worked tremendously well to ensure a large number of long term homeless have found and retained permanent accommodation. They continue to work diligently to support those still struggling without a home.

Jan Schatz, our Manager – Family, Child & Youth, maintained for the most part under Covid our Love Bites, Supported Playgroup and Beyond the Gloves programs. These services are invaluable and make a real difference to the lives of our younger community members.

Tina Hicks took on the added responsibility of managing the Brookvale Community Centre when two of the buildings were transferred to CNB for community hire purposes from Council. Through Tina's efforts we were able to increase the community use of these spaces, although much like our main office in Manly, Covid restrictions have played havoc with our ability to offer spaces regularly.

Sera Kumeroa has continued to lead our grants, donations, and fundraising efforts to new heights. This is critical to the continued future for CNB.

The overwhelming generosity of the community during the period has meant CNB has been inundated with material donations. Thanks must go to Belinda Verhagen for her efforts in facilitating these donations and storing them for our clients' use.

I would like to take this opportunity to gratefully acknowledge the funding we receive from all three levels of government which enables us to provide the services we do every day. Funding for our invaluable Federal Government Settlement Program run by Sandra Simendic and Dhondup Yultse; the NSW Department of Communities & Justice for our wide range of community focused programs, and our valued long-term partnership with Northern Beaches Council.

Finally, can I thank our most generous supporters who this past financial year have gone above and beyond our expectations regarding financial donations as well as donations of clothing and food during the lockdowns. A team of dedicated walkers conquered the Larapinta Track in a window of opportunity in May this year, raising funds far in excess of our expectations! The work of Community Northern Beaches has gone far and wide in our community and we are very grateful.

Our vision that we at Community Northern Beaches are **available**, are **builders** and that we care about **community** was never truer this financial year.



Adele Heasman  
President

Thank you for your ongoing and continued support of the work of Community Northern Beaches which we believe is invaluable in our community.

The work of Community Northern Beaches has gone far and wide in our community and we are very grateful.

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND MANAGEMENT

### TREASURER'S REPORT

#### BILL BARNES TREASURER

I'm pleased to report that Community Northern Beaches Inc. continues to operate in a financially sound and responsible manner and that we should have no trouble in meeting our foreseeable expenses.

With the continuation of the Australian Government's Economic Response to the Coronavirus financial support (e.g. JobKeeper) during 2020/21 we were able to continue operating fairly normally. These funds were a tremendous benefit in providing some certainty of income. However, not being able to maximise the potential of our new premises at Raglan St, Manly (after moving there in July) to generate our own income was very difficult and frustrating. Late in the financial year we also took over management of the Brookvale Community Centre and plan to raise additional income there in future.

We were surprised, delighted and extremely grateful to the many organisations and individuals who made financial donations during the year, especially in stressful times when pandemic restrictions were being applied. Our thanks particularly go to Echo Hill Vineyard and Macquarie Bank, Elizabeth Copeland, Hare Family Trust, OBay Capital, and the Matthew Trainor Family Trust. Special thanks to Georgie Furze for her fantastic effort in her 24 Hour Beach Walk. An intrepid group of adventurers put their bodies on the line and raised significant funds through the Larapinta Adventure Challenge – this was our major source of community donations so a big thanks to all! A special mention goes to the Member for Manly, James Griffin, who arranged a considerable donation from NSW Department of Health. A number of individuals made monthly or multiple donations and we are very appreciative. Thank you to Dee Why RSL Club and Rotary Club of Balgowlah for their support.

My personal thanks go to my fellow Management Committee members for their commitment, expertise, and common sense approach; to our Executive Director and staff for their hard work and

dedication to the welfare of the Centre's clients; and to our wonderful volunteers without whom things would not operate as effectively as they do.

#### Income

Australian and State government "normal" funding and grants provided for 41% of our income for the year. The Economic Response to the Coronavirus support (as above) amounted to 26% of total income. We are grateful to Northern Beaches Council for their significant support. Our thanks go to Zali Steggall, Federal Member for Warringah, for facilitating some grants. As mentioned, the pandemic severely impacted our ability to raise funds by hiring space in our premises to other service providers and community groups and this only amounted to 4% of total income this year (compared to around 11% in previous years).

#### Expenditure

The services and programs we run to support our clients represented about 85% of total expenses for the year. Continual efforts are made to minimise operating costs and to use our funds in the most effective way possible.

#### Future Challenges

We look forward to the time when we can utilise the full capacity of the premises at Manly and Brookvale to raise income and provide services. Our funding agreement with the NSW Department of Communities & Justice is in place until June 2025. The funding agreement with Settlement Services International for our multicultural services is due for re-negotiation in mid-2022. Both these sources of main funding carry a similar risk of future events affecting their renewal. Should this funding not be renewed at the same level we have a specific reserve of funds to allow existing services to continue for approximately three months whilst other arrangements are sought – this reserve is increased each year as circumstances allow.

My personal thanks go to my fellow Management Committee members for their commitment, expertise, and common sense approach; to our Executive Director and staff for their hard work and dedication to the welfare of the Centre's clients; and to our wonderful volunteers without whom things would not operate as effectively as they do.



Bill Barnes  
Treasurer



Carlie Risk  
Bookkeeper

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND MANAGEMENT

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

#### JOHN KELLY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

A real sense of déjà vu is my first thought when writing my report this year. Still our work is difficult enough and the lives of our clients even more so, so let's dwell on the positives!

Again our wonderful community has stepped up to support us financially, through material support, and by sharing our social media posts and providing positive comments and 'likes'. It has been quite overwhelming both financially and emotionally to receive the donations we have this year. Only a few short years ago the quantum of donations we have received would have been the stuff of dreams. However the hard work of staff and volunteers has resonated with the community and has provided such a significant boost for us in more than just pure dollars.

Although they will also get a mention later in the Annual Report, I am so appreciative of Frank Lobb, Madelaine Storey, Phillipa Furey (all regular weekly donors), The Hare Family Trust, Obay Capital, Jonathan McCauley, Matthew Peter Trainor Family Trust, Balgowlah Rotary, Manly Lions, Echo Hills Wines, Macquarie Bank, and Liz Copeland for sizeable and life changing donations through the year.

While on financial support I can't go past the Larapinta Trail Adventure (finally) held in June 2021 in the Northern Territory. The single, biggest fundraiser CNB has ever had with over \$63,000 raised by 18 very intrepid hikers who I must say (as I was one) had a life-changing and simply wonderful experience walking through the desert of a rugged and immensely beautiful part of Australia. None of us can wait for next year's adventure and I'm sure that our photos and stories will see more people want to join in not just for a great cause but a wonderful adventure.

The 27 July 2020 marked our move into a new premise at 52 Raglan Street, Manly. Oh boy what a change from Wentworth Street. Do we miss the rats, dust, noise, or cramped conditions? Nah. Again our thanks to Northern Beaches Council for their support in providing a modern office and

amenities that allow us to service our local community.

We continue to innovate with our service delivery and push well above the level of Government funding we receive. Beyond the Gloves is a wonderful example of an in-house program designed to support teenage girls with their fitness (boxing) but also how they perceive themselves, manage relationships and develop life skills. We look forward to developing this program further for schools, including boy's schools, so that teens receive support and skills that can make a difference for them.

I would like to thank my staff for their continued vital efforts to support our community. They go above and beyond what they are paid to do for their clients. It is impossible to properly describe just how they do this, and the extra effort they put in, given the space I have, but it is immense, and it should be recognized and appreciated. Lives are changed for the better because my staff fight tooth and nail to secure a person's future, often against bureaucratic inertia and indifference. Why are the biggest barriers for marginalized persons to overcome often put in place by the very institutions supposed to support them. I call it the Public Service Mentality Conundrum! Perhaps whatever level of Government could provide a grant for a scientist to test this theory. The results might shock!

A big thankyou to our volunteers, who cover so many key areas of support not just for our work but for the community they serve through their amazing efforts. Love you all. A big part of this is the work of our Management Committee who help steer the ship, often through rocky and murky waters.

A big thankyou to our volunteers, who cover so many key areas of support not just for our work but for the community they serve through their amazing efforts.



John Kelly  
Executive Director



Volunteer Mid Year Morning Tea



## CORE SERVICES

### DOMESTIC VIOLENCE & WELFARE SERVICE

#### ANONA LE PAGE EXECUTIVE MANAGER DOMESTIC VIOLENCE & WELFARE DANI ALLEN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND MENTAL HEALTH CASE MANAGER

History has repeated itself due to Covid 19, keeping us operating under various degrees of restrictions and intermittent lockdown periods. As an organisation providing essential service, we were required to remain open to provide face to face crisis and welfare assistance for our community. Fine tuning our protocols during the last 12 months we have remained open with a reduced team and focused on the more urgent needs of our clients, while continuing to provide general welfare support to the wider community. Our Domestic Violence Support Service provides the only drop-in facility on the Northern Beaches and North Shore. To keep our doors open we exercised continued flexibility with working hours extending to out of hours and on call, offering phone referrals and advocacy when face to face was not possible.

Domestic and Family Violence is complex and under identified as gender-based violence. Often dismissed if there is no physical violence - we are becoming more educated and aware of the breadth of it. Coercive Control and financial abuse are now being recognised for the pervasive and traumatic damage they wreak on our clients who have lived experience.

- 1 in 3 Australian women over 15 years old is physically abused by a current or former male partner
- 1 in 4 women have experienced sexual violence from a current or former male partner
- 1 in 5 pregnant women are abused physically or emotionally by a partner
- 1 woman dies almost every week at the hands of a current or former partner
- Over 300 Domestic Violence assaults are reported in our service area over one year
- 200 Apprehended Domestic Violence Orders are issued on average per year in our area, with over a third of these breached

Coercive Control legislation is currently being finalised by the NSW Government and we are

hoping to see this to be ratified before the end of 2021. Coercive Control is a criminal offence in many other countries and sadly Australia has been lagging behind. We hope to see this important change implemented very soon.

#### WHAT WE DO AT COMMUNITY NORTHERN BEACHES

Our Domestic and Family Violence Support Service offers immediate assistance either face-to-face or on the phone. We offer a wrap-around, integrated service to clients which includes triaging and safety assessments, referrals for legal and financial assistance, crisis accommodation and safety plans. Case management and ongoing support is an integral part of our DV service for these most vulnerable of clients.

One example of the clients we help and advocate for:

*Mary\* suffered chronic and horrific physical violence by her ex-partner over several years. He repeatedly breached the Apprehended Violence Orders put in place to protect her. On one occasion of breach, she covertly recorded him shouting abuse and threats to kill her. This was used by the Police Prosecutor in his sentencing hearing. The impact of this recording was significant evidence and a chilling insight into the horrific trauma Mary endured at the hands of this perpetrator.*

*The Magistrate convicted him of assault, stalking, intimidation, intent, fear of physical harm, property damage and multiple contraventions of his AVO, giving two nine-month prison sentences to be served in the community under an Intensive Corrections Order. This was to be managed by Hornsby Community Corrections. The Magistrate instructed him to report in person to Hornsby Community Corrections within 7 days. Following up we were horrified to learn that this violent perpetrator had reported by phone and told HCC that he was moving to Queensland. As a result of this, HCC suspended his supervision orders and stated that he had no further reporting obligations.*

## CORE SERVICES

*This is a perfect and all too frequent example of the system failing victims. Mary is suffering from severe PTSD and this violent man gets to have a new life, potentially free to perpetrate again.*

\* Mary is a pseudonym.

Who has the consequences here? It is a broken system. We are continually battling the justice system on behalf of these victims. Domestic Violence is just not taken seriously enough.

Anona and Dani are both members of Northern Beaches Domestic Violence Committee. In past years we have collectively run the White Ribbon Breakfast and Domestic Violence Beach Walk during the annual 16 Days of Activism, however Covid restrictions have not allowed this in 2021. Our provision of seconded worker support at court to the Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service (WDVCAS) has been on hold since COVID-19 restrictions but we continue to provide frequent remote support. We attend other various Interagency meetings including Northern Beaches Mental Health Interagency and the Women's Crisis Accommodation Working Group.

**Building Blocks** workshops are run throughout the year as a 6-8 week program designed specifically for women in dysfunctional relationships. This program is facilitated by the counsellor, Frankie van den Hoek with support from the CNB DV team. The workshops cover grief and loss, self-esteem, healthy boundaries, assertive communication, conflict resolution strategies, and realistic goals. The increasing numbers of attendees and positive outcomes that we have witnessed in the lives of our clients is testament to the power of this program.

Our mission is to continue to improve our Domestic Violence Service, recognising that the need is on our doorstep, but the footprint is global and the only way to help is to assist one woman at a time wherever we can. We must never underestimate the power of human connection and community. By believing and offering hope and unconditional positive regard for our clients, we can make such a difference to their lives.



Dani Allen Case Manager  
Domestic Violence & Mental Health



Anona Le Page Executive Manager  
Domestic Violence & Welfare



Belinda Verhagen  
Welfare Officer

## CORE SERVICES

### HOMELESS OUTREACH SERVICE

#### DANIEL PETERSON MANAGER HOMELESS SERVICES

Community Northern Beaches acts to prevent and reduce homelessness in the Northern Beaches. The Homeless Outreach Service exists to support anyone experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness, with a focus on people who have fallen through the cracks. People unable to engage with available support due to poor health, feelings of disempowerment or failure to meet program criteria need our service the most.

The crisis drop-in and provision of material aid provide strategic opportunities for our small team of three part-time workers to proactively befriend guests and identify their specific needs. Six to ten people access the Service each day (including both existing and new clients). A total of 65 new homelessness cases were added to the client database this year along with 46 assertive outreach referrals. Significant time is allocated to responding to reports of people sleeping rough (by conducting assertive outreach) from Northern Beaches Council, NSW Police, local business owners and the public. The Service welcomes referrals. In addition, regular outreach visits are carried out by the team to known hotspots with a speculative approach to identifying people affected by homelessness. Periodic foot patrols are carried out by workers in the Manly CBD, where rough sleeping is most prevalent within the region. All interactions are invaluable to building connections and can translate into substantial outcomes such as securing accommodation, finding employment and pursuing mental health recovery.

Each individual's circumstances are unique; therefore, a one-size-fits-all approach does not work (and can even exacerbate existing problems). Our clients' experiences are complex and layered with compound factors. Many have not just experienced one crisis. In these cases, a significant investment of time is devoted to cultivating trust. This involves acknowledging, validating, and building connections with the person behind the presenting issues. Once this foundation is established, we encourage engagement, help remove obstacles to accessing essential support services and empower people in their recovery. Successful engagement depends on

the team being non-judgemental and kind, ensuring that clients feel respected, valued, seen, and understood. Our team always applies a client-centred, strengths-based, trauma-informed approach and cares for the needs of clients from a holistic perspective. We seek to be available to clients for as long as it takes. Perseverance, commitment, and a non-linear approach are required to ensure our clients are cared for. Writing people off as disengaged would mean that the sector (and society) has failed in its duty to support the most vulnerable members of our community as they have no other recourse.

There are many challenges involved in engaging individuals experiencing chronic homelessness who are often affected by significant trauma. Obstacles to engagement include issues such as acute or common mental health issues, loss or bereavement (e.g. loved ones, relationships, home, memorabilia, belongings and documents) and substance or alcohol use. Experiencing homelessness can result in internalised shame, feelings of worthlessness and/or unworthiness and a sense of powerlessness. Many clients are further deterred by bureaucracy, a lack of awareness of available, effective support services, misunderstanding of the housing system or previous negative experiences of individual support workers and/or organisations leading to disaffection, scepticism, and mistrust. Our learnings show that the combination of meaningful connection with a key support worker and a collaborative, housing-first approach is the fastest way to resolve a person's housing crisis.

In addition to attempting to secure accommodation, the team works with clients to overcome obstacles to engagement with services. This can include providing encouragement to seek treatment and facilitating connection to healthcare providers; presenting positive pathways to move forward, including social connections and making referrals to rehabilitation services; listening to and empowering the individual; building confidence and capacity; presenting relevant information about available support; gaining invalua-

## CORE SERVICES

ble consent and providing advocacy; and helping clients to navigate the system.

The Service has played a pivotal role in advocating for and securing priority housing for 23 clients with complex needs in 2020-2021. Extremely limited stock of social and community housing poses a significant challenge to resolving homelessness in the Northern Beaches. This can mean lengthy wait times for applicants, even when on the priority waiting list. This presents serious challenges in maintaining engagement, managing expectations, and mitigating against hopelessness. Despite these challenges, collaboration with Bridge Housing Limited has been very successful. Their team pursues a person-centred approach seeking to be flexible and adaptive to the needs of clients and is responsive to advocacy from the Homeless Outreach Service. This collaboration has been essential to the successful outcomes achieved this year.

Proactively establishing collaborative relationships with multiple agencies is essential to achieving positive outcomes. Our Service participates in the Northern Beaches Homelessness Case Coordination, Northern Beaches Homelessness Interagency, Northern Beaches Mental Health Interagency and the Mental Health Interagency Housing Meeting (MHIHM).

The COVID-19 pandemic presented ongoing challenges for the Homeless Outreach Service. Stay-at-home orders beginning in December 2020 and June 2021 resulted in an urgent drive to provide temporary accommodation to people sleeping rough. As with the first lockdown, the intensity of the enquiries combined with reduction in available services (many organisations reduced service provision and ceased face-to-face support) significantly increased the workload of the service. An additional part-time worker was brought on board one day a week between July and December 2020 in response to increasing needs and available COVID-19 funding.

The Service has experienced a strain in resources due to increasing numbers of people facing homelessness and an entrenched lack of affordable accommodation options. Three local boarding houses in the Northern Beaches closed in the latter part of the year displacing 20+ people into homelessness. Future funding opportunities will be explored to increase our team and expand the Service to better meet the homelessness needs of our community. In addition, advocacy for more affordable, social and community housing remains a priority for the Homeless Outreach Service.



Daniel Peterson  
Manager Homeless Services



Rebecca Harris  
Homeless Outreach Worker



Amy Williams  
Homeless Outreach Worker

## Core Services

## CORE SERVICES

### FAMILY, CHILD AND YOUTH

#### JAN SCHATZ MANAGER FAMILY, CHILD AND YOUTH SERVICE

The primary objective of this service at Community Northern Beaches remains the fulfilment of the Targeted Earlier Intervention (TEI) program funded by the Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ). We ensure our work is programmatic and preventative, aiming to intervene early, particularly with vulnerable children, adolescents, and young families, seeking to build resilience and internal resources at key developmental milestones.

#### SUPPORTED PLAYGROUP

Since September 2017 we have partnered with Integricare to run a free Supported Playgroup for families experiencing determinants of vulnerability with children 0-5 years. This service targets children and/or the parents who are experiencing social exclusion and struggle socially, culturally, economically, or psychologically in various ways. Links, referrals and access to community health and social services are regularly made through the Playgroup.

#### WELLBEING AND EMOTION COACHING PROGRAM

We partner with Relationships Australia to facilitate the 'Emotion Coaching' program developed by DCJ and the Department of Education. This program is run in local primary and high schools across the



Jan Schatz  
Manager Family, Child and Youth Service

Northern Beaches and Sydney Northern District schools. This 'whole day' program is delivered to various cohorts, regularly throughout each school term. The Wellbeing Day program uses fun activities and discussions to teach children and teenagers the good and bad sides of each of their emotions.

This process assists them to accept their whole range of emotions as healthy and valid, whilst reminding them that how they express their feelings is significant in maintaining their resilience and sense of wellbeing.

#### RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS PROGRAM - LOVE BITES

'Love Bites' is an extremely successful school-based Domestic and Family Violence and Sexual Assault prevention program. The program comes at no cost to schools or students and fits within the PDHPE curriculum in NSW. Respectful Relationships Education is a key means of delivering primary prevention programs to young people, to ensure that young people can enjoy relationships that are free from violence and abuse and to achieve generational change at a societal level in the attitudes, norms and behaviours that support or condone gender-based violence.

'Love Bites' is facilitated by local service providers such as sexual assault workers, domestic violence workers, youth workers and police liaison officers. 'Love Bites' consists of two interactive education workshops on Domestic and Family Violence and Sexual Assault and Consent, followed by a creative workshop that consolidates the information from the morning. This program is delivered to year 9 and year 10 students and runs as a whole day program. As the Area Coordinator, since 2018, I have seen our pool of facilitators grow significantly and offer ongoing support and training as we deliver this program across the Beaches and Lower North Shore. This role oversees the planning, preparation and liaising with schools necessary to provide a facilitation day and ensures all resources and content material remains up to date and relevant.

#### YOUTH MENTORING

In collaboration with Raise Foundation, I mentor at Cromer High. This Early Intervention is critical to the solution for young people struggling to cope, dealing with challenges including depression, anxiety, bullying, fear of the future and staying connected and engaged with school.

## CORE SERVICES

### FAMILY, CHILD AND YOUTH

The Youth Mentoring program supports the Australian Student Wellbeing Framework to empower young people to become more resilient, confident, and hopeful for the future.

Volunteer Mentors are matched with a vulnerable, disengaged young person (typically a year 8 or year 9 student) who work together over the 23-week program, for 2 hours per week in school terms 2 and 3. The program is supported and supervised by a degree qualified counsellor. The program concludes with a graduation ceremony.

#### MENTORING YOUNG PARENTS

2020 saw the final year of Raise Foundation's Bump program. The Bump mentoring program which ran across 2 terms for 23 weeks, for pregnant and parenting young women aged between 13 and 23 has been running over the past 12 years, and connects young mums with an experienced mum from the community to mentor and support them during their journey. This program was a fun way to meet other young mums, have much needed "me" time and gain the support of a mentor who had completed the Raise Youth mentoring training.

#### THE YOUTH DRIVING PROGRAM

This is a wonderful partnership with The Beach School in Allambie, and StreetWork where volunteers take students driving to fulfil their logbook hours. These are students who would otherwise not have the opportunity to learn to drive due to personal struggles and complex circumstances.

#### YOGA

Since 2018 we have offered affordable and community spirited Yoga classes, with 50% of the proceeds coming back to Community Northern Beaches to continue our work. This one-hour yoga session is run by our wonderful, qualified volunteer yoga instructor, Simone Larmer. This hour of 'self-care' aims to reduce stress and anxiety, improve mindfulness, nourish wellbeing, and reduce social isolation. The room is provided free of charge by Royal Far West.

#### BEYOND THE GLOVES

Beyond the Gloves is a Boxing/Mentoring program aimed at girls 12-18 years of age, and provides skills to make better, smarter decisions when it comes to their overall wellbeing. The program mentors and educates the girls in developing self-control, emotion regulation, mindfulness, and empowerment through physical exercise.

Workshops provide a working example that teaches the girls how exercise can be a positive outlet when facing the challenges they will come across throughout their lives. Topics covered each week include: Gratitude, Meditation, Motivation/Goal Setting, Fears/Barriers, Eating Clean, Social Media Comparison Issues, Friendships, Confidence, time management and values.

At present, we have 18 girls that attend each week. These participants come from various local high schools, Stella Maris, Mackellar Girls and Pittwater High. Beyond the Gloves runs during term time throughout the year.

Given the demand for the current Tuesday class, we are planning to open another afternoon class during the week, and offer the program to high schools as part of the wellness curriculum. We have been approached by local high schools to explore this option. We are in discussions with The Beach School in Allambie and Balgowlah Boys High. At the beginning of this year, we ran a successful day of Beyond the Gloves at Willoughby Girls High School to their year 12 cohort.

We also hosted 2 sessions of Boxing/Mentoring during Youth Week (16-24th April) in conjunction with Northern Beaches Council.

#### COMMUNITY NETWORKING

I am involved in the following: Treasurer/Secretary Northern Beaches Child & Family Interagency, Professional Development Forum Northern Beaches Child & Family Interagency, Northern Beaches Youth Interagency, Youth Services in Schools Group, and Family support, referrals, advocacy.



CORE SERVICES

**HOMELESS OUTREACH**



Clockwise from top left: Sleep sites in the Northern Beaches

CORE SERVICES

**FAMILY, CHILD AND YOUTH**



Clockwise from top left: Lovebites Respectful Relationships artwork; Beyond the Gloves, Bump Graduation; Supported Playgroup Christmas.

## CORE SERVICES

### VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT & TRAINING SERVICE

#### JAZ SMITH MANAGER VOLUNTEER SERVICES

There are multiple Volunteer Programs at Community Northern Beaches and each one helps support the success of the organisation. These programs continue to grow and evolve to meet the ever-changing needs of the community. Each year, we have over 100 volunteers with a wide range of skills and experience who offer their time and the results are outstanding.

##### Front Desk

Our Front Desk volunteers are the first point of contact for most of our clients and therefore essential to the services we offer. We want to ensure that the experience is both welcoming and productive. Volunteers undertake an induction and have ongoing training so they can address all situations and provide appropriate referrals. This year we have been blessed with a number of qualified Community Services volunteers who are keen to learn more about our operations so that they can eventually offer their experience to a potential employer.

##### Specialist Programs

Our specialist programs vary from organising the delivery of OzHarvest food to assisting with our social media coverage. We also have a wonderful Tax Help volunteer who offers an invaluable service each year. Volunteers with specialist skills enable us to expand our service delivery and this helps us address the specific needs of the community.

##### Student Supervision

We continue to offer placements for students who are completing their Certificate 4 or Diploma in Community Services, to fulfil their workplace obligations. We work with students from both TAFE and Northern Beaches & Mosman College. This commitment ensures that future community services workers can apply practical experience to the knowledge they have acquired.

##### Volunteer Support

Each week, we provide volunteers with an electronic newsletter which covers any new developments and general information. This provides everyone with the Front Desk roster as well as services operating within the service hub. There is an annual review which provides the opportunity for each volunteer to voice their opinion on the role and the service in general.

##### Northern Beaches Volunteer Referral Service

The face of volunteering has changed dramatically during the pandemic, and it is imperative to keep abreast of which organisations have suspended their volunteer programs and what new programs have been created as a result of ensuing loneliness. Workshops were suspended with the need to socially distance and each enquiry was dealt with on an individual basis. It soon became evident that people were still keen to donate their efforts so long as it was in line with the NSW Health guidelines.

##### Multicultural Programs

Working with the Multicultural Manager and the Settlement Case Worker we offer three main programs within this service. The first is our enormously successful English as a Second Language Mentoring Program which has seen over 120 students paired one-on-one with volunteers for a 'walk and talk' session. This allows the students to guide the direction of each session with their mentor and work on their own outcomes.

The second program is our Multicultural Homework Club where qualified teachers offer their time to help children whose parents have English as a second language and are therefore struggling with completing their homework. We have formal tuition as well as several volunteers listening to the children read.

The third program is our Tibetan Driving Program which offers driving lessons with volunteer instructors. We continue to see clients pass their

## CORE SERVICES

driving test which often leads to employment opportunities.

##### Family, Youth and Child Programs

Volunteers add value across most of our services and this is no exception. Our Supported Playgroup has volunteers assist with setting up the play area and activities with the children whilst staff engage with the parents who need help with parenting skills. This enables the staff to interact with the parents who often need one-on-one assistance.

Along with the Manager of this service, we collaborate with Raise Foundation to offer Youth Mentoring. At high schools across the Northern Beaches volunteers assist young people with a range of issues, allowing them to be heard, valued and supported, subtly addressing underlying issues. The youth are then better able to deal with future challenges.

The Youth Driving Program is now in its second year and has seen two participants pass their test and take up a trade. Part of this program is our collaboration with The Beach School in Allambie, where volunteers take students driving to improve



Jaz Smith  
Manager Volunteer Services

skills and experience whilst fulfilling mandatory logbook hours. We have more recently collaborated with clients from both StreetWork and Manly Sea Eagles.

##### OTHER ROLES

##### Volunteer Managers Interagency

On a quarterly basis, I host a gathering of volunteer managers from local Not-for-Profit organisations on the beaches, to ensure that we are all up to date with best practice for volunteer standards. We also discuss current opportunities for prospective volunteers.

##### Love Bites Facilitator

Four times a year, I assist the team with facilitating the Love Bites Respectful Relationships course to High Schools within the area.

##### Justice of the Peace

As a serving JP, I also complete this duty as a service to the community.

“The experience of helping others provides meaning, a sense of self-worth, a social role and health enhancement. Volunteering is highly associated with greater health and happiness.”

Volunteering Australia

## CORE SERVICES

### MULTICULTURAL SERVICES

#### SANDRA SIMENDIC MANAGER MULTICULTURAL SERVICE DHONDUP YULTSE SETTLEMENT CASE WORKER

Our long-serving Manager, Maria Chidzey, retired in July 2020. Maria has been a fantastic contributor to our service over many years. In fact, Maria's contribution to Multicultural Services in this country has been considerable. We thank Maria for her terrific work with Community Northern Beaches and we know she will continue to advocate for and support our community.

#### SANDRA'S INTRODUCTION

I am so fortunate to have the opportunity to work for an amazing organisation such as Community Northern Beaches. I joined CNB in September 2021 and was welcomed into the role by Dhondup and Barbara Bice, who was covering a period between Maria's retirement and my commencement. I am very grateful to both for a smooth transition, support and a warm welcome. Although we operate from a different site to the Manly office; Brookvale Community Centre, I straight away felt accepted as part of the team; both staff and volunteers are kind and very passionate about their work and the community's greater good.

I have been working in the community welfare industry for 17 years in the Northern Beaches in a variety of roles such as a Multicultural Carers Program, Community Information Program, CALD Social Support Program and Aged and Disability Services. Being of a refugee migrant background myself, this role is close to my heart. I have first-hand life experience that relates to our client's stories and settlement experiences, learning the language, developing social connections, acquiring qualification, and gaining employment.

I feel very passionate about facilitating positive changes in our client's settlement journey.

#### Multicultural Services Funding

We are one of 21 partners of The NSW Settlement Partnership. (NSP) is a consortium of community organisations, led by Settlement Services International, delivering settlement services in NSW under the Department of Home Affairs' Settlement

Engagement and Transition Support (SETS) program.

The SETS program aims to equip and empower humanitarian entrants, other eligible permanent migrants, and their communities in their first five years in Australia. It addresses their settlement needs to improve social participation, economic well-being, independence, personal well-being and community connectedness.

The program seeks to provide for effective early intervention that contributes to clients achieving full participation in society as soon as possible and has a key role in facilitating acquisition of English language skills, supporting engagement with education and training, and building employment readiness with services complementing other settlement and mainstream services.

#### Services and Programs

The number of new clients accessing the service for the first time has reduced in the last year. This is due to the global pandemic and very limited numbers of new arrivals allowed to enter Australia. There is a significant number of refugees and humanitarian entrants who have been granted Australian visas but can't travel to Australia. These people are stuck in holding countries waiting to be allowed to travel. The concern is the longer that refugees are left in that state of limbo and not able to get access to a solution to their displacement, the more vulnerable they become, the more years lost in terms of education for children and healthcare for those that need it.

Despite this, we still have a significant number of clients accessing our services. We have seen the increase in need for support in applying for government assistance and payments. In addition, clients were assisted with applications for citizenship and preparation for the citizenship test, documentation e.g., correction of date of birth and name assistance, employment support, housing, and referrals to the appropriate services.

## CORE SERVICES

**Homework Club** continued to be a well utilised service. Run by our long-standing volunteer Jenny Herringer, and assisted by Paul Hobkirk and Tara McConnell, the program helped 18 children with their homework and reading over the year.

**ESL Program** successfully continued with the dedicated work of the volunteer ESL Program Coordinator Phyl Jelinek. Thirty-eight clients matched with volunteer teachers for English conversation in an informal setting. This program facilitated many beautiful friendships, which is hugely beneficial for our client to successfully integrate into the local community and make their settlement experience easier and more enjoyable.

**The Swimming Program** in collaboration with Water Skills for Life has accommodated 77 clients to learn to swim. Two of the Tibetan clients who learnt to swim through this program are being trained to become volunteer swimming instructors.

**The Driving Program** remains a strong asset in assisting the clients in learning to drive and gaining the driving licence. Seven volunteers are actively involved in this program and Manly Lions Club is greatly supporting the maintenance of the car. The car has received a makeover and has the CNB and Manly Lions Club signage.

We also partnered with the Platinum Driving School through the assistance of a NSW Transport grant, to provide much needed professional driving tuition. As a result, fifteen clients gained their driving licence, which is a great pathway to employment.

**Tax Help Program** is a yearly seasonal July-October service. Our volunteer Jason Ho assisted 32 clients on low incomes to lodge their tax.

**Thursday Food Service** commenced at the beginning of the pandemic. Kim Williams and his team at Northern Beaches One Meal Co-Op work tirelessly to feed the most vulnerable in our community.

Each Thursday we get a delivery of the fresh food hampers and bread, which is distributed to our clients.

**Group Information Sessions** are a big part of our service delivery. Some of the topics, speakers and agencies that provided information were Service Australia, ATO, TAFE, Beach Safety, Scouts and Gambling Australia.

We facilitated 3 community consultations in relation to settlement challenges, and sustainability strategy. Specialised workshops targeted specific needs that were identified: Digital Literacy for Seniors, Parenting workshops and a Women's Resilience workshop.

**Continued Over Page >>**



Sandra Simendic  
Manager Multicultural Service



Dhondup Yultse  
Settlement Case Worker



## CORE SERVICES

### MULTICULTURAL SERVICES CONTINUED

Youth engagement was very active in the last year. A Tibetan Youth Leadership Program facilitated by Maria Chidzey and Manly Toastmasters involved 17 youth. We continued to be the link between the school and parents, especially high school. Our close relationship with Northern Beaches Council Youth Services continued to support engagement in sporting activities. In addition, we developed relationships with the PCYC and the Business Education Network, resulting in the school holiday Tenzin Tournament which had 47 youth participating in basketball skills activities, wellbeing workshops and a job readiness workshop. The Tenzin Tournament concluded with a 3x3 basketball tournament.

#### HIGHLIGHTS

Volunteers are our biggest asset and the backbone of the organisation and our service. With the introduction of the front desk reception area, we attracted a diverse range of volunteers with a common passion. Apart from the reception and admin duties, these volunteers help us with other projects as they arise.

Two of our clients had the opportunity to volunteer at the front desk to gain work experience. This led one to gain employment as a Tibetan Family Liaison Officer and Teacher's Aide at the Frenchs Forest High School.

The Intercultural Communication Workshop for volunteers was a huge success and has equipped volunteers with valuable skills necessary in working with migrant and refugee communities.

My Settlement Journey writing project commenced early this year. The project showcases the migrant and refugee stories of settlement to provide hope and practical advice to new arrivals. With the assistance and guidance of a volunteer who is a published writer, Julie Dawson, we have matched 10 volunteer writers to 10 storytellers. The final publication will be published later this year.

Professional Development-our Settlement Case Worker Dhondup Yultse had the amazing opportunity to be selected in the Train the Trainer Program facilitated by the Migrant Employment Legal Service. Dhondup participated in a 10-day training course to qualify him to educate community members about their employment rights and to make appropriate referrals.

Stakeholder engagement is vital to the success of assisting clients in reaching their goals. We participated in several events to build relationships and raise awareness of our service. We are involved in various interagency and networking groups for the connections and information sharing. We chair the Northern Beaches Multicultural Network quarterly meetings; this is the opportunity for the local service providers to share information and resources and address challenges and issues that northern beaches multicultural communities face.

Stakeholder engagement  
is vital to the success of  
assisting clients in  
reaching their goals.

## CORE SERVICES



Clockwise from top left: Driving Mentor Eric, and Zach, who passed his test under Eric's guidance; New signage on the car; Tenzin Basketball Tournament.

## CORE SERVICES

### FUNDRAISING & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

#### SERA KUMEROA MANAGER COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

It has been a challenging year for all charities, trying to provide services and raise funds through a global pandemic. Community Northern Beaches is no exception.

Unfortunately, we were unable to hold any of our annual fundraising events such as our greatly loved Manly Skiff Club lunch, hosted by our wonderful friends at The Sisterhood Clontarf, or Trivia nights and clothes swap events.

However, we are so appreciative to our Northern Beaches Community for continuing to show their strong support by rallying together to donate food and material aid, vital for our Homeless Outreach, Domestic and Family Violence and Welfare services.

Our postponed Larapinta Adventure Challenge took off in May and was by far the most successful fundraising initiative that Community Northern Beaches has delivered, raising almost \$60,000 and far exceeding our expectations. Individual donors and corporate/businesses combined contributed to this spectacular effort. Following the success of this activity, we hope to launch a 2022 adventure as well.

This year a lot of the usual grant funding was not offered due to Covid and competition for available grant funding was at an all-time high. However, we did receive continued support from Northern Beaches Council, Balgowlah Rotary Club, Manly Lions Club and Dee Why RSL, who all provided funding towards some of our key programs. Despite these challenges, the total raised from grants was \$110,241.00.

Our financial donors, who may donate once a year, or once a month, continued their tremendous support of our programs and services. An extra special thanks to these people, because for a small charity such as ours and with economic uncertainty surrounding us all, it is heart-warming to see how kind and generous people are. Every donation makes a difference, no matter how small. This year we raised \$261,141 through fundraising and donations.

A special mention must go to Georgie Furze who completed a 24 hour walk for CNB and raised almost \$8000. Literally blood, sweat and tears for the cause!

It is worth mentioning that since Community Northern Beaches took the decision to employ a dedicated Community Engagement staff member in 2018, our grant revenue for this financial year has risen from \$26,505 in 2018, and fundraising/donations from \$44,561 in 2018. And as an added bonus has taken a lot of pressure from the other staff who had the added responsibility for these functions.

As we continue to work through these most difficult of times, we would like to pass on our gratitude to all our supporters; your help is now more important than ever.



Sera Kumeroa  
Manager Community Engagement

## CORE SERVICES

### VENUE HIRE

#### TINA HICKS MANAGER VENUE HIRE & ADMINISTRATION

It has been a year now since we moved into our wonderful new premises at 52 Raglan Street. The newly renovated building has allowed us to provide a more corporate environment for hirers. Our hire offerings consist of 6 counselling/interview rooms, two meeting rooms with Smart TV's that expand to a larger room, and 10 hot desks. We also offer a large office (4 person), and a single person office for short or longterm use in our fully serviced shared office space.

The past year has proven to be challenging for our venue hire revenue. Due to the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, our venue has been subjected to periodic restrictions on maximum capacity numbers to ensure social distancing, as well as the ability to use the spaces altogether. However, as an essential service, our Centre has continued to stay open during every lockdown period to support the community, and we have stringent COVID Safe procedures in place to ensure the safety of our staff, volunteers, visitors and hirers.

During the FY 20/21, our venue housed 17 accommodated services including Taldumande Youth Homeless Services, Gotcha 4 Life Foundation (mental fitness charity), Northern Beaches Counselling, Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, Marijuana Anonymous, Family Legal Aid, Tax Help, Centrelink, CatholicCare accredited financial counselling, Manly Legal Service, OzHarvest, CCNB (NDIS support), Family Drug Support and Osana GP Outreach Service (a free medical service).

We were happy to see some of our previous hirers, such as Photo Workshop Australia and Bonjour Babies (a French speaking class for babies and toddlers) return to use the new space as well as welcome new organisations. Workshops and information sessions were held by Kincaire In-home Aged Care Service and Side by Side Advocacy (a NDIS advocacy service for people with an intellectual disability). Clarke & Humel Real Estate conducted staff training, and a series of workshops is being held by Urban Kulture on mushroom cultivation.

In March 2021, Northern Beaches Council entered into an agreement with Community Northern Beaches to use the Brookvale Community Centre (BCC) as our second community services hub on the Northern Beaches. This agreement confirmed the exclusive use hire agreement of the North and West Halls of BCC. As part of this agreement, CNB was required to honour existing community group bookings for the remainder of 2021.

As CNB runs our Multicultural Service from BCC, our aim was to encourage other like-minded multicultural organisations to hire the North and West Halls. Organisations such as Settlement Services Intl (refugee support services), Co-Dependants Anonymous (support group for families of drug/alcohol users), Religious Groups – Tongan Church, Northern Beaches Pentecostal Church and Greek Orthodox Parish, and Capah Multicultural Aged Care, have all become regular hirers at Brookvale. We look forward to further expanding the users of this facility moving forward.



Tina Hicks  
Manager, Venue Hire & Administration



## ENGAGEMENT



Clockwise from top left: **Larapinta Trail** fundraising event participants; **Volunteer driving mentor** Paul with Iona from The Beach School; Jan and Jaz completing their **Raise Foundation** mentoring for the year.

## ENGAGEMENT



Dearest Nani, Marelie  
& Dani,  
  
THANK YOU SO MUCH  
FOR ALL THAT YOU HAVE  
DONE FOR ME AND  
ARE CONTINUING TO DO  
TO GET ME THROUGH  
THIS TIME.  
  
YOUR KINDNESS IS A  
GIFT THAT IS TRULY  
TREASURED.  
  
FROM THE BOTTOM OF  
MY HEART WITH LOVE  
AND APPRECIATION,  
  
xxx



Clockwise from top: Linda and Belinda providing the **OzHarvest** service; **Dani going above and beyond** suiting up in full PPE to support a client in custody; **Thank you letter** from one of our domestic violence clients.

## ADDITIONAL COMMUNITY SERVICES

### ACCOMMODATED SERVICES

#### Legal Aid NSW Outreach

Legal Aid NSW provides family law advice each Tuesday to people most disadvantaged or marginalised within local communities. This includes individuals who have a mental illness, disability, financial hardship, experience homelessness and those from non-English speaking backgrounds.

#### Psychologist Services

Paula James provides individuals, couples and family units affordable counselling and psychological services. Bulk-billing is available under a Mental Health Care Plan with referral from a General Practitioner. Clients utilise the service for a variety of reasons including depression, anxiety/stress, grief, and loss; domestic violence and other trauma; relationship issues as well as other mental health concerns. The goal is to work in collaboration with the clients to help them live life to their maximum potential.

#### The Big Issue NSW

Since 1993, The Big Issue magazine has assisted in effectively establishing employment opportunities for the disadvantaged and homeless. Vendors purchase the magazine from CNB as an approved distribution outlet and resell the magazine for double the price. This initiative not only provides significant encouragement to those struggling financially but allows them to exercise financial independence.

#### Osana GP Outreach Service

A free walk-in GP clinic service was available from 9th September 2020 to 31st March 2021. Each Wednesday, an Osana GP and nutritionist provided general medical and dietary advice to our clients. Assistance was also given with Medicare Card applications.

#### Centrelink (Services Australia)

The Community Engagement Officer runs an outreach service at Community Northern Beaches on Wednesday mornings. It is a wonderful opportunity for vulnerable people who have barriers which prevent them from accessing mainstream services to get the relevant information and help.

This service also enables clients to learn how to use online services and Express Plus mobile apps.

#### Tax Help (ATO)

This is a free and confidential service offered between mid-July and 31 October each year to people who have a taxable income of less than \$60,000 per year, to complete their tax returns. It is run by Tax Help Volunteers who assist with straightforward returns and help clients navigate the MyGov website.

#### Narcotics Anonymous

Narcotics Anonymous is a non-profit fellowship or society of men and women for whom drugs had become a major problem. Clients are recovering addicts who meet regularly to help each other stay clean. They have found through the group experience that the therapeutic value of one addict helping another is without parallel. Meetings are held at CNB each Sunday, 12 – 1pm.

#### Marijuana Anonymous

Marijuana Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength, and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from marijuana addiction. Meetings are held each Monday, 7-8pm.

#### OzHarvest

OzHarvest provides our clients with free fruit, vegetables, and drink products each Wednesday at the Centre. This is an incredible and valued program as many clients struggle financially to afford the amount of fruit and vegetables required for good health.

#### One Meal

One Meal is a local volunteer-based organisation providing fresh food and cooked meals to the Northern Beaches community. One Meal supplies CNB with fresh fruit and vegetables every Wednesday. They form an integral part of our support to the community.

#### Taldumande Youth Services

Taldumande Youth Services provide services for vulnerable and homeless children and young people

## ADDITIONAL COMMUNITY SERVICES

between the ages of 12-21, and their families. They operate Monday – Friday. Taldumande finished a long and successful tenancy with CNB on the 30 June 2021 due to an amalgamation of their various offices across the Sydney North area to St Leonard's.

#### Community Care Northern Beaches (CCNB)

CCNB conducts a wide range of services and programs across the Northern Beaches and Northern Suburbs of Sydney. They provide outreach services at CNB for persons experiencing mental health concerns that are entitled to NDIS support and need assistance in accessing and utilising this benefit.

#### Gotcha 4 Life

Gotcha4Life is a not-for-profit Foundation that funds sustainable educational workshops, training programmes and products, building mental fitness in communities across Australia, to enable strong, open, and binding relationships. They operate Tuesday - Thursday from the Centre.

#### Supernatural Coaching

Supernatural coaching is a holistic health coaching business that focuses primarily on family coaching and relationship coaching.

#### Family Drug Support

Family drug support provides up to date information on all aspects of alcohol and drug use relative to the families of alcohol and other drug users. Family Drug Support run a support group from the Centre once a month on a Tuesday evening.

#### Manly Legal Advice Service (MLAS)

The Manly Legal Advice Service (MLAS) works to provide the local community with access to justice. MLAS provides free, practical, and accessible legal advice to those who need it the most.

MLAS operates every Thursday night from 6pm to 8pm and on the third Saturday of every month from 10am to 12pm. MLAS operates as a walk-in service that is staffed by lawyers and clerks who volunteer their time and experience to ensure that all members of the local community have the opportunity to access legal advice, regardless of the size of the matter.

#### Legal Practitioners

MLAS is fortunate to be staffed by an experienced team of legal practitioners who specialise in diverse areas of law, including but not limited to criminal, civil and family law matters. Their contributions are invaluable to the service and make it possible to provide the Northern Beaches community with quality, accessible legal help. The MLAS would like to sincerely thank the following volunteer lawyers who have taken the time to help the community over the past year: Brian Hamer, Clare Cory, Michael Adamo, Peter Wood, Sundip Ghedia, Metin Ozmen, Margie O'Neil, Janet Gardner Winn, Roshni Sima, Ionita Gentles and John Howard.

#### Law Clerks

The volunteer clerks at MLAS are tasked with assisting the legal practitioners, overseeing administrative duties, and running the reception desk. The clerk's contribution to MLAS allows them to give back to the local Northern Beaches community and help ensure the service can continue to run smoothly for the public. We would like to acknowledge the contributions of our clerks: Angie Mei (Co-ordinator), India Vlotman, Connor Barham, Saxon Ward, Ella Davidson, William Chung, Jemima Belger, Giuliana Hsu, James Zanon and Isabella Summerer.

#### Case Study

The MLAS recently assisted a man and his son regarding a residential housing dispute over noise and flooring issues with the tenants living above them. The neighbouring tenant had become very difficult with heavy footsteps and constant loud music, despite polite requests made by the client and offers by the client to pay for their carpet costs to minimise noise pollution. The landlord offered no assistance, making life very difficult for the client. The pair sought advice on how to approach the situation going into an upcoming scheduled mediation with their neighbours. The volunteer solicitor assisted the pair with legal resources, and also helped the client with drafting a formal letter to the landlord and tenant. The solicitor also provided advice on how to approach the mediation as well, where to find additional legal recourse available to them.

## DONATIONS

### DONATIONS & CONTRIBUTIONS

#### Financial donations

Local individuals  
Coleen Faes  
Copeland Family – ESL Charitable Trust  
Damian Ham  
EchoFarm Pty Ltd (EchoHill Wines)  
Felicity Shonk  
Georgie Bates  
Georgi Furze  
Grill'd Dee Why  
James Griffin, MP  
Laura and James Brennan  
Madeline Storey  
Manly Business Chamber  
Manly Fairlight Scouts  
Manly Lion's Club  
Manly Surf Life Saving Club  
Paul Kotala  
Phillipa Furey  
Reece Heddle  
Return & Earn Scheme  
Rotary Club of Balgowlah  
The Sisterhood – Clontarf  
Zonta International

#### Material donations

Local individuals, families, and schools  
Bunnings  
Ben and Jerry's Manly  
Care Essentials  
James Eyden – Clarke & Humel Real Estate  
Manly Congregational Church  
Manly Presbyterian Church  
Officeworks, Dee Why  
Rotary Club Balgowlah  
Share the Dignity  
SkuVantage  
The Sisterhood – Clontarf

#### Pro-bono Support

Simone Larmer (Yoga Instructor)

## DONATIONS

#### Christmas hampers

Local families and individuals  
Blackmores  
Diva Charity Foundation  
Manly Library Giving Tree  
Manly Village Public School  
Schwarz Real Estate  
St Matthew's Church Manly  
St Andrew's Church Manly

#### Food contributions

Community Co-op Northern Beaches  
(Community Pantry)  
Infinity Bakery  
Manly Co-op  
Manly Lion's Club  
Oz Harvest  
SkuVantage  
The Butcher's Café  
In Situ, Manly

#### Corporate Sponsors

Balgowlah Automotive  
Karim & Nicol Lawyers  
SmartMove Removals and Storage



Mona Vale Primary School kids  
donating packs for rough sleepers



## DONATIONS

### DONATIONS



Generous donations clockwise from top left: Freshwater Seventh Day Adventists packs for women; Christmas hamper donation from Schwarz Real Estate; Tina potting plants donated by Bunnings; John accepting plants and pots donated by Theo at Bunnings.



## DONATIONS



Generous donations clockwise from top left: Children's Christmas donations for multicultural clients; donation from Diva Charity Foundation; donation of shampoo and conditioner from Unilever.



## FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

### Community Northern Beaches Incorporated Management Committee's Report for the year ended 30 June 2021

The Committee members present this report of the financial affairs of Community Northern Beaches Incorporated for the year ended 30 June 2021.

#### Committee Members

Adele Heasman, Kandy Tagg, Caroline Pearce, Bill Barnes, Peter Wood, Paula James, Sally Cornelius, Phyl Jelinek. Public Officer: John O'Connor

#### Net Surplus/Deficit

The outcome for the year ended 30 June 2021 was a surplus of \$27,605 (2020: deficit \$22,818).

#### Significant changes in state of affairs

There have been no significant changes in the state of the Association's financial affairs during the financial year.

#### Principal activities

The principal activity of the Association during the course of the year was:

"To provide a wide range of community facilities to members of the Association and to the general public."

There have been no significant changes in the nature of this activity during the year.

#### Post Balance Sheet date events

No known matters have arisen since the end of the financial year which do or may significantly affect the Association's operations, its results or the state of its affairs in future years.


#### Future developments

The Association expects to maintain the present status and level of operations provided funding remains available. Our NSW Government program funding is secure until June 2025. The arrangement with Settlement Services International runs until December 2022. Should these sources of funding not be renewed, the Centre has specific reserves to allow most existing services to continue for approximately three months whilst other sources of funding are sought.

#### Auditors Independence Declaration

Section 307C of the Corporations Act 2001 requires the Association's auditors, Shuriken Consulting Manly Pty Ltd, provide the Committee with an Independence Declaration in relation to the review of the financial statements. The Independence Declaration forms part of the financial statements.

This report is made in accordance with a resolution of the members of the Management Committee and is signed for and on behalf of the Committee by:



Adele Heasman  
President



Bill Barnes  
Treasurer

Dated this 16<sup>th</sup> day of SEPTEMBER 2021

## FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

### Community Northern Beaches Incorporated Management Committee's Report for the year ended 30 June 2021

The Committee has determined that the Centre is not a reporting entity. The Committee has determined that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in note 1 of the financial statements.

The Management Committee hereby declares that the accompanying financial statements and notes of the Association as at 30 June 2021:

- present fairly the Centre's financial position as at 30 June 2021 and its performance for the year ended on that date in accordance with the accounting policies as detailed in note 1 of the financial statements;
- comply with Australian accounting standards as detailed in note 1 of the financial statements and the Corporations Act 2001 and the Corporations Regulations 2001; and
- there are reasonable grounds to believe that the Association will be able to meet its debts as and when they become payable.

The Management Committee further declares that:

- the Income and Expenditure statement gives a true and fair view of all income and expenditure of the organisation with respect to fundraising; and
- the Balance Sheet gives a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the organisation with respect to fundraising conducted by the organisation; and
- the provisions of the *Charitable Fundraising Act 1991* and the *Charitable Fundraising Regulation 2015* and the conditions attached to the fundraising authority have been complied with by the organisation; and
- the internal controls exercised by the organisation are appropriate and effective in accounting for all income received and applied by the organisation from any of its fundraising.

This statement is made in accordance with a resolution of the members of the Management Committee and is signed for and on behalf of the Committee by:



Adele Heasman  
President



Bill Barnes  
Treasurer

Dated this 16<sup>th</sup> day of SEPTEMBER 2021

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

**Community Northern Beaches Incorporated**  
**Balance Sheet**  
for the year ended 30 June 2021  
ABN: 77 721 844 221

	2021	2020
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Cash & Cash Equivalents (see note 2)	793,992	546,703
Trade and Other Receivables (see note 3)	13,687	33,387
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>807,679</b>	<b>580,090</b>
<b>Non Current Assets</b>		
Property, Plant & Equipment (see note 4)	-	-
<b>Total Non Current Assets</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>807,679</b>	<b>580,090</b>
<b>Current Liabilities</b>		
Trade & Other Payables (see note 5)	182,736	102,304
Provisions (see note 6)	470,119	350,567
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>652,855</b>	<b>452,871</b>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>652,855</b>	<b>452,871</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>154,824</b>	<b>127,219</b>
<b>Equity</b>		
Retained Surplus/Deficit	154,824	127,219
Accumulated Funds	154,824	127,219

**Community Northern Beaches Incorporated**  
**Income & Expenditure**  
for the year ended 30 June 2021  
ABN: 77 721 844 221

	2021	2020
<b>Income</b>		
Income	1,192,482	830,963
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>1,192,482</b>	<b>830,963</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Wages	733,111	646,398
Superannuation	69,644	59,282
Provision for Lease Renewal	-	16,660
Provision for Annual Leave	25,272	11,150
Provision for Building Maintenance	-	(217)
Provision for Loss of Funding	25,000	-
Provision for Extraordinary Events	125,000	-
All other expenses	186,850	120,508
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>1,164,877</b>	<b>863,781</b>
<b>Surplus/Deficit for the year</b>	<b>27,605</b>	<b>(22,818)</b>
Surplus/Deficit brought forward	127,219	150,037
<b>Surplus/Deficit Carried Forward</b>	<b>154,824</b>	<b>127,219</b>

These financial statements should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes and the attached audit report.

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

**Community Northern Beaches Incorporated**  
**Income & Expenditure**  
for the year ended 30 June 2021  
ABN: 77 721 844 221

	2021	2020
<b>Income</b>		
Funding (see note 7)	507,492	507,912
Grants (see note 8)	34,775	29,000
Donations (see note 9)	265,005	109,892
Venue Hire (see note 10)	58,026	78,758
Interest Received (see note 11)	3,930	7,635
Other Income (see note 12)	322,854	97,796
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>1,192,482</b>	<b>830,963</b>
<b>Cost of Services</b>		
<b>Community Services</b>		
Homeless Services	165,487	149,629
Community Services	69,381	56,837
Family, Child & Youth Services	115,718	100,636
Multicultural Services	193,410	165,890
Welfare & DV Services	195,739	146,243
Volunteers Program	51,868	50,819
SETS Innovation	4,784	4,798
Community Capacity Building	6,275	5,067
Homeless Outreach	16,078	6,464
Stronger Communities	3,686	-
RMS Road Safety	3,263	-
Tibetan Youth Leadership	6,094	-
Seniors Week	889	-
Social Sector Transformation	6,026	-
Community Engagement	49,291	68,275
Dee Why RSL	-	17,500
Other Programs	9,985	-
Venue Management	21,716	-
<b>Total Community Services</b>	<b>919,690</b>	<b>773,148</b>
<b>Total Cost of Services</b>	<b>919,690</b>	<b>773,148</b>
<b>Gross Surplus/Deficit</b>	<b>272,792</b>	<b>57,815</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
<b>Head Office Expenses</b>		
Administration	18,708	12,469
Banking	235	341
Insurances	7,640	7,073
Telecommunication	2,252	2,634
Technology	2,752	1,704
Operating	3,964	4,143
Marketing	516	124
Occupation	25,324	18,735
Motor Vehicle	2,276	-
Venue Management Wages	-	18,062
North Head Properties	6,347	(11,626)
Provision for Annual Leave	25,272	11,150
Provision for Loss of Funding	25,000	-
Provision for Extraordinary Events	125,000	-
Provision for Lease Renewal	-	16,660
Previous Year Accrued Expenses	-	(536)
<b>Total Head Office Expenses</b>	<b>245,187</b>	<b>80,633</b>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>245,187</b>	<b>80,633</b>
<b>Surplus/Deficit for the year</b>	<b>27,605</b>	<b>(22,818)</b>
Surplus/Deficit brought forward	127,219	150,037
<b>Surplus/Deficit Carried Forward</b>	<b>154,824</b>	<b>127,219</b>

These financial statements should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes and the attached audit report.

## FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Community Northern Beaches Incorporated	
Notes to the Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2021 ABN: 77 721 844 221	
<b>1. Statement of significant accounting policies</b>	
This financial report has been prepared for the use by the Committee and members of the Centre and is a special purpose financial report. The Committee has determined that the Centre is not a reporting entity.	
The financial report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the following Australian Accounting Standards:	
AASB 101	Presentation of Financial Statements
AASB 107	Statement of Cash Flows
AASB 108	Accounting Policies, Changes in Accounting Estimates and Errors
AASB 1031	Materiality
AASB 1048	Interpretation of Standards
AASB 1054	Australian Additional Disclosures
This report is also prepared on an accruals basis and is based on historical costs and except where stated does not take into account changing values or current valuations on non current assets. The following specific accounting policies, which are consistent with the previous period unless otherwise stated, have been adopted in the preparation of this report for Community Northern Beaches Incorporated:	
<b>a) Cash &amp; Cash Equivalent</b>	
Cash and cash equivalents includes cash on hand, deposits held at call with banks and other short term highly liquid investments with original maturities of six months or less.	
<b>b) Property, Plant &amp; Equipment</b>	
Property, plant and equipment, other than freehold land, is depreciated over the estimated useful life of each asset. The estimated balance of the useful life of assets is reviewed at least every three years or as required.	
<b>Related Party Transactions</b>	
There were no Related Party transactions.	
<b>Remuneration or Benefit Received by the Management Committee</b>	
Other than reimbursement of reasonable out-of-pocket expenses there was no remuneration or benefit received by any member of the Management Committee.	
These notes should be read in conjunction with the attached audit report	

## FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Community Northern Beaches Incorporated		
Notes to the Financial Statements		
for the year ended 30 June 2021		
ABN: 77 721 844 221		
	2021	2020
<b>2. Cash &amp; Cash Equivalents</b>		
Bank - Operating WBC335	180,644	74,534
Bank - Debit Card WBC327	3,065	1,815
Bank - Cash Reserve Bonus WBC855	231,707	197,585
Paypal	2,029	-
Term Deposit - 711531	114,258	113,071
Term Deposit - 713908	43,871	43,387
Term Deposit - 432824	100,403	-
Term Deposit - 16700943	118,015	116,311
	<b>793,992</b>	<b>546,703</b>
<b>3. Current Trade and Other Receivables</b>		
Trade Debtors	13,687	5,423
Sundry Receivables	-	1,252
Deposits Paid - Suppliers	-	26,712
	<b>13,687</b>	<b>33,387</b>
<b>4. Property, Plant &amp; Equipment</b>		
Office Equipment @ Cost	50,804	50,804
less: Accumulated Depreciation	(50,804)	(50,804)
	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>5. Current Trade &amp; Other Payables</b>		
GST Liabilities	30,096	3,921
PAYG Withholding	2,000	6,238
Superannuation	2,301	-
Payroll	(828)	-
Salary Sacrifice	4,750	-
Accruals	12,224	4,400
Venue Hire Bonds	800	800
Unearned Income	131,393	86,945
	<b>182,736</b>	<b>102,304</b>
<b>6. Current Provisions</b>		
Building - maintenance / new premises	38,063	93,783
Community Centre - funding loss / ongoing projects	220,000	195,000
Lease - renewal / termination costs	25,000	25,000
Leave Entitlements - annual / long service	62,056	36,784
Extraordinary Events	125,000	-
	<b>470,119</b>	<b>350,567</b>
These notes should be read in conjunction with the attached audit report		



FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Community Northern Beaches Incorporated		
Notes to the Financial Statements		
for the year ended 30 June 2021		
ABN: 77 721 844 221		
	2021	2020
<b>7. Funding Income</b>		
NSW Department of Communities & Justice	261,849	254,924
SSI Community Services	141,357	149,318
SSI Community Capital Building	4,937	5,057
SSI Settlement Innovation Fund	4,784	4,798
Northern Beaches Council	94,565	93,815
	<u>507,492</u>	<u>507,912</u>
<b>8. Grants Income</b>		
NBC Homeless Outreach Support	15,000	6,500
StreetSmart	1,000	-
Seniors Week	840	-
Dee Why RSL	-	17,500
SSI Client Relationship Management	2,273	-
Social Sector Transformation Fund	6,028	-
Stronger Communities Raglan Street	3,636	-
Tibetan Youth Leadership	6,000	-
RMS Road Safety Program	-	5,000
	<u>34,775</u>	<u>29,000</u>
<b>9. Donations Income</b>		
Membership Fees	260	360
Counselling Donations	-	9
Donations for Programs - Fund Raising	-	28,800
Donations for Programs - Donations Various	197,902	61,046
Donations for Programs - Beyond The Gloves	3,190	-
Donations for Programs - The Sisterhood	-	1,447
Donations for Programs - Youth Week	538	-
Donations for Programs - Pittwater Motoring Enthusiasts	1,000	-
Donations for Programs - Unconditional Grants	3,963	5,000
Donations for Programs - Corporate Sponsorship	-	1,000
Donations for Programs - Goodwill Hunting	3,000	6,000
Donations for Programs - Larapinta Adventure Challenge	54,015	3,725
Donations for Programs - Tibetan Support	1,737	4,505
	<u>265,605</u>	<u>109,892</u>

These notes should be read in conjunction with the attached audit report

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Community Northern Beaches Incorporated		
Notes to the Financial Statements		
for the year ended 30 June 2021		
ABN: 77 721 844 221		
	2021	2020
<b>10. Venue Hire Income</b>		
Venue Hire	9,483	36,674
Accommodated Services	41,223	34,280
Women's Shelter	6,600	6,364
North Head Rental Management	720	1,440
	<u>58,026</u>	<u>78,758</u>
<b>11. Interest Income</b>		
Term Deposit - 353416554	-	3
Term Deposit - 167009943	1,704	1,614
Term Deposit - 432824	403	-
Term Deposit - 709335	31	69
Term Deposit - 711531	1,187	4,189
Term Deposit - 709327	1	3
Term Deposit - 713908	483	1,441
Term Deposit - 713655	121	88
Term Deposit - 727947	-	328
	<u>3,930</u>	<u>7,635</u>
<b>12. Other Income</b>		
Aust Govt Jobkeeper Subsidy	294,100	72,000
Aust Govt Cash Flow Boost	28,554	25,766
	<u>322,654</u>	<u>97,766</u>

These notes should be read in conjunction with the attached audit report



## FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Community Northern Beaches Incorporated		
Statement of Cash Flows		
for the year ended 30 June 2021		
ABN: 77 721 844 221		
	2021	2020
<b>CASH FLOW FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Receipts from Federal, State and Local government	507,492	507,912
Receipts from grants	34,775	29,000
Receipts from donations and membership fees	265,605	109,592
Receipts from venue hire	58,026	78,758
Interest received	3,930	7,635
Other income	322,654	97,766
Payments to employees	(802,755)	(705,680)
Payments to suppliers	(142,438)	(120,508)
<b>Net cash provided by Operating Activities</b>	<b>247,289</b>	<b>4,775</b>
<b>CASH FLOW FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Receipts from debtors	0	56,271
Payments to creditors	0	(2,770)
Payments for property, plant and equipment	0	0
<b>Net Cash provided by Investing Activities</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>53,501</b>
<b>CASH FLOW FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES</b>		
Nil	0	0
<b>SUMMARY</b>		
Net increase in cash held	247,289	58,276
Cash at the beginning of the financial year	546,703	488,427
Cash at the end of the financial year	<u>793,992</u>	<u>546,703</u>

These financial statements should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes and the attached audit report.

## FINANCIAL STATEMENTS



### COMMUNITY NORTHERN BEACHES INCORPORATED INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF COMMUNITY NORTHERN BEACHES INCORPORATED

We have audited the attached financial report, being a special purpose financial report of Community Northern Beaches Incorporated (the Association), which comprises the Committee's report, the Statement by the Management Committee, the Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2021, the Income and Expenditure Account and Statement of Cash Flows for the year then ended and the notes to the financial report.

#### Committee's Responsibility for the Financial Report

The Management Committee of the Association is responsible for the preparation of the financial report and has determined that the basis of preparation described in Note 1 is appropriate to meet the needs of members and also the Association's constitution. The Management Committee's responsibility also includes such internal control as the committee determines is necessary to enable the preparation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

#### Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. We have conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Those standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement in the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the Association's preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view, in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Association's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the Management Committee, as well as the overall presentation of the financial report.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Liability Limited by a scheme approved under the Professional Standards Legislation

## FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

### Audit Opinion

In our opinion, the financial report presents fairly, in all material aspects, the financial position of Community Northern Beaches Incorporated as at 30th June 2021 and its financial performance for the year then ended in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements.

### Basis of Accounting

Without modifying our opinion, we draw attention to the fact that the financial report has been prepared to assist the Association to meet the requirements of the Community Northern Beaches Incorporated's Constitution. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for any other purpose.

*P Jackson*

Peter Jackson  
Chartered Accountant and Registered Auditor

Dated this 16<sup>th</sup> day of September 2021

## FINANCIAL STATEMENTS



Shuriken Consulting Manly Pty Ltd  
ABN:66 624 155 719  
Suite 506, Level 5, 39 East Esplanade, Manly NSW 2095  
PO Box 404, Manly NSW 1655  
T: (02) 9977 2044  
F: (02) 9977 4904  
Email: manly@shuriken.com  
Website: www.shuriken.com

### AUDITORS INDEPENDENCE DECLARATION UNDER SECTION 307C OF THE CORPORATIONS ACT 2001

To the Management Committee of Community Northern Beaches Incorporated:

I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, in relation to the audit of Community Northern Beaches Incorporated for the year ended 30th June 2021 there have been;

- a) no contraventions of the auditor independence requirements of the Corporations Act 2001 in relation to the audit; and
- b) no contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.

*P Jackson*

Peter Jackson  
Chartered Accountant and Registered Auditor

Dated this 16<sup>th</sup> day of September 2021

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## Community Northern Beaches Inc. (CNB)

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#### 1. Executive Summary

Community Northern Beaches (CNB) delivers key community services and linkage to the most vulnerable in the Northern Beaches LGA. It prioritises a strong commitment to the Northern Beaches Council [Better Together](#) Social Sustainability Strategy. The key objective of Better Together (ie. to create an inclusive, connected and safe community) provides a clear and robust rationale for CNB to focus and align its efforts with the goals of both Northern Beaches Council and the community for the greatest social impact.

CNB is also aligned with the Premier's Priorities to reduce street homelessness across NSW by 50% by 2025. As a key stakeholder in the Northern Beaches Homelessness Case Coordination (NBHCC), CNB's Homeless Outreach Service (HOS) provides critical advocacy and intelligence regarding hard-to-reach cohorts who are sleeping rough, and vital support to achieve housing outcomes. The attendance of Northern Beaches Council at the NBHCC facilitates further collaboration with CNB to address street homelessness, which includes the management of public space.

#### 2. Overview - Programs/activities delivered from the Northern Beaches Council Grant

##### 2.1 Homeless Outreach Service (HOS)

CNB acts to prevent and reduce homelessness in the Northern Beaches. The HOS exists to support anyone experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness, with a focus on people who have fallen through the cracks. People unable to engage with available support due to poor health, feelings of disempowerment or failure to meet program criteria need our service the most.

The crisis drop-in and provision of material aid provide strategic opportunities for a small team (FTE 1.6) to proactively befriend guests and identify their specific needs. Six to ten people access the Service each day (including both existing and new clients). Significant time is allocated to responding to reports of people sleeping rough (by conducting assertive outreach) from Northern Beaches Council, NSW Police, local business owners and the public. The Service welcomes referrals. In addition, regular outreach visits are carried out by the team to known hotspots with a speculative approach to identifying people affected by homelessness. Periodic foot patrols are carried out by workers in the Manly CBD, where rough sleeping is the most prevalent within the region. All interactions are invaluable to building rapport and meaningful connections and can translate into substantial outcomes such as securing accommodation, finding employment and pursuing mental health recovery.

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Each individual's circumstances are unique; therefore, a one-size-fits-all approach does not work (and can even exacerbate existing problems). Our clients' experiences are complex and layered with compound factors. Many have not just experienced one crisis. In these cases, a significant investment of time is devoted to cultivating trust as a priority. This involves acknowledging, validating, and building connections with the person behind the presenting issues. Once this foundation is established, we encourage engagement, help remove obstacles to accessing essential support services and empower people in their recovery. Successful engagement depends on the team being non-judgemental and kind, ensuring that clients feel respected, valued, seen, and understood. Our team always strives to apply a client-centred, strengths-based, trauma-informed approach and cares for the needs of clients from a holistic perspective. We seek to be available to clients for as long as it takes. Perseverance, commitment, and a non-linear approach are required to ensure our clients are cared for. Writing people off as disengaged would mean that the sector (and society) has failed in its duty to support the most vulnerable members of our community as they have no other recourse.

There are many challenges involved in engaging individuals experiencing chronic homelessness who are often affected by significant trauma. Obstacles to engagement include issues such as acute or common mental health issues, loss or bereavement (e.g. loved ones, relationships, home, memorabilia, belongings and documents) and substance or alcohol use. Experiencing homelessness can result in internalised shame, feelings of worthlessness and/or unworthiness and a sense of powerlessness. Many clients are further deterred by bureaucracy, a lack of awareness of available, effective support services, misunderstanding of the housing system or previous negative experiences of individual support workers and/or organisations leading to disaffection, scepticism, and mistrust. Our learnings show that the combination of meaningful connection with a key support worker and a collaborative, housing-first approach is the fastest way to resolve a person's housing crisis. We are driven to have the highest levels of care towards people experiencing homelessness and understand that our knowledge of the psychological and emotional impacts gives us greater responsibility to be part of the solution for affected individuals.

In addition to attempting to secure accommodation, the team works with clients to overcome obstacles to engagement with services. This can include providing encouragement to seek treatment and facilitating connections to healthcare providers; presenting positive pathways to move forward, including social connections and making referrals to rehabilitation services; listening to and empowering the individual; building confidence and capacity; presenting relevant information about available support; gaining invaluable consent and providing critical advocacy, and helping clients to navigate the system.

An extremely limited stock of social and community housing poses a significant challenge to resolving homelessness in the Northern Beaches. This can mean long wait times for applicants, even when on the priority waiting list. This presents serious challenges in maintaining engagement, managing expectations, and mitigating hopelessness. Keeping people engaged



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amidst a broken housing system has become one of the lesser-known vital strengths of the Homeless Outreach Service. Despite these challenges, collaboration with Bridge Housing Ltd (and other housing providers) has been very successful and their team is responsive to advocacy from the Homeless Outreach Service. This collaboration is essential to successful housing outcomes.

Proactively establishing collaborative relationships with multiple agencies is essential to achieving positive outcomes. Our Service participates in the Northern Beaches Homelessness Case Coordination (NBHCC), Northern Beaches Homelessness Interagency (NBHI), Northern Beaches Mental Health Interagency (NBMHI) and the Mental Health Interagency Housing Meeting (MHIHM).

## 2.2 Community Drop-in

The community drop-in, also known as the crisis drop-in, provides a focal point for a wide range of stakeholders either seeking assistance, wanting to provide help or referring people for support. It has several characteristics that make it distinct in NSW because of the catch-all nature of service provision and the small, grassroots appeal of the organisation. For example:

- Consumers experiencing homelessness, DV, mental health challenges (including suicidal crisis), financial hardship, housing issues and other psychosocial difficulties can access a diverse breadth of support.
- Volunteers are drawn to the service wanting to contribute to connection building and give back to the community.
- Supporters in the community regularly contribute, of their own volition, material donations and organise awareness or fundraising events
- Government agencies recognise the social capital significance
- Other support agencies refer consumers to the drop-in to improve their social connections, access further services, request advocacy, and access general problem solving (beyond the scope of the referring service).

### 2.2.1 Key Strengths of the Community Drop-in

- Support for people experiencing the following presenting issues:
  - Housing issues (including promoting tenancy sustainability)
  - Lack of access to internet and phone services
  - Lack of food
  - Acquired brain injury (ABI)
  - Alcohol dependency (past)
  - Alcohol dependency (present)
  - Anger management
  - Bereavement
  - Care system
  - Childhood trauma

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- Child loss
- Chronic low self-esteem/self-worth
- Computer/device illiterate
- COVID-19
- Criminal justice system
- Domestic and family violence
- Substance addiction (past)
- Substance addiction (present)
- Eating disorder
- Employment, education and training issues
- Ex-military
- Financial crisis/insecurity or debt
- Financial management order (Guardianship)
- Fleeing toxic environment/relations
- Gambling addiction
- Hoarding disorder
- Homelessness
- Immigration
- Incarceration
- Intellectual disability
- Intergenerational poverty
- Lack of affordable accommodation
- Language barrier
- Legal issues
- Literacy barriers
- Lost belongings
- Mental health issues - undiagnosed
- Mental health issues - unmanaged
- Mental health issues - acute
- Mental health issues - non-acute
- Natural disaster
- Non-intimate partner abuse
- Over 45yrs and Indigenous
- Over 55
- Physical abuse
- Physical disability
- Physical health issues
- Poor experiences with prior support
- Poverty
- Pregnancy
- Rape/sexual assault
- Refugee/asylum seeker



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- Relationship breakdown
- Self-harm
- Sexual abuse
- Sex work
- Single parent
- Social exclusion
- Social isolation and/or loneliness
- Substance use (prescription medication)
- Suicidal thoughts
- Suicide attempt
- Unable to resolve housing crisis (due to capacity issues)
- Victim of crime
- Violence
- No appointment required and no wrong door policy
- Face-to-face (particularly vital for people experiencing MH, DV, homelessness or suicidal crisis)
- The power of connection building and social contact for people who experience severe isolation, loneliness and marginalisation (recently compounded by COVID-19 pandemic)
- Convenient community location (on foot or via public transport)
- Gateway to a broad range of practical and programmatic support
- Available, flexible and collaborative team approach to service provision
- Support needs are able to be identified through trust-building (which often requires a long term commitment to building rapport and engagement)
- Material aid distribution (positive engagements through practical acts of kindness which can create an opportunity to connect without the need for initial full disclosure and a catalyst for relationship)
- Volunteer workforce, local and committed to the vision of the organisation - drawn to supporting the cohort that the agency exists to reach. A wider diversity of personalities and input sends a message that the community cares. Some clients prefer to engage initially with an untrained, personally motivated individual.
- Not having to engage initially with professionals, but rather with a volunteer, can sometimes cultivate a more meaningful basis for building connection (without the need for a worker's input initially, if at all)
- Positive and trusted relationships, whether through engagement with a volunteer or an experienced welfare worker, can foster self-determination in consumers. Some consumers respond very well having the opportunity to visit the space with no particular agenda.
- Accessibility for people who find it difficult to engage by starting in an informal setting. Flexibility is built into the ethos and strategy to allow people to engage on their own terms.

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- The scope of the organisation is broad and therefore flexibility and adaptiveness to community needs are prioritised. The Drop-in service is an expression/extension of this and affords consumers access to a variety of supports and including problem-solving
- Acknowledging the barriers to social and service inclusion for people with severe and persistent mental illness and complex needs and that they will require extra resources and skills to ensure they do not fall through the gaps
- Incorporates recovery-oriented practices
- Well-loved, frequently used, safe space and many service users discover the drop-in through positive word of mouth
- Give consumers a place to gather, interact socially and be exposed to expressions of warmth and friendliness and a sense of community and hope. Some have described CNB as 'family'
- Consumers feel psychologically and emotionally safe disclosing personal circumstances and support needs

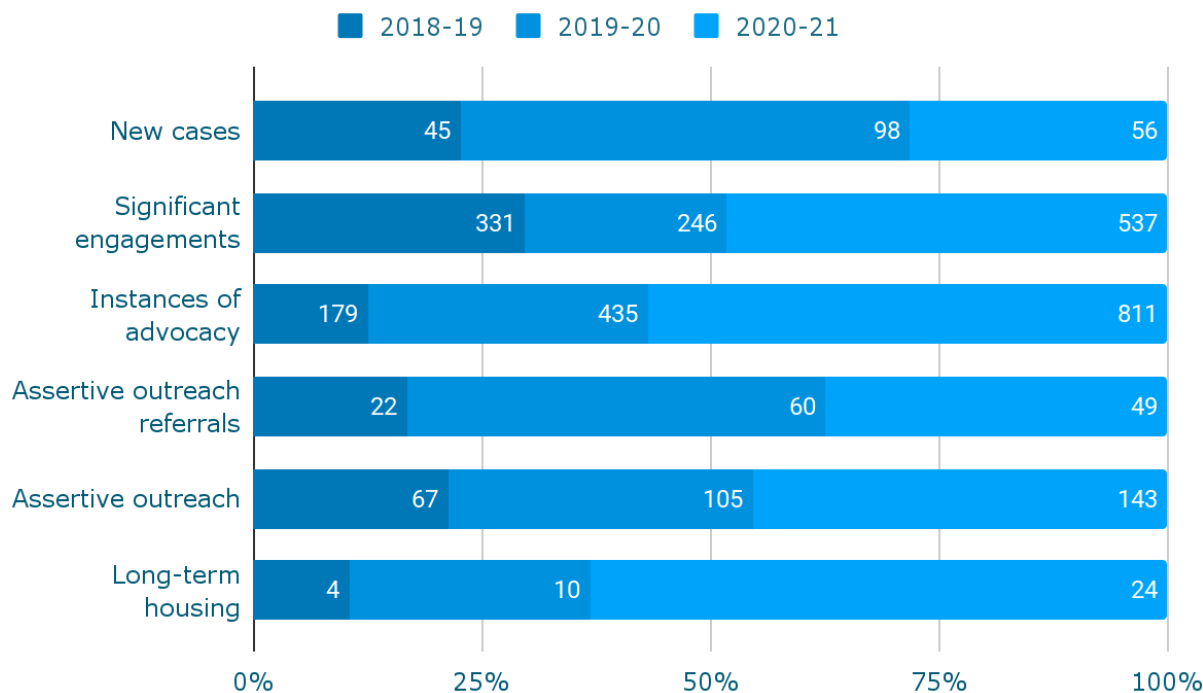
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## 3. Key Outcomes

### 3.1 HOS Trends by the Fiscal Year

	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21
New cases	45	98	56
Significant engagements	331	246	537
Instances of advocacy	179	435	811
Assertive outreach referrals	22	60	49
Assertive outreach	67	105	143
Long-term housing	4	10	24



### 3.2 Data Analysis

This data has been collected and reported from the CRM. Activities within the HOS have seen a general increase in number over the last 3 fiscal years apart from a few exceptions.

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Firstly, a note about the first row in the data, new cases are opened when either a new client requests support from the Service, or if a worker deems a new case is appropriate (e.g. instances, where a consumer is not necessarily actively engaged, and activities need to be documented, or, for repeat episodes of homelessness). Unique to the HOS, cases can be kept open for as long as required. This is due to the fact that the target group can often engage in transient ways due to poor mental health (amongst other factors). Therefore having a timeframe for open cases is not required. Closing cases (and communicating this to clients) can, in fact, send an unintended message to clients that they are being penalised for low levels of engagement (which can become an obstacle to future engagement with support).

The spike in **new cases** in 2019-20 is attributed to the early months of the pandemic in the latter part of that fiscal year (circa March 2020). There was a huge push in the housing and homelessness sector to assist rough sleepers to access temporary accommodation because of the risks of the pandemic for people sleeping rough (which included the reduction of services e.g. food provisions, showers and other support). This caused an increase in dependency on the HOS due to the fact that other services were not offering face-to-face support at intervals during the pandemic. It follows, however, that the number of **significant engagements** dipped at the same time because the preference was to minimise face-to-face contact and prioritise **instances of advocacy**, which the data also shows for 2019-20.

The increase in **long-term housing** outcomes and decrease of **assertive outreach referrals** in 2020-21 is a positive marker for the combination and effectiveness of the Together Home Program, the Northern Beaches Homelessness Case Coordination and the strength (and significant increase) of **instances of advocacy** by the HOS in the same year.

### 3.3 HOS Case Studies

#### 3.3.1 Case Study A

'A', a 59-year-old woman, was originally referred to CNB by Vicki Smith, Manager Dee Why Library who noticed her frequenting the library on a daily basis for extended periods. She observed 'A' to appear malnourished, withdrawn and guarded. Library staff attempts to engage with 'A' were only met with polite, single-word answers and it became difficult to establish enough information to know the appropriate course of action under Library policy. Vicki suspected 'A' to be experiencing homelessness, especially as she would often sleep with the brow of her cap hiding her eyes and she would appear to be reading. Vicki google searched 'homelessness services in the Northern Beaches', discovering CNB. The Homeless Outreach Service (HOS) made contact with Vicki who introduced them to 'A'. She was very cautious, confused, reluctant to share personal information and initially suspicious about the intentions of the HOS workers. Through repeat visits and ongoing collaboration with Vicki, rapport and trust were carefully established over several months. The deliberately slow process could not have

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been rushed or subverted as it emerged that 'A' showed significant mistrust in the system of support and appeared to have very poor insight into her mental health. The impacts of this caused, and perpetuated homelessness in the first place, thus the risk of alienation and deeper marginalisation was extremely high. Over the course of many months 'A' had:

- a strong reluctance to accept help from housing, women's shelters or Centrelink, holding a strong belief that she didn't require accommodation assistance
- requested assistance (provided by a HOS worker) to access superannuation funds during the pandemic
- entrusted HOS workers by providing ID (albeit very cautiously and nervously)
- some capacity to manage many daily tasks which meant that she was going under the radar and could be easily overlooked when carrying out an assessment.

'A' was admitted to RNSH due to a bad fall at the Collaroy Beachouse which HOS workers were alerted to by the accommodation manager. Hospitalisation for her physical health presented a unique opportunity for clinicians to carry out a mental health assessment and determine if 'A' met the criteria for treatment which could ultimately break the cycle of homelessness. Urgent advocacy was provided by the HOS to the social worker who relayed information to the treating team. Had the HOS not intervened and provided advocacy, 'A' would have been discharged from RNSH to the Backpackers in Collaroy at her own request. This would have resulted in further homelessness, especially in light of the fact that the Backpackers was closing in the next month. Instead, enough information was provided to satisfy the tribunal to schedule 'A' under the mental health act and transfer her to Northern Beaches Hospital.

A meeting with the treating Psychiatrist was organised with HOS workers at Northern Beaches Hospital. The advocacy provided by the HOS changed the treating team's decision that it was now unsafe to discharge 'A'. The hospital had access to information about her mental health history which showed that her diagnosis was schizophrenia and that the delusions she experienced were long-term, however, they could not see justification at that point for not discharging 'A' as it had already been 10 days and they advised that medication would not bring about a quick change in her condition. The HOS team were able to provide contextual information and observations about the current impacts of her condition, ie. homelessness, malnutrition, delusions about her mother being an imposter, inability to pay for accommodation combined with a pathological fear of accessing a payment from Centrelink. This advocacy resulted in a much-needed extension to her stay in the care of the hospital and a community treatment order upon discharge. Without the advocacy, 'A' would have been able to satisfy the hospital that she had the means to pay (in the short term) for her own accommodation. Even the mention of support in the community (ie. from the HOS or NBMHS) would ordinarily give the hospital cause to discharge someone in her circumstances.

- Through focusing resources on supporting 'A', she subsequently engaged with a housing plan, accessing a Centrelink payment and ongoing support from CNB. This

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was a significant outcome and demonstrated the necessary rapport, connection and trust that was built by the HOS team over a long period of time.

- 'A' was identified as requiring a Community Treatment Order (CTO) and ongoing collaboration with the NBMHS assertive outreach team remains in place currently
- Attempted referrals to other services.
- There were significant challenges in building more support due to dependency on CNB (because of strong established trust)
- A critical factor in getting 'A' into accommodation and ongoing mental health support was the HOS' advocacy and coordination of support with NBH, NBMHS, Centrelink and Bridge Housing
- There are ongoing challenges that the HOS provides advocacy on behalf of 'A' due to ongoing financial hardship and reluctance to apply for DSP because of poor insight into MH (belief of having no disability)

#### 3.3.2 Case Study B

'B' lived in a tent for nearly 2 years at Shelly Beach in the bush.

- 15 years of homelessness
- Constantly fleeing toxic environments (and "narcissistic people"), desire for change and a new location
- HOS assisting Council in managing public space at the client's sleep site at Shelly Beach through extensive rapport and trust building
- 'B' gave up on the housing system due to mistrust and poor experiences with workers that he felt "gave up" on him
- 'B' disclosed a diagnosis of schizophrenia and reluctance to engage with mainstream support around this. The HOS team observed notable physical and mental health deterioration over the course of 2 years.
- Because of the consistency and authenticity of support from the HOS team, 'B' developed a willingness and desire for support to give the Housing System another chance through CNB.
- Advocacy and detailed knowledge were provided by the HOS team to the case coordination meeting (NBHCC) which lead to 'B' being accepted in the Together Home Program
- 'B' experienced physical and mental health improvements that went well beyond expectations because of the program and there is now a genuine joy for all the team at CNB seeing the impact of this outcome.

#### 3.3.3 Case Study C

'C' lived out of her truck for many years and Couchsurfing wherever possible. She experienced childhood trauma which ultimately could be argued was the cause of homelessness later in life. See the summary of key details:

- Victim to sexual assault at 11yrs

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- Subsequent internalised shame which led to sex work and feelings of low self-worth
- Personality disorder combined with other mental health challenges caused support workers and housing officers in the past to misunderstand and overlook her support needs and reinforced her mistrust in the system of supports.
- Being 'high functioning' also contributed to being 'overlooked'
- Mother of 5, 3 youngest being Aboriginal young women. One of the girls also experienced childhood trauma which caused deep vicarious trauma for 'C'
- The capacity to hold down work made living in the truck the most viable option often
- Mistrust in the system.
- Comment made identifying that she was daring to hope in a system that she felt for years had let her down led to strong emotions and tears
- Agreed to give it another chance, but didn't feel able to self advocate because of anger and mistrust of the system.
- BHL responded to the advocacy and prevented 'C' from having to engage much directly with the housing provider (making it possible to progress and not alienate the provider through reactionary behaviour)
- She deserves peace and a chance to enjoy her life without always being in a hypervigilant state
- Argued that psychosocial disability and childhood trauma and the impacts of vicarious trauma should be considered a priority need for housing and it was granted.
- The property is very well situated and appropriate given the presenting issues and past trauma
- Positive impact on mental health was observed
- Genuine heartfelt gratitude was expressed by the client for the intervention, accurate advocacy and appropriate support.

### 3.4 Data for Community Drop-in (Community Services Hub)

CNB averages the following numbers of walk-in enquiries and phone enquiries respectively:

- Per day 12-15 and 8-11
- Per week: 60-75 and 40-55
- Per year: 3120-3900 and 2080-2860

## 4. Key additional information

- Client Feedback / Survey Results
  - Note the digital transformation project which includes the intention of collecting client feedback from the beginning of 2022-23 for the purpose of both impact



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measurement and reflective practice. Funding for this was provided by the Department of Communities and Justice.

- CNB strategic plan for 2022-2023 will be finalised in May 2022, this plan will be anchored around the CNB community hub/drop in and Homeless Outreach Service and will prioritise client feedback including surveys.

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## 5. Community Services Hub

### 5.1 Objectives of the Community Services Hub

The primary objectives of the Community Services Hub are to increase accessibility to services and support, to improve service delivery through effective collaboration and to work in partnership to provide and facilitate responsive and holistic outcomes for the Northern Beaches community. CNB achieves this by:

- Co-locating activities, programs and services delivered by a range of service providers, for the benefit of the whole Northern Beaches community.
- Providing accessible and affordable accommodation for service providers.
- Supporting and promoting a 'seamless', warm referral process between services.
- Improving service delivery and reducing obstacles to accessing and navigating services.
- Building relationships and effective collaboration between the various organisations involved.
- Creating a safe person-centred environment for consumers.
- Improving financial savings and capacity to attract funding from external bodies and government departments to further support and deliver services to the community.
- Identifying unmet needs and seeking to establish new collaborations in response to community needs.

### 5.2 CNB assets available to Community Hub partners:

- Manager Venue Hire to manage community hub relationships and venue bookings
- Reception operated by CNB volunteers and staff between 10 am - 3 pm
- Facilities including kitchen (inc coffee, tea and milk, zip boiler with filtered chilled water, fridge/freezer, dishwasher, microwave, cutlery, plates, cups, bowls), WC, cleaning, maintenance, WiFi, Printer, CCTV, IT support (onboarding), TVs (for casting video meetings or content)
- Meeting rooms, hot desks, lunchroom and break-out space.
- CNB knowledge base and services
- Material aid

### 5.3 Current Community Hub partners and contributors:

- Northern Beaches Women's Shelter
- Counselling professionals
- NBWS
- Manly Business Chamber
- Karim and Nicol - DV and AVO legal information, criminal matters and referrals
- Manly Legal Service

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- Services Australia - Centrelink
- Community Music lessons
- Gotcha 4Life
- Total Interaction
- Taldumande
- OzHarvest
- One Meal
- Tax Help
- Marijuana Anonymous
- Good Will Hunting Co.

#### 5.4 Key outcomes\*, achievements to date:

- New and improved referral pathways for people accessing support and existing clients
- Awareness of CNB and its important work as well as the support given from Northern Beaches Council
- Some revenue for the community hub
- Collaboration

## 6. Impact of COVID-19

### 6.1 Homeless Outreach Service

The COVID-19 pandemic presented ongoing challenges for the HOS. Stay-at-home orders beginning in December 2020 and June 2021 resulted in an urgent drive to provide temporary accommodation to people sleeping rough. As with the first lockdown, the intensity of the enquiries combined with a reduction in available external services (many organisations reduced service provision and ceased face-to-face support) significantly increased the workload of the service. An additional part-time worker was brought on board one day a week between July and December 2020 in response to increasing needs and available COVID-19 related funding.

### 6.2 Community Drop-in

- Drop-in attendees were naturally reduced in number during and post lockdowns.
- However, those who were in crisis were encouraged to continue to reach out for assistance.
- CNB continued to operate a (reduced) face-to-face support service throughout the pandemic (with zero closures as a result)

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#### 6.3 Community Hub

During the lockdowns specifically, and in the wider context of the pandemic generally, the Community Hub has experienced notable impacts. These include:

- Reticence from potential partners about making changes to their operations ie. relocation during the pandemic - a time of considerable uncertainty.
- Public health orders resulted in some state and federal government-funded services to work from home during lockdowns and a slow return to full face-to-face service at the Manly campus.

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#### **7. Proposal**

CNB requests \$202,342 per annum in funding from the Northern Beaches Council to enable CNB to sustainably continue delivering key services in the LGA and investigate setting up satellite hubs across the LGA. Please note below in the budget, CNB has detailed the expenses this funding will cover to ensure effective and continued operations.

In the previous 3 years, CNB has experienced funding shortfalls that have at times been met by small community grants and donations.

CNB proposes that this funding request would guarantee ongoing service delivery, financial certainty for CNB as well as employment security, knowing that there is funding available (not reliant on possible grants and donations)

Currently the Northern Beaches Council Grant funds the 1 FTE of a Homeless Outreach Worker (less 2% shortfall, not taking into account corporate recovery)), with this 2% shortfall and another 0.6 FTE funded by a time-limited grant and doesn't cover or contribute to the corporate recovery . CNB has shown that much has been achieved and more could be with funding that allows for a guaranteed increase in FTE to meet the needs of the Northern Beaches LGA and meet needs across the whole of the LGA.

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#### 7.1 Budget

<b>Northern Beaches Council 2022 Funding Proposal</b>	
<b>Cost of CNB's Homeless Outreach Service</b>	
<b>Corporate Recovery (15%)</b>	
Technology costs (2021/22 budget)	4,986
HR Support	6,000
Direct staff costs (wages + super + leave loading):	
- General Manager	124,239
- Bookkeeper	22,876
- Manager Venue Hire and Office Management	50,790
- Manager Volunteer Services	57,139
<b>Total</b>	<b>208,891</b>
<b>Homeless Outreach Service</b>	
Direct staff costs - 5 days per week (2 FTE)	
Manager Homeless Services/Homeless Outreach Worker (1 FTE)	95,231
Homeless Outreach Worker (1 FTE)	75,777
Corporate Recovery @ 15%	39,905
<b>Total (one year)</b>	<b>202,342</b>

#### 7.2 Impact of the requested funding amount \$202,342

- Having 2 FTE of staff, which allows for 2 staff bodies 5 days per week
- Continued quality service delivery
- CNB effectively delivering on agreement with Northern Beaches Council, for the community services hub
- Allow for funds to explore ways to improve the community hub for both people needing support and other Non-Government organisations
- Expansion of outreach across the wider Northern Beaches LGA
- Provision of consistent staff support in our drop in-service (which often services people experiencing homelessness, family and domestic violence and mental health distress)
- Retention of current HOS Manager/Outreach Worker (who is experienced practitioner in Homlessness Services)

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- CNB being able to meet operational costs/obligations as noted in the budget. The budget allows for a 15% corporate recovery cost allowance to fund crucial back office staff members who all contribute to the running of the community hub and drop in centre, to date this has been a sunk cost and not met by council funding
- Referral pathway for people experiencing challenges
- Informal triage between the community (facilitated by HOS and the drop in centre) and mental health services
- Increased capacity and responsiveness in assisting NBC in managing homelessness in the public space

#### 7.3 Impact without the requested funding amount of \$202,342

- CNB's HOS would only be able to function with 0.4 FTE , equating to 2 days per week
- Continued needs being unmet in the Northern Beaches LGA
- HOS not being available 5 days a week
- Potential redundancy
- With 0.4 FTE service provision would be limited and lack the responsiveness that the program could afford with 2 FTE
- Reduction in drop in centre hours
- People experiencing homelessness, mental health and domestic violence not having a face to face service where appropriate support and referral pathways can be facilitated
- Increase in rough sleeping within the Northern Beaches LGA which often has potential to increase community concern (for theirs and the person experiencing homelessness's safety
- Increase in anti-social behaviour, often people experiencing homelessness are supported by the HOS and the drop in centre, this support often alleviates the underlying issues which may lead to anti-social behaviour
- Gap in the responsiveness to council concerns around rough sleepers





## Acknowledgment of Country

The Northern Beaches Women's Shelter acknowledges the Gayemagal people who are the traditional owners of the lands, waters and communities in which we live and work.

We pay our respect to Elders past, present and emerging, especially Elders working to eradicate homelessness and domestic and family violence.

We acknowledge that homelessness and domestic and family violence are both problems experienced disproportionately by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

We acknowledge the strength, resilience and wisdom of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and celebrate their ongoing custodianship of this beautiful land we all share.



Parliamentary Secretary for Health and Veterans  
Member of Manly

What a year.

It would be easy to dwell on what we all missed out on, the sacrifices, and the moments of despair. But there are two observations I would like to share that highlight the importance of the Shelter, and the power of our community.

Firstly, no matter what was thrown at it, the Shelter went above and beyond in providing a safe place for women at the most challenging of times.

Second, the challenges we faced brought a renewed focus for many on the importance of supporting the vulnerable and the voiceless in our community. Being a part of something 'bigger' than one's self.

The ups and downs of the last year reframed for many of us what is truly important in our lives.

The role I am most proud of as a Parliamentarian is my Patronage of the Shelter. It is a privilege and an honour to be involved with such an important and respected organisation, backed by the most outstanding team and supporters. The dedication and hard work of the team meant that throughout one of the most trying 12 months for all of us, the shelter operated at full capacity the entire time.

The way residents of our community, and further afield, came together to help and support each other was incredible. From home cooked meals to vouchers and activities to keep the clients busy – this was a real shining light during a difficult year.

NBWS provided crisis accommodation for 26 women and transitional accommodation to 41 women meaning a total of 67 women have had access to support. In total, over the last 11 years in excess of 500 women have been supported and assisted back into the community.

The NBWS Outreach Service has been on hand to provide support and continuity to our

women who are transitioning back into the community. Importantly, the service also works as an early intervention and prevention of homelessness program.

The work of the Shelter goes beyond providing a roof over a head. The breakdown of the 1160 hours of support provided to our 67 women shows how expansive the outreach support services are:

- Assisting with family and domestic violence – 35%
- Financial, legal, education or employment assistance – 22%
- Health, mental health and disability support – 33%
- Access to Drug and Alcohol services – 10%

The NBWS has also made some modifications to the shelter to support residents with mobility issues including ramp access and a mobility bathroom with shower and toilet facilities, all of this designed to enable the NBWS to provide greater flexibility.

Finally, it is fantastic to see the shelter on the way to secure Australian Service Excellence Standards accreditation. This certification is designed to further improve our already excellent business practices and client services, and the Board has developed an implementation plan that will see NBWS certified by 2024.

A heartfelt thanks must go to the leadership team, the Shelter manager, staff and our unstoppable volunteers and donors for a job well done.

After the year we've had, we now know how resilient we are and can be confident and energised to continue making a profoundly positive impact on the lives of women who need our help.

Congratulations NBWS team and volunteers.

Yours sincerely,

**James Griffin MP**

Member for Manly

Parliamentary Secretary for Health

Patron – Northern Beaches Women's Shelter





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## Overview

Northern Beaches Women's Shelter (NBWS) is a community-funded, charitable organisation providing crisis and transitional accommodation, support, safety and outreach services for homeless women across Sydney's Northern Beaches.

## Our *Mission*

More than a safe haven, NBWS supports homeless women so they can rebuild their lives, reclaim their independence and re-join society.

Formerly Manly Women's Shelter, NBWS provides individual case management and an outcomes-based approach to assist women to access permanent accommodation and community support systems and services.

We know the main factors leading to homelessness include physical, emotional and/or sexual abuse; family breakdown; financial strife; domestic violence; addiction; health or mental health issues and/or lack of affordable housing.

Our goal is to identify and address the underlying root cause(s) of each individual woman's homelessness, so that their lives are forever transformed for the better through their stay, and the benefits to their health, wellbeing and prospects are enduring.



# Our Vision

## A future where we aren't needed.

Our vision is to build social capital and enhance the quality of life for the community.

### We Believe

Community engagement in local initiatives is key to resolving the pressing social issues of women's homelessness and domestic and family violence.

We believe our specialist Women's Shelter offering best practice support is a critical service for women on the Northern Beaches.

### Our Values

#### Respect

We value our staff, our volunteers and all our communities and recognise their value and worth.

#### Kindness

We are generous and considerate, non-judgemental and understanding of others' needs.

#### Excellence

We strive always to exceed expectations and deliver high standards.

#### Courage

We seek to drive positive change and challenge the status quo.

#### Hope

We provide hope and optimism. Hope for those most needing it. And we hope all our values can be achieved through collaboration and partnership.





Northern Beaches Women's Shelter Annual Report 2020-2021

#### This year

4531

Bed nights



65

Day average stay



26

Women  
assisted in crisis  
accommodation



41

Women assisted  
in transitional  
accommodation



74

women assisted  
with 1160 hours of  
outreach support



95%

Transitioned  
sustainably into  
the community



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## Chair Report

As each year passes, I am both saddened and astounded by the human race. The very fact that a service such as the Northern Beaches Women's Shelter is needed in a modern civilisation is shocking to our very core of what is good and decent. And at the same time, I am encouraged by the support, love and true respect that is demonstrated consistently by our community in support of women in times of crisis.

Since opening our doors in November 2010, our local community has opened its arms and accepted that even in our idyllic environment of the Northern Beaches, we need a service to address homelessness. From our beginnings of 2 houses and being able to offer crisis accommodation to 8 women, we now have 4 rented houses with capacity for 17 women in crisis or transition, and a property in Mosman for affordable housing for a further 18 women. Additional short term housing was provided to 7 women thanks to community members who provided short-term access to private properties. We are a service that is constantly changing and re-configuring to meet evolving needs.

Our model can be summarised simply as a three-tier approach:

1. Women's Community Shelter (WCS) providing overall governance, support and advocacy at a high level
2. The volunteer Board of Management providing localised governance and support to the Shelter team and a focus on fundraising to ensure continuance of the service
3. The highly trained and skilled Shelter team providing the day-to-day clinical support to women in crisis.

This three-tiered approach to our service has developed considerably over the past eleven years, and is proving to work well in ensuring that our service is funded, compliant and focused on core needs.

Over the past year, NBWS, like everyone else in the world, has been struggling with the added weight of Covid. This has meant that we have needed to reduce our numbers at the Shelter to meet social distancing requirements. The financial impact has also been felt with the inability to hold fundraising events, added cleaning costs and staff working remotely and still providing daily contact for clinical and emotional support. This period of Covid, has also shown us that our service is needed more than ever. NBWS has needed to look at financial diversification strategies and as always engage the generosity of our community in other different and meaningful ways. Throughout the past year, we have been fortunate to have the highly

**This period of Covid, has also shown us that our service is needed more than ever.**



Bassike IWD Fundraising Event

skilled service of two Shelter Managers. Jacqui Leonard led the team through the first half of the year, finishing in November 2020. We thank her for her commitment to the service and her ability to network throughout the industry and ensure that NBWS was always at the forefront of people's minds. In December 2020, the very experienced and deeply committed Narelle Hand joined the team as the new Manager. Narelle brought with her many years of experience in the sector (she started very young), and has led the team by example, true grit and determination to improve the lives of the women who need our service. Narelle lives by her statement which she made in her initial interview, which is "If you turn around and there's no-one there, you are not leading". She certainly has her team and the Board of Management following her example of energy, enthusiasm and commitment to the cause.

Our service has also seen two Fundraising and Communication Managers throughout the past year. The wonderful and energetic Lara Gallagher who had lifted our fundraising functions to the next level, was offered a position she couldn't

refuse and before moving on from her position with the Shelter, recruited the equally amazing, talented and enthusiastic Kirstie Christensen. Kirstie has a focus on wellbeing and embeds this belief into every activity and function in which she is involved. She has navigated us through the 2021 Covid lockdown with expertise and agility, as our planned functions are constantly changing.

I take this opportunity to thank those people that we have always referred to as "our heroes". From our fabulous local State Member of Parliament, James Griffin, who is our very active Patron, to our Ambassadors who are championing our cause on a daily basis. We have a lively and dynamic team of volunteers who provide support from organising and running activities from walking groups, sewing, gardening, the Friday BBQs to ensuring that the food and storage units are maintained in perfect order.

From a financial perspective, our donors and funding sources are not just "buckets of money". They consistently show us how much they care about our organisation and the services we provide.





Bassike Founders and NBWS heroes  
Deborah Sams and Mary-Lou Ryan

WCS advocates to government on a daily basis and ensures that funding that they obtain is shared throughout the Shelter network. We are blessed with some very significant and very loyal donors, including the Mary Alice Foundation (which also provided an extra injection of covid financial support), the Fussell Foundation, and Bassike who support NBWS with their spectacular annual fundraising event held on International Women's Day, which we luckily were able to hold in March prior to lockdown. The staff at the Northern Beaches Council make substantial donations from their fortnightly wages, which in addition to the annual grant from Council, makes a real difference to the level and variety of outreach services that NBWS offers. In addition to our heroes, we have so many community-based heroes ranging from private foundations, community groups and people who donate on a monthly basis – all form an important part of our critical sources of fundraising.

In addition to donations of funding, we are also supported by some fabulous partners who provide in-kind support of regular food and grocery delivers, such as the Sisterhood, Oz Harvest and Too Good and thanks are also extended to Nest Renovations for their ongoing assistance with accessibility improvements and general maintenance issues. And then there are the many, many individuals who have donated goods and items to the shelter and to residents throughout the year, particularly when we have made public requests across our social media channels for specific items required as women move from the Shelter into new accommodation with the hope of new lives.

Over the past year, we have also seen an increase in people making bequests in their wills for the Shelter. This does not increase the funding pool for the current year, it is reassuring to know that there are sources of funding into the future. Such thoughtfulness from our community clearly goes beyond



Bassike IWD Fundraising event with MC  
Wendy Harmer and Chair Rosy Sullivan.

the current everyday and into people's thoughts about the legacies that they can leave. We are so grateful.

To my fellow Board Members, I extend a tremendous thank you for your tireless efforts, time, energy and skillsets that you give so readily and willingly on a daily basis. Every member of the Board is a person who believes whole-heartedly in improving the lives of women in crisis.

In closing, my most important acknowledgement goes to our residents, who on a daily basis demonstrate their strength and bravery as they seek new beginnings, time to heal and take stock of how far they have travelled. We thank them for sharing this time with our team and for trusting that we will care and respect their individual journeys. We applaud you.

**Rosy Sullivan**  
Chair



Zonta Breakfast Thankyou.



Sisterhood Balgowlah Comedy Night Fundraiser.



North Balgowlah Angels.



Volunteers assisting with Ozharvest Mother's Day Delivery.

## Shelter Manager Report

The NBWS shelter is proud to provide crisis accommodation, transitional accommodation, and outreach support to adult women. This last 12 months have shown the team's strength and the women's courage during this difficult time. We had to regularly review our service provision to ensure we met the NSW Health guidelines, whilst continuing to operate at the recommended safe capacity as an essential service.

### Crisis Accommodation

The Shelter provides short term crisis accommodation. Using a person-centred and Trauma informed approach. Each resident is supported with case management in the 9 life areas of response so they can live out their life goals and aspirations.

In our crisis accommodation setting, we support 10 women at any time for up to 3 months. However, during Covid we had to reduce our resident numbers as we could no longer have shared rooms. Thankfully a generous donor in the community provided a 2-bedroom unit which has been such a blessing as this meant we could continue to support women who may have otherwise been turned away.

Covid has highlighted significant challenges, but we have also seen the resilience and strength of how our women have supported each other and the shelter operations during this time. The women have been running the food store managing the Oz Harvest deliveries, assisting with gardening, cleaning, and supporting donation deliveries at shelter. This has been a fantastic support as we had less staff and no volunteers onsite during this time.

Our staff in lockdown continued to support the women with their case management by video conferencing daily. So, it was business as usual but

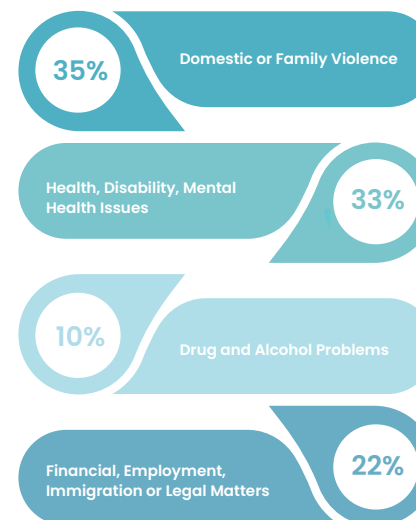
delivered in a slightly new way. The staff and residents adjusted to the new model very well and I am proud to show that our outcomes for women in empowerment and self-esteem resulted in 92% of women making improvements in this area and 8% maintaining their level, which is something to celebrate for our women.

We provided crisis accommodation for 26 women and transitional accommodation to 41 women totalling 67 women accessing support. While overall Shelter accommodation numbers were reduced, the length of stays increased as many housing providers did not have availability for longer term housing options. We also had a period where we were completing renovations and could not house residents for 2 months due to bathroom renovations in the December/January period.

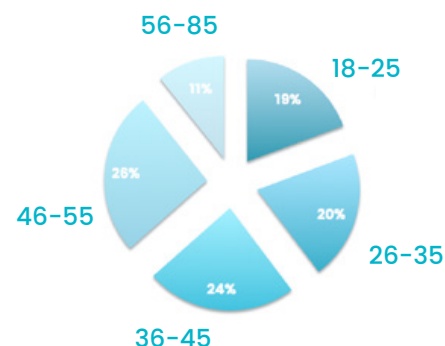
Women request our support for a range of reasons. Most of these presentations overlap and require complex case management support. Covid-19 added additional financial costs for women and the service as we saw more women with no income or no income eligibility during this period.

While 28 women identified as having a culturally or linguistically diverse background, the Shelter also supported six women who identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. We are very proud to see that Aboriginal women are wanting to come to our shelter and their length of stay is also starting to increase. I credit this to our work with the Women's Community Shelters Reconciliation Action Plan working party that Kylie our case manager actively participates in and contributes to.

Women needed crisis support for a range of reasons as detailed below. Many of the reasons overlap, which requires complex case management.



## Ages Represented



## Turnaways

The number of women we could not accommodate

July 1 2020 – June 30 2021 152

Monthly Average 13



Mosman House Opening.

In the last 12 months we have seen a significant change and consistent levelling of ages of residents presenting to the shelter.

#### Transitional Accommodation

Medium term transitional accommodation, for up to 12-months, has become an integral component of our support services. This program is a vital next step from shelter for those residents who may be eligible. The program provides a longer supported accommodation period for women, which primarily focuses on goals that ensure they can eventually live independently. This allows women to build capacity in areas such as employment, education, training, health, legal or financial matters that may be barriers to independence.

This last financial year, through the generous support of a local resident, the Shelter was offered the use of a private residential property for a six-month period. This enabled NBWS to support extra women with transitional housing. In total, NBWS was therefore able to support 5 women with transitional housing throughout the year. This opportunity helped to offset the effects of Covid-19 and increased the number of women able to be supported through our crisis services.

#### Mosman House

Mosman House is an innovative project that opened its doors in November 2020 and has provided safe, secure, and affordable housing to 20 women over 50 years of age since opening. Women's Community Shelters along with Link Housing (now known as Link Wentworth), Twilight Aged Care and the Northern Beaches Women's Shelter came together to establish this site and service. This has been an incredible partnership which made use of the former Mosman Private Hospital site to provide affordable accommodation for independent women who have experienced financial insecurity or a crisis event in their lives. Temple and Webster provided all the new furnishing in the apartments and the shared spaces, and this gave this place a beautiful finish.

Women sign a lease with Link Wentworth for a period of up to 12 months. Link Wentworth manage all the maintenance of the property and our role is to support the women to achieve their goals. The project is managed by Kate De Salvo our Mosman House Coordinator who supports the women with drop in case management on site. We are very thankful for the opportunity to provide a low-cost

housing option for women over 50 who have been at significant risk of increased homelessness over the last few years.

Mosman House has had the wonderful opportunity to work with outside organizations and volunteers to run client centred programs such as physiotherapy, cooking, yoga and painting.

Our lovely volunteers additionally ran a weekly walking group, sewing, and furniture restoration.

An exhibition has been organised to showcase the residents' favourite paintings weekly in the corridor of Mosman House, adding to the already beautiful artwork donated by Temple and Webster.

#### Our Partners

Supporting NBWS every step of the way is our partner Women's

Community Shelters (WCS). The Women's Community Shelter team are so supportive and guide our practice in policy governance support and we are very grateful for the expertise they bring to us. Our service co-ordination continues with the support of Community Northern Beaches, however due to Covid we have changed the intake and assessments to video conferences to reduce any potential Covid risks.

I was voted in as the Northern Beaches DV Network Vice Chair at the AGM this year and I feel very privileged to be partnering with so many organisations in developing much needed resources to support people in our community who may be experiencing domestic and family violence. The role works closely with key stakeholders in the community including Police, Health and other agencies and accommodation services on the Northern Beaches.



Art at Shelter.



Naidoc Week.



“Covid has highlighted significant challenges, but we have also seen the resilience and strength of how our women have supported each other and the shelter operations during this time.

The essential support of Oz Harvest continues, with the provision of high-quality fresh fruit and vegetables, meat, and dairy on a weekly basis. The Two Good Company offers ready-made meals weekly from their supported employment education service, which also provides training and opportunities for residents.

We thank a number of other vital community organisations for supplying office, household and wellbeing supplies for our residents, with particular gratitude to The Sisterhood, Advantage Property Styling, Community Northern Beaches, Link Wentworth Housing, Nest Renovations, Bridge Housing, Balgowlah Social Café, North Balgowlah Angels, Uniting Church, Rotary, Women and Children First, Blackmores, Claire Mills, Physio Rebound Health, Josie Wild, Olive Tree Health and Zonta Northern Beaches.

#### Volunteers

Special thanks must also go to our team of dedicated volunteers, who tirelessly offer their energies and skills to ensure our Shelter runs efficiently. Our volunteers assist with many necessary jobs around the Shelter and in doing so, allow for the case managers to focus on supporting the women in our care. Our volunteers form special relationships with the women and the compassion and empathy they demonstrate is critical to our residents' paths to recovery.

#### Service Highlight: Bathroom and Ramp Access for Shelter

We have been able to make some modifications to the shelter to support residents who may have mobility issues. Nest Renovations built a mobility bathroom which included a mobility shower and toilet.

Nest also built a disability access ramp which extends from the office to one of the shelter houses. This was an extensive amount of work, and we were very glad when it was all completed so we could onboard residents into the house as it was left empty during the works completion.

#### Program and service quality updates ASES

Our organisation has commenced The Australian Service Excellence Standards accreditation process which once certified is designed to improve business practices and client services. The Board have developed an implementation plan which will see our organisation certified by 2024. The ASES project will take approximately 12 months to implement, and we are very excited to commence this journey as this will raise the profile once again of our organisation and the services we provide to women in our care.

#### Independent Living Skills Program

We commenced the Independent Living Skills program in a group setting and one-on-one with residents. The ILS is an 8 week program that covers 8 topics related to skills required to live independently such as: nutrition, budgeting, cleaning, household management, shopping, and health/hygiene. Residents are asked to engage with this program, which may also support a Working Development Order where our women can reduce their State Debt Recovery Fines by becoming involved.

#### Wellbeing Program

Our program has a strong focus on strengthening the wellbeing of women. We have a personal trainer running an exercise program for our women which focuses on exercise in the home and not needing extensive equipment. As part of this program, an OT comes weekly to walk with residents, supporting them to build capacity and improve their physical and mental well-being.

The well-being program also offers art group, gardening, and a much-celebrated BBQ Friday social event, which includes preparing, cooking, and cleaning as a group. This is one of the best activities of the week for the residents and the staff. It's a coming together at the end of a week to share a highlight from everyone at shelter and wrap up the week's events.

#### My Safety Kit

We were also approved to run the My Safety Kit program which was developed by Dr Linda Coates and Dr Allan Wade. This is a new program that we are running with residents who identify that they have experienced domestic and family violence or been in difficult relationships in the past. The program is an education program that informs, increases knowledge and awareness. We are very proud to be approved to run this and look forward to sharing in the next annual report outcomes from this program.

#### Thank you's

To the NBWS Board who are encouraging, supportive and always available we are very thankful.

To the staff who are highly skilled and have endless energy, patience, and kindness for the residents they care for. I have such admiration for all of you and for all you do. You are special people with special gifts.

To our volunteer coordinator and the volunteers who give their time, care, and support to help this shelter operate with the utmost ease. All that you do for the residents at NBWS, and Mosman House is so very appreciated.

**Narelle Hand**  
*Shelter Manager*



CBRE Volunteer Work Bee



Pymble Ladies' College Christmas Hamper Collection



RNS Woolies for Winter Project



## WCS Report

### Building our Shared Success

Women's Community Shelters works with local communities to establish new crisis accommodation Shelters and safe housing options for women and children experiencing homelessness or domestic and family violence. We were born in 2011 from what was then the 'Manly Women's Shelter' project – our joint founders, after successfully starting the Manly Shelter, asked themselves the big question – 'might there be other communities who have seen a need to support women, and what can we do to help them?' A decade after conception, the answer is unequivocally 'Yes!'

Women's Community Shelters now works in partnership with eleven communities – 9 with established and operating Shelters & safe housing projects, and a further two we are working with to start new Shelters. Each Shelter in our network operates under a partnership agreement where WCS provides:

- **Funding support** – assisting with ongoing Shelter operational costs.
- **Operational support** including assistance with oversight of the Shelter Manager and staff, recruitment, policies and procedures and best practice guidance for the Shelter.
- **Case Management support** through the provision of an outcomes-based client management system.

- **Governance support** through membership of each local Shelter Board, regular meetings and development opportunities for Shelter Boards and staff.

Women's Community Shelters receives funding from the NSW State Government to partially fund our network of shelters. Other sources of each Shelter's funding include philanthropy, business partnerships and community fundraising.

We have been proud to support the dedicated staff and Board of Northern Beaches Women's Shelter in 20/21 through recruitment, training and professional development of staff, connecting donors and philanthropists to the Shelter, providing governance support and advice to the Shelter Board, and advocating on NBWS' behalf with all levels of government. We are proud that, together with WCS' support, NBWS helped 67 women in the 2020/21 financial year, providing over 4,000 nights of safe accommodation and tailored assistance to each resident. For every safe bed NBWS had available, there were significant numbers of requests for it, showing the desperate need for more crisis accommodation. WCS has continued to provide extra philanthropic assistance in the form of the NBWS 'Outreach' Program, enabling Shelter staff to continue to support women who have moved from the Shelter into transitional accommodation. Our Mosman House partnership, providing safe transitional housing to 20 women over 50 at risk of homelessness, has been a highlight of our reporting year and an outstanding success.

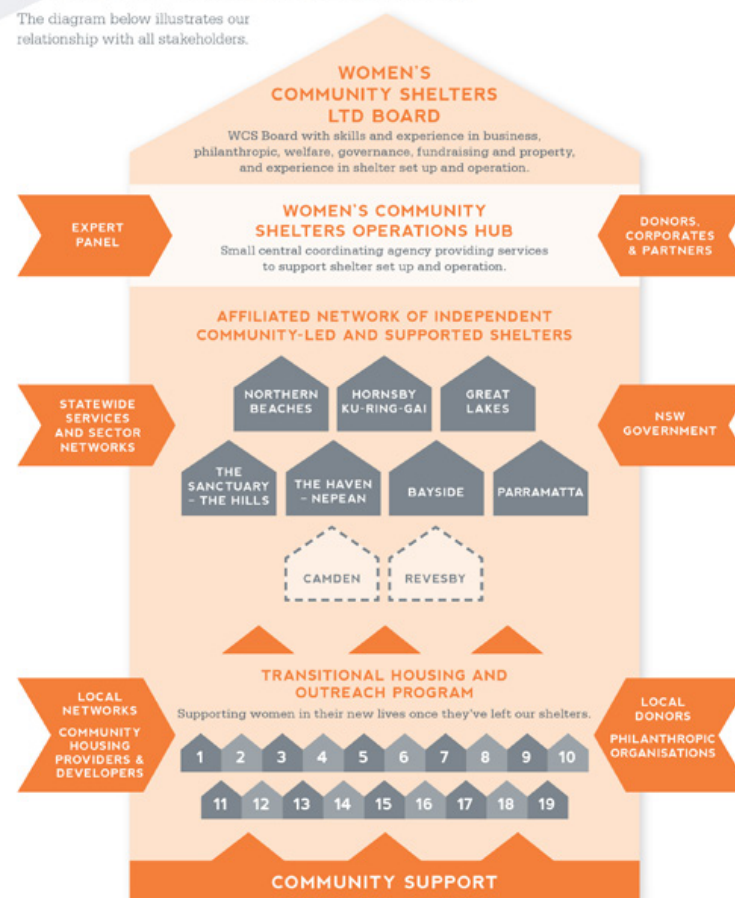
This critical ongoing assistance supports women to maintain their tenancies, continue to attend necessary appointments and stay on track with employment, education and training goals. NBWS continues to consolidate its practice excellence and good governance each year, whilst maintaining strong links at the grass roots with the extended Northern Beaches community. It is a local organisation that has truly engaged the very best people from the community to be a part of it. NBWS will always retain a special place in the WCS network through our joint origins and early supporters. We cannot wait to report on our 2022 plans!

**Annabelle Daniel OAM**  
Chief Executive Officer

## Social Franchise Model

**Women's Community Shelters is a social franchise model.** The model is unique to Australia's homelessness and Domestic and Family Violence (DFV) sectors because it is supported by diversified funding from corporate and private philanthropy and community fundraising. It receives minimum Government funding for its shelters and its head office (Hub) is solely funded by philanthropy.

The diagram below illustrates our relationship with all stakeholders.



Artwork created by Bug Communications



## People & Structure

“The Northern Beaches Women's Shelter (NBWS) was established by our community. It exists to serve our community. It survives because of our community.”



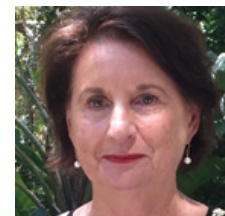
## Our *Committee of Management*



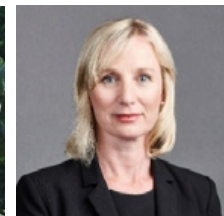
Annabelle Daniel, CEO of Women's Community Shelters



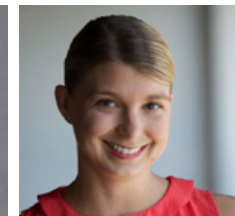
Rosy Sullivan, Chair



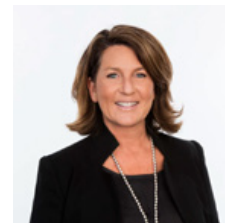
Beth Lawson, Co-Chair



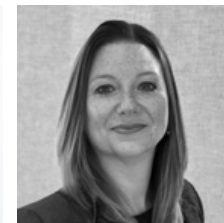
Elizabeth O'Brien



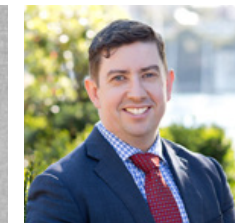
Libby Gauld - Chair  
Fundraising



Fiona Reid



Sherry Midgley



Luke Mitchell



## Our People

All of our activities and services are provided by a dedicated, qualified and skilled team of professional support workers and volunteers who go above and beyond in providing care and support to those in need.

NBWS values its skilled and motivated support workers and continues to invest in and retain long term and highly valued employees who are regularly up-skilled in providing quality client services, through ongoing professional development and external clinical supervision.

Our service does not exist in a vacuum and NBWS prioritises community development through participation and support of a range of community forums including the

Northern Beaches Domestic Violence Committee, Northern Beaches Mental Health Interagency, Northern Beaches Community Drug Action Team and Northern Beaches Homelessness Forums.

Our volunteers support the Shelter through Board membership, Shelter operations, fundraising and business activities. Without the support of our skilled and dedicated volunteers the Shelter would not be able to provide the quality and range of service delivery we achieve.

**Due to the nature of our business the names of staff and volunteers must remain anonymous.**

## Our Patron James Griffin MP



NBWS Patron since February 2018; Member for Manly; Parliamentary Secretary for Health and Veterans.

James willingly agreed to represent the Northern Beaches Women's Shelter and advocate on its behalf for the improvement of services, and access to allied services for women in need of crisis accommodation. His work to actively support the Shelter and his advocacy have been unfaltering throughout his time as Patron. We look forward to furthering our relationship with our local Member of Parliament.

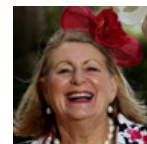
## Our Ambassadors



**Vic Lorusso**



**Luisa Manfredini**



**Julia Lever**

We are so honoured and grateful for the dedicated involvement of our ambassadors. With their support, we continue to grow awareness and raise much-needed funds.





“It is a great privilege to work in an empowering environment with an inspiring team and feel supported by a community that enables women to make positive changes in their lives.

## Walking Alongside Her

### Our NBWS Case Workers

**The ultimate goal of a NBWS Case Worker is to set a woman on the path to financial independence, social inclusion, and a new future free from violence and the risk of homelessness.**

**Here, one of our incredible Case Workers, provides an insight into her role at the Shelter.**

It is difficult to believe a full year has passed since Narelle has come onboard as Shelter Manager!

It has indeed been a year of changes, working around safe protocols in lockdown and undoubtedly an enhanced service to our residents of Northern Beaches Women's Shelter.

I am one of 7 support workers in our various Crisis, Transitional, and Outreach programs. We work with a person-centred approach, in which we acknowledge a woman's right to make her own decisions, while working with her toward her goals. We will ask a client to “paint a picture of the life she wants”, in order to recognise her values and what is important to her.

As a homeless provider, our primary focus is sustainable appropriate housing, however we aim considerably higher, supporting women in accessing all services that will build a better future, for example; counselling, gaining an income including employment, and furthering educational goals, health and medical services, and support for legal issues, including immigration, property and parenting matters.

This year has certainly had its challenges, with COVID lockdowns and increased demand for Domestic Violence and Homeless services. For many months most of our team were working from home, a frustrating situation for our hands-on and caring support workers. While difficult for everyone, lockdown is much worse for those experiencing domestic violence, then exacerbated further when they may be at risk of homelessness.

Despite these considerable challenges, things ran incredibly smoothly and we shared many wonderful outcomes with our clients. We were humbled by an outpouring of support from our community. Overwhelming donations of food, gift cards, household and personal items and financial contributions, allowed us to provide for our ladies while some of our usual resources were not available.

We have an amazing community on the Northern Beaches and we saw our vulnerable ladies touched by this kindness as much as we were. We'd like to say a sincere 'thank you' to all who acknowledged there were others suffering more than they were in lockdown.

One of my personal highlights of the year has been our Barbecue Fridays, where I have prepared a meal with the residents to be shared with staff and at times volunteers and returned residents. The simple act of preparing and sharing a carefully prepared meal brought much cheerful camaraderie and seemed to encourage a happier and more collaborative dynamic. We celebrated the things we were thankful for in the previous week and our cultural diversity in the dishes we shared.

It was wonderful to witness personal achievements and growth in the women we support. It is a great privilege to work in an empowering environment with an inspiring team and feel supported by a community that enables women to make positive changes in their lives.

## Gemma's Story

### A NBWS Resident

I was leaving rehab and needed accommodation. I met with the Shelter Manager for intake. I felt overwhelmed at the thought of coming into shelter, sharing with other people and not having any privacy, it made me feel so scared.

But I am so glad I did come into shelter and from the day I came to the service my life started to turn around. I came to the Northern Beaches Women's Shelter in March 2021, during an extremely difficult time in my life after escaping from domestic violence. I had also recently completed rehabilitation, and it was the early stages of a COVID pandemic. Upon entering the shelter, I had experienced significant trauma, grief, and anxiety, nevertheless, I kept going with my goals and was clear about what I wanted to achieve.

I had previously applied for housing but knew the area was no longer safe for me, so I decided to make the Northern Beaches my new home. Simply changing areas with no connections/ supports in the area created an issue with housing. I needed to create connections and link in with support services. NBWS supported me and eventually I was approved for the Rent Choice Start Safely Program.

The connections and supports I created now make the Northern Beaches my home. I created these connections independently by putting myself out there and trusting people which was challenging especially when you have had your trust broken by others in the past.

I always focused on my recovery journey by attending daily NA meetings even through lockdown and was asked to become a sponsor which was an incredible achievement for me. It showed me how far I had come in my own recovery journey.

While I was at the shelter, I completed a monumental milestone by reaching 9 months of sobriety. This was something I could not of imagined a year before. Things were turning around, I had good supports in shelter and knew I could get through this.

I knew that I needed to find employment, not only for financial security but to keep myself busy during the day for my recovery. I searched for employment and secured a job that gave me the flexibility of hours so I could still attend case management meetings and other support meetings.

I was then approved for deeper rental subsidy for the Rent Choice Start Safely Program through Bridge Housing which was a huge win. I then actively engaged in securing suitable accommodation.

I am so thankful to the shelter staff for their support and endless care. The effort and support that all of the staff give is selfless and amazing. Anyone who has the chance to go into shelter is very lucky.

The shelter experience gave me strength, independence, resilience and I have never felt so empowered as I was to be myself.



Thankyou card from Gemma.

“I am so thankful to the shelter staff for their support and endless care. The effort and support that all of the staff give is selfless and amazing. Anyone who has the chance to go into shelter is very lucky”.







## Treasurer's Report

During an unprecedented time, we are grateful to have achieved a surplus for the year of \$224,448.

The Shelter is funded by a mix of NSW government grants, philanthropic trusts, corporate partners, fundraising, and donations from the community.

We were fortunate to have one of our community heroes host a major fundraising event just before lockdown, with NBWS as the sole beneficiary. Unfortunately, Covid-19 restrictions meant our annual Gala ball had to be cancelled. We are grateful to have received continued support from many of our loyal and engaged donors.

Economic stimulus received in the form of JobKeeper, cash boost payments, and rent assistance from our landlords contributed support of \$150,000 from July 2020 to March 2021.

This additional support is largely responsible for us ending the financial year with net assets of \$1,292,636.

While the balance sheet has improved over the past year, all surplus funds are fully committed toward future provision of services, and the increasing need will be essential to our continued operation in what promises to be an extended road to economic recovery country wide. Furthermore due to recent 2021 lockdowns we have not been able to host our annual Gala for a second year and it is relieving that we have the cash reserves to support the service until this is held in the second quarter of next calendar year.

96c of every funding dollar was spent directly on providing services, an outstanding achievement by our team, and evidence of our commitment to manage costs as tightly as possible while still delivering the high service standards and outcomes we are known for.

We remain focused on building from our current position to provide the services that the most vulnerable in our community need into the future.

**Luke Mitchell**  
Treasurer

Northern Beaches Women's Shelter Incorporated  
Financial Accounts  
for the 12 months ended 30 June 2021  
ABN: 20 873 461 261



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**Northern Beaches Women's Shelter Incorporated**  
**Statement of Financial Position**  
**As at 30 June 2021**

ABN: 20 873 461 261



	Note	30 June 2021	30 June 2020
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Cash & Cash Equivalents	2	1,305,000	881,950
Receivables	3	61,552	41,775
<b>Total Current Assets</b>		<u>1,366,552</u>	<u>923,725</u>
<b>Non-Current Assets</b>			
Property, Fixtures & Fittings	4	13,578	31,918
<b>Total Assets</b>		<u>1,380,130</u>	<u>955,643</u>
<b>Current Liabilities</b>			
Trade & Other Payables	5	56,664	29,893
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>		<u>56,664</u>	<u>29,893</u>
<b>Provisions</b>	6	30,830	19,318
<b>Total Liabilities</b>		<u>87,494</u>	<u>49,210</u>
<b>Net Assets</b>		<u>1,292,636</u>	<u>906,433</u>
<b>Equity</b>			
Retained Surplus		1,292,636	906,433
<b>Accumulated Funds</b>		<u>1,292,636</u>	<u>906,433</u>

These financial statements should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes and the attached review report

**Northern Beaches Women's Shelter Incorporated**  
**Statement of Income**  
**for the 12 months ended 30 June 2021**

ABN: 20 873 461 261



	12 months to 30-Jun-21	12 months to 30-Jun-20
<b>Gross Income from Trading</b>	<b>262,174</b>	<b>230,026</b>
Outreach Funds	171,632	132,181
Shelter Rents Received	90,242	97,729
Sundry Income	300	116
<b>Net Income from Fundraising</b>	<b>709,983</b>	<b>636,278</b>
Income from events	92,700	129,253
Donations received for core business	606,741	556,554
Donations tied to specific projects	36,500	48,000
Fundraising costs	(25,958)	(97,529)
Interest Received	249	643
<b>INCOME NET OF FUNDRAISING COSTS</b>	<b>972,406</b>	<b>866,947</b>
<b>Employment costs - Net of JobKeeper &amp; Cashboost</b>	<b>498,036</b>	<b>454,892</b>
<b>Property costs</b>	<b>133,532</b>	<b>156,559</b>
Administration Charge - Northern Beaches Community Centre	6,365	6,365
Electricity & Gas	17,196	9,931
Refuse Collection	324	521
Rent	75,330	99,689
Repairs & Maintenance	2,117	17,439
Small Asset Purchases	3,341	-
Security	4,500	-
Resident expenses	5,524	4,102
Insurance	21,908	17,360
Water Charges	1,161	1,152
<b>Property Improvement Project</b>	<b>57,278</b>	<b>51,809</b>
Funded by grants specific to purpose		
<b>Operating costs</b>	<b>59,112</b>	<b>41,932</b>
Advertising & Promotional Expenses	117	540
Bad Debt	105	-
Bank Charges	3,989	224
Computer & Software Costs	1,209	4,649
Depreciation	11,176	7,092
Office expenses	1,103	1,472
Legal, Accounting & Audit Expenses	27,262	16,305
Motor Vehicle Expenses	3,534	4,085
Postage, Printing & Stationary	1,677	2,300
Storage	2,474	1,467
Telephone & Internet	3,815	2,716
Travel Expenses	244	1,082
Website Design	2,407	-
<b>Total costs of providing services</b>	<b>747,958</b>	<b>705,192</b>
<b>Surplus for the Year</b>	<b>224,448</b>	<b>161,755</b>
<b>Surplus Brought Forward</b>	<b>1,068,188</b>	<b>906,433</b>
<b>Surplus Carried Forward</b>	<b>1,292,636</b>	<b>1,068,188</b>

**Northern Beaches Women's Shelter Incorporated**  
**Notes to the Accounts**  
**for the year ended 30 June 2021**  
ABN: 20 873 461 261



**1. Statement of significant Accounting policies**

This financial report has been prepared for the use by the Committee and members of the Shelter and is a special purpose financial report. The Committee has determined that the Shelter is not a reporting entity.

The financial report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the following Australian Accounting Standards:

AASB 101	Presentation of Financial Statements
AASB 110	Events after the Balance Sheet date
AASB 1031	Materiality

No other applicable Accounting Standards or other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board have been applied.

This report is also prepared on an accruals basis and is based on historic costs and except where stated does not take into account changing values or current valuations of non current assets. The following specific accounting policies, which are consistent with the previous period unless otherwise stated, have been adopted in the preparation of this report for Northern Beaches Women's Shelter Incorporated.

**a) Cash & Cash Equivalent**

Cash and cash equivalents includes cash on hand, deposits held at call with banks, other short term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less.

**b) Property Plant & Equipment**

Property, plant and equipment, other than freehold land, is depreciated over the estimated useful life of each asset. The estimated balance of the useful life of assets is reviewed at least every three years or as required.

**Northern Beaches Women's Shelter Incorporated**  
**Notes to the Accounts**  
**for the year ended 30 June 2021**  
ABN: 20 873 461 261



30 June 2021    30 June 2020

**2. Cash & Cash Equivalents**

NAB Cheque Account	308,980	82,077
NAB Cash Maximiser Account	955,666	973,787
PayPal Account	40,074	24,419
Petty Cash	280	280
	<u>1,305,000</u>	<u>1,080,563</u>

**3. Trade & Other Receivables**

**Current**

Prepayments	26,018	15,866
Pledges Receivable	2,031	5,102
Deposit - Lease Bond	33,503	33,503
	<u>61,552</u>	<u>54,471</u>

**4. Property Plant & Equipment**

**Land & Buildings**

Property Improvements	36,498	36,498
less: Accumulated Depreciation	- 36,498 -	- 32,117
	<u>0</u>	<u>4,381</u>

Furniture & Fittings	21,988	21,988
less: Accumulated Depreciation	- 13,720 -	- 12,180
	<u>8,268</u>	<u>9,808</u>

Motor Vehicle	26,579	26,579
less: Accumulated Depreciation	- 21,269 -	- 15,961
	<u>5,310</u>	<u>10,618</u>

Total Property, Fixtures & Fittings	<u>13,578</u>	<u>24,827</u>
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**5. Trade & Other Payables**

**Current**

GST	- 2,147 -	2,813
Superannuation Payable	13,474	6,995
PAYG Withholding Tax Payable	-	-
Prepayments	25,000	35,000
Trade Creditors	15,962	7,859
Bonds Refundable	1,455	2,160
Other Creditors	- 1,374	327
	<u>56,664</u>	<u>49,528</u>

**6. Provisions**

Provision for Leave Entitlements	<u>30,830</u>	<u>42,145</u>
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Shuriken Consulting Manly Pty Ltd  
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Email: manly@shuriken.com  
Website: www.shuriken.com

#### AUDITORS INDEPENDENCE DECLARATION UNDER SECTION 307C OF THE CORPORATIONS ACT 2001

To the Committee of Northern Beaches Women's Shelter Incorporated

I declare that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, in relation to the audit of Northern Beaches Women's Shelter Incorporated for the year ended 30 June 2021 there have been;

- a) no contraventions of the auditor independence requirements of the Corporations Act 2001 in relation to the audit; and
- b) no contraventions of any applicable code of professional conduct in relation to the audit.



Peter Jackson  
Registered Auditor

Dated this 21<sup>st</sup> day of September 2021



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#### NORTHERN BEACHES WOMEN'S SHELTER INCORPORATED INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF NORTHERN BEACHES WOMEN'S SHELTER INCORPORATED

We have audited the attached financial report, being a special purpose financial report of Northern Beaches Women's Shelter Incorporated (the Association), which comprises the Committee's report, the Statement by the Management Committee, the Balance Sheet as at 30 June 2021, the Trading and Profit and Loss Account for the year then ended and the notes to the financial report.

##### Committee's Responsibility for the Financial Report

The Management Committee of the Association is responsible for the preparation of the financial report and has determined that the basis of preparation described in Note 1 is appropriate to meet the needs of members and also the Shelter's constitution. The Management Committee's responsibility also includes such internal control as the committee determines is necessary to enable the preparation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

##### Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. We have conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Those standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement in the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the association's preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view, in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the association's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the committee, as well as the overall presentation of the financial report.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

##### Audit Opinion

In our opinion, the financial report presents fairly, in all material aspects, the financial position of Northern Beaches Women's Shelter Incorporated as at 30 June 2021 and its financial performance for the year then ended in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements.





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#### Basis of Accounting

Without modifying our opinion, we draw attention to Note 1 of the financial report, which describes the basis of Accounting. The financial report has been prepared to assist the Shelter to meet the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act 2009 (NSW). As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for any other purpose.

*P. Jackson*

Peter Jackson  
Registered Auditor

Dated this 21<sup>st</sup> day of September 2021

## With *thanks* to our Supporters

As a community funded organisation we rely heavily on very special group of Major Donors, who we affectionately call "NBWS Heroes". Our local community also offers significant support that ensures we can continue to support women in crisis.

Together they make it possible for our organisation to continue operating our vital residential service for homeless women of the Northern Beaches. Because of their consistent generosity, today we're a strong organisation, helping as many peninsula women as possible.

Submissions for financial grants are made to Government, corporations and foundations. We are the proud recipients of consecutive-year grants made by the Fussell Family Foundation, Mary Alice

Foundation, Westpac Community Fund and Myer Community Fund.

These generous Foundations actively support the on-going operational costs of our essential service and importantly enables critical service improvements.

In addition to the financial support of our Major Donors, our Northern Beaches community is a core contributor to our capacity to operate and fundraise. We are proud of and humbled to be a charity of choice for these local network organisations, schools, clubs and businesses.

We sincerely thank all our donors and community partners for their ongoing commitment to the cause of female homelessness.

## NBWS *Heroes*



The Mary Alice Foundation



The Fussell Family Foundation



Northern Beaches Council



Women's Community Shelters



Bassike

Thank you to [Spicy Broccoli Media](#) for their graphic design support for this Annual Report.



To learn more about NBWS,  
and how you can help, please visit  
[nbws.org.au](http://nbws.org.au)



NORTHERN BEACHES WOMEN'S SHELTER  
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We are social.



**Northern Beaches Women's Shelter  
Reporting period Jan-Dec 2021**

The Northern Beaches Women's Shelter ('NBWS' or 'the Shelter') extends the reach from Palm Beach to Mosman for women needing support. The Shelter provided crisis accommodation for 26 women, transitional accommodation to 41 women and outreach support to 74 - totalling 141 women supported in the Jan - Dec 2021 reporting period.

**Shelter Outcomes**

- Out of the 26 clients in Shelter none have returned to homelessness.
- 3 women were supported to be approved for start safely 2 in the Northern Beaches 1 out of area.
- 1 woman was referred to our meanwhile use property in Mosman House for over 50-year-old women.
- 7 women were supported to find transitional housing accommodation with external providers, i.e., Wesley Mission, CatholicCare and Women's Housing Company.
- 1 woman was supported in restoration with her child and then referred to Women and Children first. She was then approved for rough sleepers using the 'Together Home Program'. We supported Women and Children first with the client through this process.
- 1 woman was approved for the together home program single women in the Northern Beaches local area.
- 5 women who met the Northern Beaches Transitional Housing Program were housed in shelter transitional accommodations and local meanwhile use properties.
- 1 woman was able to access private rental.
- 3 women were able to go and live with family members.
- 2 women went to live locally with friends.
- 1 Aboriginal Elder was approved for a social housing transfer while in shelter and supported to relocate to the Marrickville area with her daughter and grandchildren.
- 1 woman is still in shelter as she only came in towards the end of the period but has been approved for priority in the Northern Beaches CS5 region and is awaiting a property offer.
- 16 of the 26 women were escaping Domestic Violence situations.

**Transitional Housing Client Outcomes**

- 41 transitional housing residents were supported in the last 12 months
- 9 are still in NBWS transitional
- 20 moved to the private rental market
- 1 moved with family/ friends
- 5 moved into transitional housing programs within NBWS
- 6 were referred to other housing services for accommodation and longer-term support

**Outreach support**

NBWS provided 74 clients with outreach support. Outreach hours are broken down into case management meetings. Clients who leave the Shelter or transitional housing are offered 6 weeks of outreach support. Outreach is guided by the client dependent on what they see is still needed after leaving accommodation support. Most clients need support with

sustainability of tenancy, Domestic Violence, Legal, Financial, Independent living skills, and day-to-day living.

### Turnaways

In the Jan-Dec 2021 period, we turned away 13 adult women per month totalling 152 for the year. However, if we had more accommodation options, we may of be able to reduce this number significantly. NBWS currently rents its properties and even though we are given a substantial 30% reduction we are still paying over \$100,000 per year.

Out of the 152 turnaways:

- 5 were for women who had children in their care
- 40 were deemed too complex due to high needs support requirements. This is assessed on the current household and shared living arrangements. Most have comorbidity or complex mental health issues.
- 67 clients who requested service at NBWS shelter were told we had no vacancy. All clients who phone who are not connected to a homelessness service are given link2home for support.
- 13 women refused the offer of accommodation from NBWS.
- 20 were referred to another service.
- 7 were Drug and Alcohol current user.

### Demographics

NBWS supported women ranging in age from 18 to 74, including:

18-25 years	19.3%
26-35 years	20.4%
36-45 years	23.7%
46-55 years	25.8%
56-85 years	10.7%

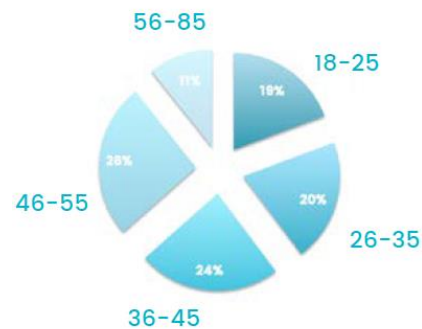
Ages of our residents at the Shelter ranged from 18 to over 65 with over 30% of residents being over 50 years of age.

While 28 women identified as having a culturally or linguistically diverse background, the Shelter also supported six women who identified as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders. We are very proud to see that Aboriginal women are wanting to come to our Shelter and the length of stay is also starting to increase.

### Northern Beaches Council Financial Subsidy

The Financial Subsidy that the Northern Beaches Council provides allowed for \$10,000 in staffing our outreach support program totalling 200 hours. Those 200 hours include case management, one-on-one contact and support with outreach goals. The primary goal is sustainability of tenancy and out of the 21 women we supported, 11 transitioned into private rental, 2 into social housing, 3 applied successfully for the start safely program, 2 moved back with family, and 3 were successful in applying to other community and transitional housing programs.

### Ages Represented



Out of the women receiving case management, 5 gained employment in the local area, 6 were able to accomplish study, 2 rebuilt family relationships, 3 had restoration with their children and none have returned to shelter or needed accommodation support.

The council subsidy of \$50,000 funded 22.8 hours, 3 days per week for 43 weeks to a case manager who provided Shelter residents one-on-one support. This is intensive case management for those residents residing at Shelter and enabled 13 women significant outcomes. Of those women, one resident was supported to apply for an Early Childhood Traineeship and through the traineeship was employed fulltime. After working in that role for a 12-month period, the resident applied for employment as she was then qualified, and she then returned to another state to further her career closer to family. Another resident who came to Shelter due to domestic violence and was pregnant, was supported with child restoration and then supported to fast track her priority housing in the Northern Beaches so she could live with her children safely.

Our unmet needs analysis indicates that if we had a further \$20,000 per year, we could increase our outreach support by another 400 hours. This would help an additional 42 women per year in our community to maintain and sustain their accommodation and access case management support for their primary needs. We are seeing more and more women wanting outreach support and without additional funds our outreach turnaways will greatly increase and this will impact the Northern Beaches homelessness and service stress.

### **Client Feedback Survey**

Northern Beaches Women's Shelter has 6 monthly surveys twice per year to gauge a snapshot of residents using our services. NBWS also uses a range of mediums i.e., feedback survey, exit and entry surveys and house meetings for residents to give feedback. Feedback is used for quality improvements to the service.

38 Survey forms were posted out to current and ex-residents of NBWS, Shelter/Crisis, Transitional and Mosman House Accommodation. We conducted the survey through the week of 1<sup>st</sup> November 2021 till 7<sup>th</sup> November 2021. (A copy of the survey questions is attached) Each survey has the same 28 questions and responses are 1-5 N/A and DK. This survey is purely for residents to give feedback on their service experience, it does not capture client outcomes, but their experience of the accommodation provided. Client outcomes are assessed using the Empowerment Star tool which is a collaborative practitioner client case management tool to gauge the client's journey.

Of the 38 surveys posted to clients; 12 clients completed and returned the survey, 5 were completed and returned by residents of Mosman House and 7 were completed and returned by residents of Northern Beaches Women's Shelter.

Clients were asked to rate the 28 statements relating to 3 areas: Service Delivery, Environment and Food.

### **Survey Results**

#### **1. Northern Beaches Women's Shelter**

Overall ratings were predominantly in the 4/5 range. Only one respondent indicated a rating of '2' regarding food statements and '1' in response to curfew time.

#### **2. Mosman House**

Overall ratings were found predominantly in the 4/5 range. Only One respondent indicated a rating of 2 regarding system processes.

Q: What do you like most about Northern Beaches Women's Shelter?

*"You guys. The staff the staff, the staff. Always there and respectful"*

*"Great support and understanding in every situation"*

*"No Judgement and absolute respect"*

*"Staff wonderful. Helpful ladies"*

*"My own room. Independence"*

*"Programs and opportunity to grow"*

*"Having our own little shop on site"*

*"Good food to choose from"*

*"We had every support we needed"*

#### **Client feedback is received and recorded**

The Northern Beaches Women's Shelter is also piloting a new digital online client feedback system which commenced in December 2021. This Elker feedback system uses a QR code and feedback can be provided anonymously or with name. The person providing the feedback is given a password so they can track the process of feedback, they can also request who responds to the feedback which includes the NBWS Board Chairperson. The Elker System questions have been designed with NBWS resident consultation, combining client satisfaction and complaint tracking to ensure that clients can give feedback immediately.

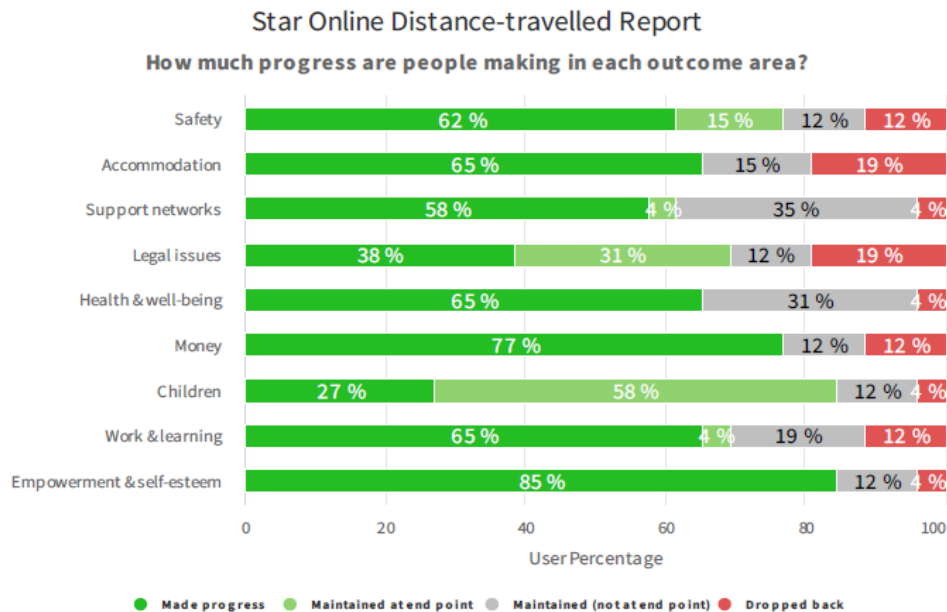
#### **Impact of COVID-19**

Women request support from the Shelter for a range of reasons. Most of these presentations overlap and require complex case management support. COVID-19 added additional financial costs for women and the service as we saw more women with no income or no income eligibility during this period. In the last period, we have financially supported 1 Russian woman and 3 Iranian women with no income with an overall increased totalling \$11,806.73 payments compared to \$175.00 in 2019.

#### **Empowerment Star**

The Shelter uses the Empowerment Star to show the progress for women who are accessing our service support. This evaluates the 9 life areas of response and from our Distance – travelled report, shows that we are seeing positive outcomes in accommodation with 65% of women making progress with housing, 62% increased safety, 65% work and learning and 85% empowerment and self-esteem.

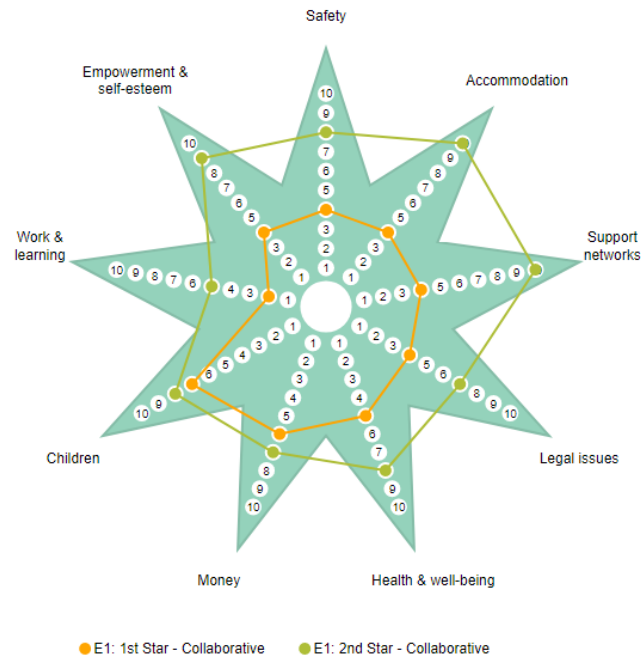
A key measure in the last financial year has been to support women to increase learning and work skills and the results are evident below in the table provided.



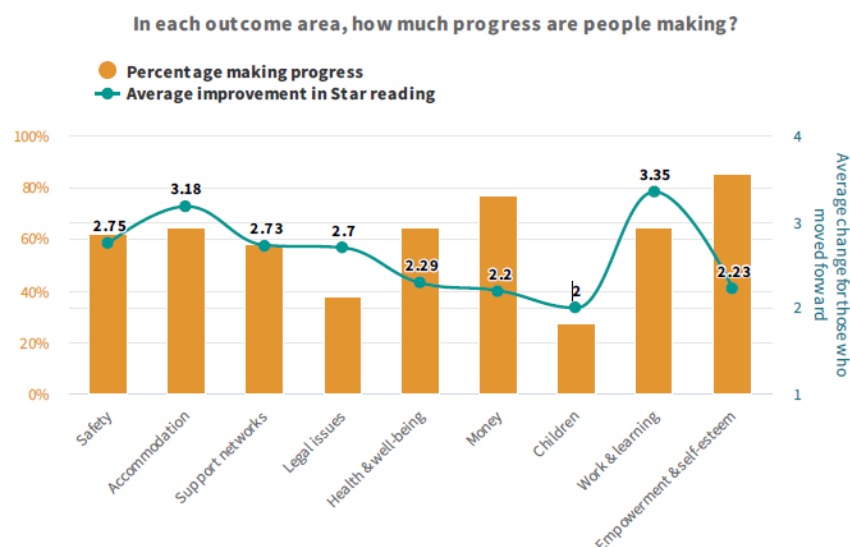
An example of how the Empowerment Star may report is that a client comes to Shelter who is homeless, escaping DV has complex trauma and may be feeling very emotionally stressed. The client may come to Shelter and on the first star they may track low in all areas of the empowerment tool. Then in 3 months a review will be done in the case management meeting, and this should show progress for this resident. However, when some residents leave the Shelter or transitional housing, they may feel like they are dropping back in accommodation due to what their prospects may look like in the future. Sadly, social housing and or shared living or leaving the Northern Beaches due to lack of affordability and moving to another area, may feel like a setback for some clients.

In the below example, the client left a violent DV relationship had been stalked on social media and had very little trust in services. When she came to Shelter you can see that her self-esteem was low, her support networks lacking, accommodation, safety, money, legal and health all very low. However, she did have a good relationship with her adult children. She is now living in her own unit after being approved for start safely in the Drummoyne area, she is starting up her own dog walking business. Her social connections have increased and still engages with our service on group work activities.





NBWS also showed the service results either met the average or went above average results in 5 Key areas - safety, support networks, health and wellbeing, money, empowerment, and self-esteem. One key noted area is accommodation and due to the lack of affordable longer term housing options this is currently not meeting the average. Another challenge is if a client regresses dramatically in one area due to the number of clients that we work with it can affect the result overall. Some clients may leave the Shelter for Drug and Alcohol rehab, mental health hospitalisations, and to move out of area which seems to be the biggest challenge as most residents love this area and feel safe.



**Australian Service Excellence Standards**

Our organisation has commenced The Australian Service Excellence Standards accreditation process which once certified is designed to improve business practices and client services. The Board has developed an Implementation Plan which will see our organisation certified by 2023.

<b>Standard 1</b>	Planning
<b>Standard 2</b>	Governance
<b>Standard 3</b>	Financial and Contract Management
<b>Standard 4</b>	People
<b>Standard 5</b>	Partnerships
<b>Standard 6</b>	Communications

**Independent Living Skills (ILS) Program**

We commenced the Independent Living Skills (ILS) program in a group setting and one-on-one with residents. The ILS is an 8-week program that covers 8 topics related to skills required to live independently such as: nutrition, budgeting, cleaning, household management, shopping, and Health/hygiene. Residents who engage in this program can reduce their SDRO debt as we are now a Work Development Order Sponsor.

NBWS has supported 5 women through the ILS program which ran over the 8-week cycle. Out of the 5 women who participated in the program, the overall feedback was that they loved the interaction and started the BBQ Friday weekly cooking event at Shelter where all the women come together and cook a meal and share. 1 Resident was also able to reduce her SDRO debt by \$800.00 by attending the weekly sessions.

**Wellbeing Program**

Our program has a strong focus on strengthening the wellbeing of women. The wellbeing program offers walking, art and gardening activities. This program is currently being run by volunteers and we do not have specific measures other than the women are up ready and wanting to engage in activities. The volunteers design activities around what residents want to do each week. We have had a furniture restoration group, painting group online during COVID, and walking group.

**The Women's Empowerment Circle**

This is a new program that we are running with residents who identify that they have experienced domestic and family violence or been in difficult relationships in the past. The program is an education program that informs, increases knowledge and awareness using the My Safety Kit Resource. We have completed five sessions, and the residents have reported really loving that the program is reflections based and 5 residents attended next session we already have another 3 residents wanting to attend.

**Partnership activities with key local services**

Supporting NBWS every step of the way is our partner Women's Community Shelters (WCS). The Women's Community Shelter team is so supportive and guide our practice in policy governance. Our service co-ordination continues with the support of the Community Northern Beaches, however due to COVID we have changed the intake and assessments to video conferences to reduce any potential COVID risks.

The essential support of Oz Harvest continues, with the provision of high-quality fresh fruit and vegetables, meat, and dairy on a weekly basis. The company provides 5 large boxes of food for residents. The Two Good Company offers ready-made meals to Shelter and normally provides about 10-12 per week. Two Good also offers our residents the opportunity to engage in their supported employment education service, which also provides training and

employment opportunities. One resident completed a cookery course and then gained employment with Two Good which was a great outcome.

Our community partnership relationships are strengthening. This last 12 months have seen much support from the following organisations and charity partners in the community:

The Sisterhood	Advantage Property Styling
Community Northern Beaches	Northern Beaches Council
Link Wentworth Housing	Nest Renovations
Bridge Housing	Balgowlah Social Café
North Balgowlah Angels	Uniting Church
Rotary	Women and Children First
Blackmores	Claire Mills
Physio Rebound Health	Josie Wild
Olive Tree Health	Zonta Northern Beaches

Zonta has been supporting women in our Shelter with education and study grants with one resident being supported to complete her Bachelor of Psychology and another a Certificate III in Aged Care and start up packs for our residents when they move into accommodations. We also want to thank Northern Beaches Council staff who salary sacrifice giving monthly to the Shelter.

#### **Northern Beaches Domestic Violence Network**

Network aims:

##### **1. Community Understanding**

To increase community understanding of ALL forms of violence/abuse against women and children and promote a culture of ZERO tolerance.

##### **2. Service Delivery**

To increase service provider awareness, support and understanding of the wide range of abuse experienced by women and children, including children witnessing violence.

##### **3. Education**

To promote and assist in the development, training and implementing of education programs with effective service delivery to support women and children experiencing DV/Abuse.

##### **4. Advocacy**

To advocate, represent and work on behalf of women and children who have experienced, or are at risk of experiencing all forms of DV/Abuse.

The Shelter General Manager was voted in as the Northern Beaches DV Network Vice Chair at the AGM in 2021 and has taken on the role of the Northern Beaches DV Network Chair upon the resignation of the Chair. The role works closely with key stakeholders in the community including the Northern Beaches Council, Police, Health, Housing, Domestic Violence services, CatholicCare, Mission Australia, Burdekin, CCNB, St Vincent DePaul, The Salvation Army, and other agencies and accommodation services on the Northern Beaches. A key focus this year will be to work on the 4 strategic areas that have been identified in community consultations. The first project will be working with PHN Sherryn Moltzen to establish a GP network to support older persons who may be experiencing domestic violence assess supports and services starting with the GP connection.



1 March 2022

# Avalon Youth Hub

## Report to Northern Beaches Council

### March 2022

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## Outcomes Achieved

The generation of explicit and genuine data detailing outcomes for wellbeing based service delivery is complex to develop and report on as a whole for the Avalon Youth Hub, it is acknowledged there is further work to be done around both the development of a Theory of Change and our outcome measurement as a whole. The Hub is a collaboration with a number of services partners and those service partners rely on their own individual data that they collect which informs their continued engagement with the Hub.

Our partner KYDS provides counselling at the hub and uses best practice measurement and evaluation systems to ascertain clinical service outcomes. Outcome data from 2020/2021 shows that young people who completed treatment reported a 28% decrease in symptoms of anxiety and depression, thereby meeting the criteria for “recovery”. Also 84% of young people who access counselling support at the Avalon Youth Hub receive direct help by the interventions they receive, compared to 16% who receive no treatment.

## Key Program Outcomes

- Waves of Wellness
  - 72% learned new skills to help with their wellbeing /mental health
  - 87% would recommend the program to other young people
- Body Image and Nutrition Workshop
  - 81% gained new information about diet and its link to your wellbeing
  - 90% would continue with future sessions – this program will be rolled out to high schools in 2022
- Podcast – 95% learned a new skill (media training with Gus Worland )
- Hub phone – parents are routinely asked how helpful their phone call to the Hub phone has been.
  - 93% of parents indicate that the contact has been very helpful.
  - 60% increase in the number of community members seeking to support the efforts of the Hub.
  - The overwhelming feedback from the children and young people that attend the Hub is it is a positive environment, and they would seek out support.

## Where did Council Funding Go?

Purpose-designed as a safe space for young people to find community, connection and rapid access to mental health support and wellbeing, it has been no surprise there was a change in how the service was provided during COVID-19. Since its inception in May 2018, 55% of the Hub's annual operation costs (\$165,000) were generously provided by the Northern Beaches Council.

Costs have risen due to the expansion of the Community Engagement Program, funded by various community donors. It was immediately apparent that the Avalon Youth Hub was a much needed service, and the community embraced the service. This addition to our community engagement costs have been lower this past year due to the scaling back of face to face engagement and activities.

Continued work has occurred both online, 7 day per week phone hotline, referral pathways, telehealth counselling support, workshops as well as face to face workshops and events when the opportunity arose.



Northern Beaches Council's financial assistance of \$90,000 per annum funds the core operational needs of the Hub to sustain the coordination, accessibility, and service delivery for the community. The Burdekin Association has been further subsidising the Hub over the past few years as addressed above.

## Summary of Expenses

Item	Cost (\$)
Staff Wages (including on costs) for the Avalon Youth Hub Coordinator, Community Engagement and social media / Marketing officer.	79,400
Advertising and promotion	3,600
Workshops	9,245
IT	875
Printing and Stationery	384
Rent (part year due to impact of COVID-19)	3,026
Admin Fee	Waived
Youth Advisory Group Costs	Waived
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$96,530</b>

## Future of the Avalon Youth Hub

Now that we are all 'living with COVID-19' and restrictions have been lifted the popular Wednesday afternoon engagement program was due to commence on 3 March 2022, given the high numbers we get this program is only able to go ahead in Dunbar Park in fine weather. This afternoon program is crucial to building relationship and trust for a new generation of young people as an entry point for referrals, engagement and drop in support.

In preparation for the Hub's return in 2022 we have engaged the employment of a part time Community Engagement Worker who is very excited to continue building on the connection with the children, young people and adults of the community. This role along with the Hub Coordinator have already commenced planning for the roll out of events for the year ahead with our service partners.

Whilst The Burdekin Association has always been committed to securing ongoing funding for the Hub this has proven a challenge over the years initially due to the significant demand for the the Hub's service and limited resources to seek further funding. The fundraising landscape has been significantly impacted due to COVID-19 and many of our local community fundraising events and opportunities have been cancelled.

We are expecting these opportunities to ramp up and whilst we are committed to securing on ongoing funding for the Hub and not relying on the Council funding in the future, we are however seeking further support at this time. We would hope that Council could continue with a contribution of \$90,000 per year for the next two years to ensure the core operations of the Hub can continue and grow.

## Avalon Youth Hub - Our Work - 2020/2021

As lead agency, The Burdekin's goal is to provide a safe community space for vulnerable young people, their families and support persons, as well as a one-stop shop, go-to resource for help with a range of concerns in respect to young people. These issues range from family conflict, couch surfing and homelessness, bullying, drugs, or alcohol abuse. It facilitates cooperation





and communication between key stakeholders and service providers in the community to achieve an improvement in the awareness and treatment of mental health and wellness issues, and importantly, acceptance through destigmatising help (Appendix A).

Governed by a Steering Committee (Appendix B) and informed by a Youth Advisory Committee (YAG), the Hub operates as a consortium of reputable service partners such as KYDS (Ku-ring-gai Youth Development Service), Mission Australia, Lifeline Northern Beaches, StreetWork, Headspace, CCNB and the Sydney Drug Education and Counselling Centre. The Hub has developed organically over time and today it is a mixture of one-on-one counselling, case management, outreach, drop-in, assessment, and referral services at a range of locations where young people congregate. Research tells us that slow speed to access, affordability, inflexibility, and red tape, are all barriers to families accessing mental health services in the moment it is most needed, therefore it is crucial services are accessed rapidly, easily, and free of charge.

## Our Living Impact

Due to the evolving confidential nature of our work and services, quantifiable statistical impact measurement is challenging, however we continually seek new systems/tools/methods to meet the increasing demand for data (Appendix C & D). However, it is the individual stories of the young lives/families we have the privilege of serving at the Hub that is immeasurable, for example:

*"Tom" is a 15-year-old boy who we met in a near-by park during one of the Hub's regular Wednesday afternoon Community Engagement sessions. Tom disclosed to a Hub leader his suicidal tendencies and 'his plan.' With nervous permission granted, we urgently spoke with his parent, and together, we collaborated on establishing a plan that involved immediate engagement with the Child & Youth Mental Health team. His mental health was assessed as serious, and he was immediately admitted into care. The Hub team remained in daily regular contact for months with regular visits to the care facility.*

This is one example of a common event where the safe, welcoming, non-judgemental, ground-roots environment we create at the Hub enables us to 'capture' or 'tap into' vulnerable teen minds and problems in real time. We regularly engage in instances of sexual assault, problems at home (parent separation, family violence), distressing emotions caused by a successful suicide event within the community, or friendship issues. We develop strategies to address the issues that are meaningful to the kids, and issues they might be personally experiencing.

*"The Hub has provided easy access to help for my friends and myself...it is an advocate for openly having conversations about mental health to help bring it more to the forefront of our community" Female, 16 yrs*

*"The Hub has provided a safe place for me and my friends to go no matter what the situation is. It is incredibly inclusive and welcomes anyone." Female, 15 yrs*

*"I like the genuine connection between one person and another. I have been able to share positive messages around to friends, and family." Male, 18 yrs.*

We have made great strides in the past three and a half years, even during COVID, but we still have much more to accomplish.



## Appendix A: Avalon Youth Hub Service Pillars

The Hub achieves its objectives through three Service Pillars:

<p><b>1. Early Intervention &amp; Prevention</b></p> <p>Activities that intervene in issues that may affect young people and their families before initial onset, to prevent development and reduce impacts. Includes screening, assessment, and referral.</p>	<p><b>2. Direct Intervention</b></p> <p>The direct delivery of services, programs, and activities by collaborating Service Partners, such as case management, counselling and workshops.</p>	<p><b>3. Outreach &amp; Community Engagement</b></p> <p>The delivery of services, programs and activities offsite (eg schools or community settings), leading to the development of strong relationships with the community, promotion of The Hub and identification of community needs.</p>
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The Hub aims to adapt our service and objectives to the changing needs of the community.

Success of the Hub is measured by:

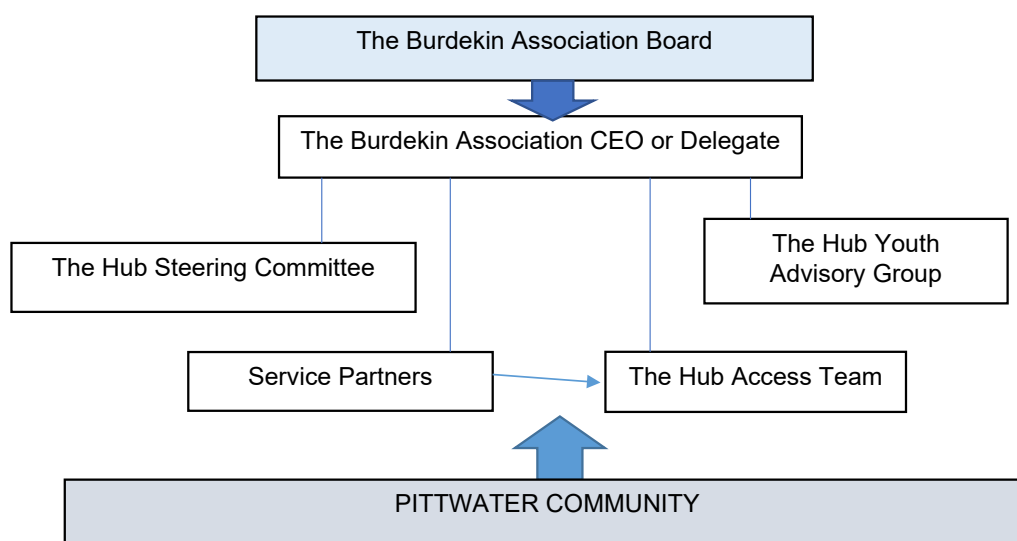
- The achievement of identified measures, making a positive impact on the identified needs and issues of young people and their families
- Sustainability and longevity of the Hub and financial resources
- The strength of the Service Partners' collaboration
- Effective engagement and relationship with the local community and
- The satisfaction of the local community and funding bodies.



## Appendix B: Avalon Youth Hub Governance (Confidential)

The Burdekin Association as lead agency of the Hub, together with the then Executive Committee of the Hub, conducted a review of the Hub's governance, and after several workshops unanimously agreed to introduce a new governance structure, with a Steering Committee replacing the Executive Committee. It was agreed the roles of lead agency and an advisory Steering Committee required clarification.

The Governance structure of the Avalon Youth Hub is now as follows:



### Lead Agency

The Lead Agency for the Avalon Youth Hub is The Burdekin Association (Burdekin). The Hub is not a legal entity in itself. Burdekin are the ultimate decision makers and responsible for the operation of The Hub including:

- Identifying and guiding new Service Partners and Providers
- Project oversight and guidance
- Marketing and media collateral
- Policy and Operations Manual reviews
- Institutional overheads
- Strategic fundraising
- Contract/management of Operations Manager
- Contract/management of the Community Engagement Officer role
- Decision making for final assessment, intake forms and software
- Financial sustainability
- Provision of the appropriate insurance coverage, notwithstanding the need for each Service Partner to carry their own insurance for their involvement with the Hub.

### Service Operations

Burdekin provides an Operations Manager who is responsible for:

- Daily operations
- Managing Steering Committee communication and meetings
- Updating the Operations Manual, policies and procedures



- Monthly report and meeting secretariat
- Managing internal administration
- Marketing collateral, information, and website updates
- Helping with online bookings when required
- Managing the Hub staffing (Burdekin employees only)
- Developing and disseminating the roster
- Collecting referrals where appropriate
- Collecting and correlating evaluations and data
- Attending Outreach and/or other groups where required.

Burdekin provide a Community Engagement Officer who is responsible for:

- Promoting and educating the community on all services provided at the Avalon Youth Hub (alongside Service Partners' own promotion and education efforts)
- Building working relationships within the community
- Completion of consultation and research in response to community needs
- Being present at community engagement events
- Managing social media and other marketing in collaboration with the Hub Youth Advisory Group (YAG) and Burdekin
- Overseeing the running of the YAG meeting and secretariat
- Attending Access Team meetings when required and on request from Burdekin

Burdekin provide an IT consultant who will support The Hub's database system and manage bookings online.

### **Steering Committee**

The Hub has a Steering Committee comprising of representatives from:

- Young people aged 16 – 18 years from Pittwater Region (3 positions)
- Mental Health Services
- Homelessness Services
- Education & Health Services
- Drug and Alcohol Services
- Burdekin

The Steering Committee is chaired, and secretariat provided by Burdekin. The Steering Committee provides advice and counsel to Burdekin on all aspects of the Hub. Other community services and organisations can remain updated on the running of the Hub through the Northern Beaches Youth Interagency General Meetings and other interagencies and relevant forums e.g. the Northern Beaches Suicide Response Group Steering Committee. Community services and organisations might be invited to join the Steering Committee for one-off discussions depending on concerns/issues arising in the community.

The Steering Committee meets at a time, venue and frequency determined by Burdekin and the Steering Committee. Key duties include:

- Liaise with Burdekin to approve MOU agreements with relevant stakeholders for new and existing partners
- Represent key local agencies in advising decision making that supports collaboration
- Review project deliverables and ensure it is tracking to identified community needs
- Coordinate with other community initiatives / groups to facilitate collaboration
- Disseminate information regularly to their networks to ensure that services and the community are aware of developments in the project
- Monitor and advise on budget sustainability
- Provide a feedback platform for goals, planning and strategies.



## Appendix C: Avalon Youth Hub – Impact by Numbers

Statistics provided by KYDS (Ku-ring-gai Youth Development Service), Service Partner and a key provider of counselling services at the Hub, demonstrates a sample of the measurable impact achieved through face-to-face counselling. Using best practice measurement and evaluation systems to ascertain clinical service outcomes such as this, is what we aim to achieve for all services.

In this instance, a KYDS clinician collaborates with clients face-to-face at the Avalon Youth Hub every Monday (9am-6pm) to build skills and develop strategies to manage their mental health long term. Clinicians will also work with client families/parents/caregivers and other agencies as appropriate. Outcome data from 2020/2021 shows that young people who completed treatment reported a 28% decrease in symptoms of anxiety and depression, thereby meeting the criteria for “recovery”. Furthermore, those young people currently in treatment are also reporting reductions in symptoms across a range of anxiety related difficulties. Further analysis demonstrates that 84% of young people who access KYDS’ counselling support at the Avalon Youth Hub receive direct help by the interventions they receive, compared to 16% who receive no treatment.

### 2020/2021

Objectives	Assessment Result
Reduce Anxiety and Depression post-counselling in Young People at the AYH.	RCADS (Revised Child Anxiety & Depression Scale) & SRS (Social Responsiveness Scale) Scores: 16%
Improve individual (personal well-being), interpersonal (family/close relationships), and social (friendships) relationships	ORS (Outcome Rating Scale). Improvements recorded between 7.5 to 16%.

From July 2019, KYDS alone facilitated 376 individual counselling sessions. There were more females than males seeking support and the main ages were 14 to 17-year-olds. The main areas of mental health issues were depression followed by anxiety. There were slightly more young people seeking support from families with only one parent in the home, as opposed to both parents.

The RCADS assessment tool was utilised pre and post counselling. The Revised Child Anxiety and Depression Scale (RCADS-Child) is a 47 item self-report questionnaire that measures symptoms of depression and anxiety in children and adolescents aged 8 – 18.

There were very impressive improvements shown in all areas, particularly in depression. Most young people stopped treatment when the client and therapist agreed that the client had achieved their counselling goals and treatment can conclude for that time.

### Funding

The Principal funding body of the Avalon Youth Hub is Northern Beaches Council, who generously provided the initial funding to start the Hub in 2018. Council renewed its funding 135k for the 18 month period to end June 2022. This makes up roughly half to two thirds of the costs of running the Hub, with the remaining funds secured through philanthropic income sought each year by Burdekin.



One of the conditions of the current funding provided by Council is that the Hub seek alternative sources of funding with a view to becoming self-sustaining. To this end, Burdekin have sought a variety of funding sources, both large and small, and at present a replacement for the Council funding from July 2022 has not been identified.

We have recently submitted a proposal for three years funding for the Hub to a known funder and await the result of this submission. In addition, we have secured a recent Dee Why RSL Grant of \$15k towards the counselling services of the Hub. Finally, a local group of community members have organised a fundraising event 'Party at the Bowlo' to raise funds for the Hub which will be held in February. We continue to seek out and apply for various funding opportunities as they arise.





## Appendix D: Service Delivery Snapshot (2020 – 2021)

# OUTREACH - AYH



**93**

Young People provided with 1:1 general outreach support and information, referral, support or crisis intervention.

**443**

From July 2020 – June 2021 there were 443 services delivered to young people (that could be an event, a workshop, a meditation session, a counselling service).

**5,470**

Throughout that period there were 5,470 young people who attended in total.



# OUTREACH - AYH

ACTIVITY/INITIATIVE	VOLUME	COMMENTS
<b>Community Engagement Activations / Sporting Events</b>	11 Community Engagement events 3,520 young people attended across the events	BBQ's, engaging with young people in the local community at various locations. Skateboarding events, music events.
<b>Counselling service</b>	388 individual counselling sessions held	Delivered by various services (e.g. KYDS, Headspace, Mission Australia, Burdekin)
<b>Waves of Wellness</b>	9 group therapy sessions held. 94 young people attended across those sessions.  Due to COVID an online session was held via zoom with 10 attendees.	A program used as mental and physical health intervention.
<b>Workshops</b>	3 workshops held 145 young people attended across the sessions.	Inc. sexual health, nutrition, stress relief.
<b>Meditation &amp; Mindfulness</b>	1 group session. 10 young people attended.  Due to COVID these sessions moved online via live Facebook & Instagram: 14 sessions 1,193 views via social media	Young people joined an Instagram live mediation session.
<b>Podcast Project</b>	11 sessions 71 young people attended across these sessions	
<b>Youth Advisory Group Meeting (YAG)</b>	5 sessions 39 young people attended across these sessions	



# Northern Beaches Draft Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026

### **Acknowledgment of Country**

Council acknowledges the traditional custodians of these lands and shows its respect to the Elders past and present.



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## 6

**Mayor's message**

The people of the Northern Beaches have a diverse set of strengths and abilities that contribute to how they experience life on the beaches. As a community we want all people to be treated with respect, have control of their life and be active contributors in the community.

In order to do that we need to recognise and embrace the diverse abilities within the community so that we can remove barriers and actively work towards a society that is more accessible and inclusive for everyone.

Together, we continue to make significant strides towards building an inclusive and accessible Northern Beaches. This Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) 2022-2026 will build on the exceptional work of our previous plan in working towards our vision of universal access and inclusion across the Northern Beaches.

Council will always have an essential role in creating and enabling access and inclusion for all people in the community. Through service provision, infrastructure delivery, and advocacy Council can promote positive community attitudes and behaviours, ensure that facilities and programs are accessible and inclusive and provide meaningful employment opportunities for people living with disability.

Improving the accessibility and inclusion of Council facilities, public areas and programs is already a fundamental component of project and service delivery. The DIAP provides an additional 'roadmap' for Council action that will assist in making the Northern Beaches more inclusive for all.

I am grateful to the many members of our community who contributed their lived experience and feedback during the consultation period which has informed the development of this plan. Your involvement ensures that this plan reflects the priorities and aspirations for people living with disability, their loved ones, carers, and service providers.

This DIAP continues our commitment to work with the community to support all people to experience universal access and inclusion.



**Michael Regan**  
Mayor



## Introduction

People living with disability are important and valued members of the Northern Beaches community. We are stronger as a community when all people can participate, and when a diverse range of views and individual perspectives are valued. People living with disability bring a range of individual strengths, interests and knowledge that enriches and contributes to the vibrancy and diversity of the Northern Beaches.

Northern Beaches Council is committed to continually improving access and inclusion in the area. Universal inclusion and access are rights to be afforded to all people. Creating a community that is inclusive and accessible to all is a long-term vision that will not be achieved in four years.

The Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026 (the DIAP) provides information for how we are going to make the Northern Beaches a more inclusive and accessible place to live, work and visit.

Council has continued working towards universal access and inclusion over the past five years through the implementation of the first Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2017-2021. The DIAP 2022-2026 builds on the achievements of the previous plan.

This DIAP has been developed following an extensive consultation process with the community, disability service providers groups and organisations, and our Council staff to understand the existing barriers and identify opportunities for improvement related to each of the four key focus areas.

### **Strategic Overview – Delivering on the Better Together Strategy**

Better Together 2040 Social Sustainability Strategy outlined the vision for creating a socially sustainable and inclusive community for all.

The Strategy's three strategic directions work towards achieving the vision in our Community Strategic Plan: Shape 2028: 'A safe, inclusive and connected community'.

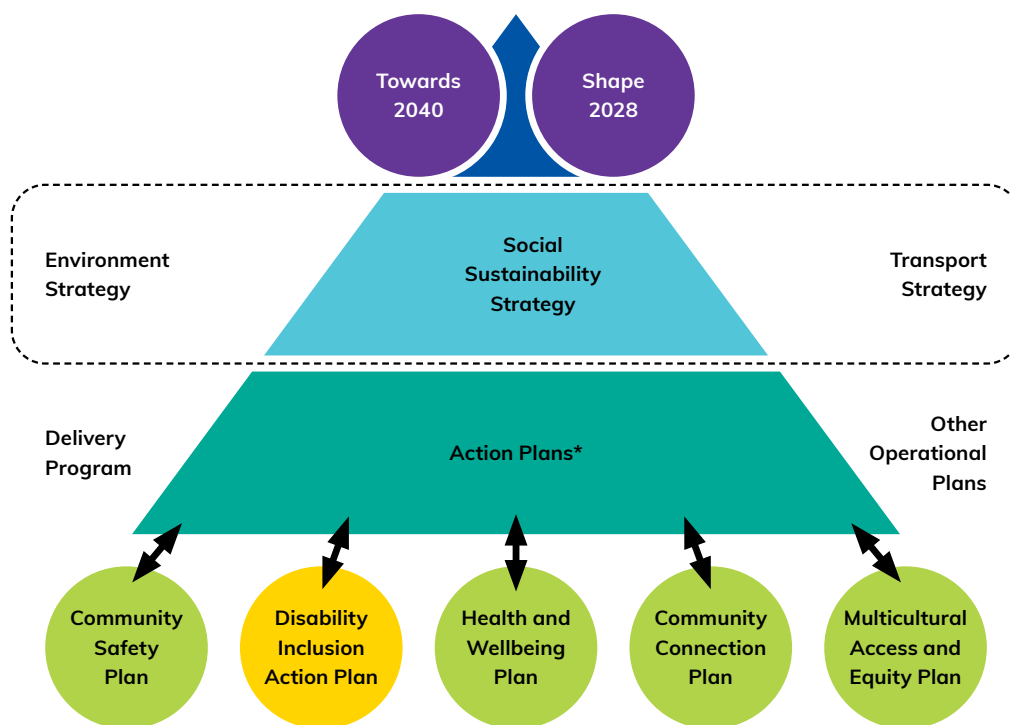
The Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022 – 2026 is an action identified in Better Together 2040, working towards the outcomes in the Inclusive pillar of the strategy.



The DIAP is a supporting document that will inform actions in the Delivery Program and Operational Plan over the next four years.

Council is required under the Disability Inclusion Act 2014 to develop a DIAP every four years. Appendix 1 provides a summary of the legislative context for this plan.

**Figure 1**  
Alignment of Disability Inclusion Action Plan in Council's strategic framework



## 10

## What is inclusion?

For the purpose of this plan, inclusion is defined as everybody having equal opportunity to enjoy the same experiences, and be part of groups that are meaningful to them.

Inclusion reaches across all domains of life including health, wellbeing, education and employment. When we have an inclusive community, everyone benefits. Impacts of exclusion are felt far beyond the individual, with families and the broader community being negatively impacted by a non-inclusive community.

Everyone deserves to participate, have fun, be visible, heard and celebrated. We know people living with disability require everyone's support to ensure that they also enjoy the same access to assistance when needed, social infrastructure, services and information as others living in the community.





*“People with disability include, but are not restricted to, those who have long-term physical, mental, cognitive, intellectual or sensory impairments. People with disability have specific needs, priorities and perspectives based on their individual identities including their gender, age, sexuality, race and cultural background, and can face additional barriers and inequities.” – Australian Disability Strategy 2021-2031.*



## What the Disability Inclusion Action Plan will achieve

This DIAP continues to work towards achieving the community's' vision:

**Universal access and inclusion across the Northern Beaches that enables people living with disability to fulfill their potential as equal members of the community. (Northern Beaches Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2017-2021)**

It supports people living with disability to feel included and be a part of community life.

### Key Outcome Indicator:

Percentage of DIAP survey respondents who say they feel included most of the time in community life

In 2021, 77% of survey respondents indicated that they felt included some or all of the time. The DIAP is Council's tool to help us continue to improve the inclusion of all people.



**Council's role in supporting inclusion and access**

Local government plays an essential role in access and inclusion as a:

- **Role model** - Council has a key role to play as a leader and role model for best practice inclusion and access initiatives
- **Advocate** - Council is in a position to lobby State and Federal governments to secure funding and other forms of support for disability inclusion and access initiatives
- **Advisor** - Council is in a unique position to provide advice to non-government and community organisations and local businesses on local disability inclusion and access issues
- **Educator** - Council is able to provide information, education and training to the broader community on disability inclusion and access issues
- **Policy maker** - Council will influence disability inclusion and access outcomes through clear policies which prioritise key issues
- **Consent authority** - As the key development consent authority in the Northern Beaches Local Government Area (LGA), Council can support disability inclusion and access in residential and commercial zones through development compliance frameworks
- **Landowner** - Council has control over land it owns, and can facilitate disability inclusion and access through improvements to the public realm and community facilities
- **Service provider** - As a provider of community services, Council will support disability initiatives and encourage other services to be inclusive
- **Funder** - Council can fund and support disability services, events and initiatives offered by non-government organisations
- **Event planner** - Council will plan and run inclusive and accessible events
- **Employer** - As the biggest employer in the Northern Beaches, Council can influence inclusion and access outcomes through establishing best practice employment practices and committing to the meaningful employment of people with disability.



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## Disability in Australia

### 4.4 million

18% of all Australians are people  
**living with disability.**



### 44.5%

Almost half of all people  
living with disability  
**aged 65+**



### 53.4%

people 15 years and  
over with disability  
avoided common  
situations **because  
of their disability**  
in the previous year ^

People living with disability are more than  
**twice as likely to not have a job**  
(10.3% compared to 4.6%)

### 90%

the vast majority of disabilities are **not  
readily visible**

## Disability on the Northern Beaches



### 9,273

in our community **people need help**  
in their day to day lives (3.7%)



### 10.7%

of the population **provide  
assistance to a person** with  
disability, long term illness or old age



### 60+

We know that prevalence of disability increases with age.  
The Northern Beaches has **a larger proportion of people** over the  
age of 60 than greater Sydney.

\* Source (<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/health/disability/disability-ageing-and-carers-australia-summary-findings/latest-release>). ^ Source (<https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/disability/people-with-disability-in-australia-2020-in-brief/contents/how-many-people-have-disability>).

## Northern Beaches Disability Inclusion Action Plan

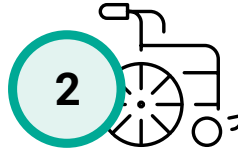
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This Action Plan supports the NSW Disability Inclusion Plan. It sets out actions to be undertaken by Council to support the four focus areas of the plan.



### Focus Area 1

Developing positive community attitudes and behaviours



### Focus Area 2

Creating more liveable communities



### Focus Area 3

Achieving a higher rate of meaningful employment



### Focus Area 4

Providing equitable access to services through better systems and processes

## How the plan was developed

### Review of previous DIAP

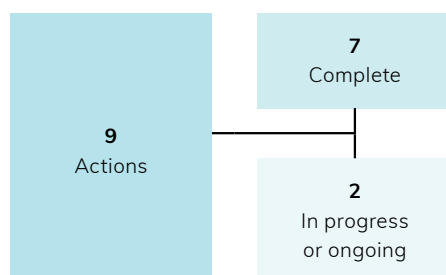
The development of this plan began with a review of the achievements and progress made on the previous DIAP 2017-2021.

Overall, since 2016 Council has made significant progress in understanding and meeting the needs of people living with disability.

Northern Beaches Council DIAP 2017-2021 had 78 actions across the four focus areas. Since the implementation of the Plan, Council has successfully achieved 92 percent of these actions.

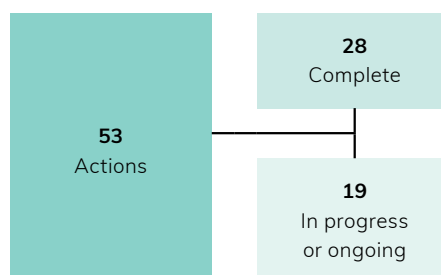
#### Focus Area 1

Developing positive community attitudes and behaviours



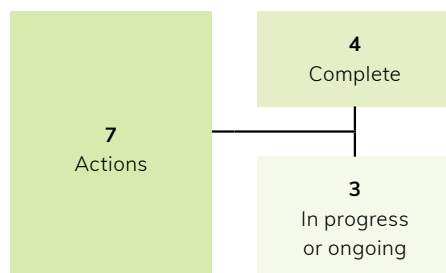
#### Focus Area 2

Creating livable communities



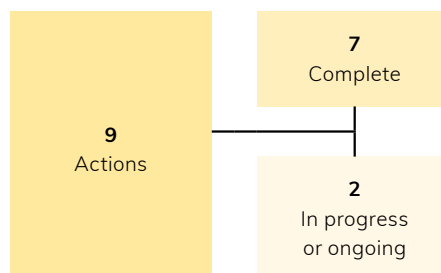
#### Focus Area 3

Supporting access to meaningful employment



#### Focus Area 4

Improving access to council services through better systems and processes





**Consultation with the community**

People living with disability were consulted about their experiences of living, working and visiting the Northern Beaches throughout the creation of this Plan. They were asked to share their ideas for making the Northern Beaches more accessible and inclusive.

Throughout October and November 2021, people living with disability, their family, carers, friends, service providers and other engaged and interested community members participated in the following activities to provide feedback on how Council can improve accessibility and inclusion on the Northern Beaches.

Consultation activities:

- Community survey - An online community survey that was open to all community members from 8 October 2021 - 7 November 2021
  - 37% identified as a person with a disability
  - 29% identified as a family member or friend of a person living with disability
  - 11% identified as a carer
- Vision board - community members shared their vision for an inclusive and accessible Northern Beaches on an online vision board.
- Workshop in a Box - service providers supported their clients to participate in a Workshop in a Box activity that gathered lived experience.
- Community conversation – several community members attended two workshops hosted by Council exploring their lived experience across the four focus areas.

**What our community told us**

People living with disability shared the reasons they love living, visiting or working on the Northern Beaches, including their love for the beach and natural environment, their connection to the community, and the infrastructure improvements they have seen made in the last few years that allow them to participate in community life.

*"I love the connections I've made with people over the years. I would say it's the community themselves who make me feel a part of the Northern Beaches."*

*"Being able to enjoy most, if not all of what the Northern Beaches has to offer; from walks along the bay and ocean, or through the bush, to being able to access most venues including restaurants."*

*"Northern Beaches is like an extended family. Everyone knows everyone."*

*"The laid-back lifestyle - no one is too busy to give you a hand when you need it or even ask are you alright?"*

People shared that they felt there was generally more awareness about disability within the community and commented on the continued improvement to physical access in places like Collaroy and at recently upgraded children's playgrounds. Respondents said when they are in the community people generally try to assist them when they noticed they need help. Respondents also said that people assist them to make sure they have understood what they have said, including taking off their masks or finding another way to share information.

At the same time, people also highlighted that there needs to be more awareness and understanding of invisible or hidden disability.

Respondents highlighted the diversity within the cohort and the importance of recognising this diversity to understand the different abilities and barriers experienced by people living with disability.

### Key themes that emerged during consultation



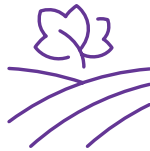
Access to what the  
Northern Beaches  
has to offer



Opportunities for  
engagement



Opportunities for  
employment



Focus on  
infrastructure



Awareness and  
education

### How the consultation shaped this Plan

The actions included in the Plan respond to community feedback and represent what Council can directly contribute to over the next four years. Some actions that involve Council advocating for change.

We acknowledge that there are barriers to access and inclusion that exist outside Council's scope of influence. Some actions have been included that involve Council advocating for change. These actions ensure that we are supporting the community to realise change that is outside the control of Council.

The Plan also includes a number of actions from the previous DIAP 2017-2021 that are now embedded practices or ongoing actions.

## Focus Area 1 - Positive community attitudes and behaviours

**Aim: To build community awareness of the rights and capabilities of people with disability and support the development of positive attitudes and behaviour towards people with disability.**

Attitudes and behaviours of the community towards people living with disability can present the greatest barrier to full access and inclusion. Negative attitudes towards people living with disability can have significant impact on their day to day lives and can affect education, employment, health and community participation.

Every third person in NSW who lives with disability has avoided situations due to disability in the past year – often avoiding visiting family, retail and hospitality venues, and other social situations (NSW Disability Inclusion Plan 2021-2025).

### Key achievements in the last five years:

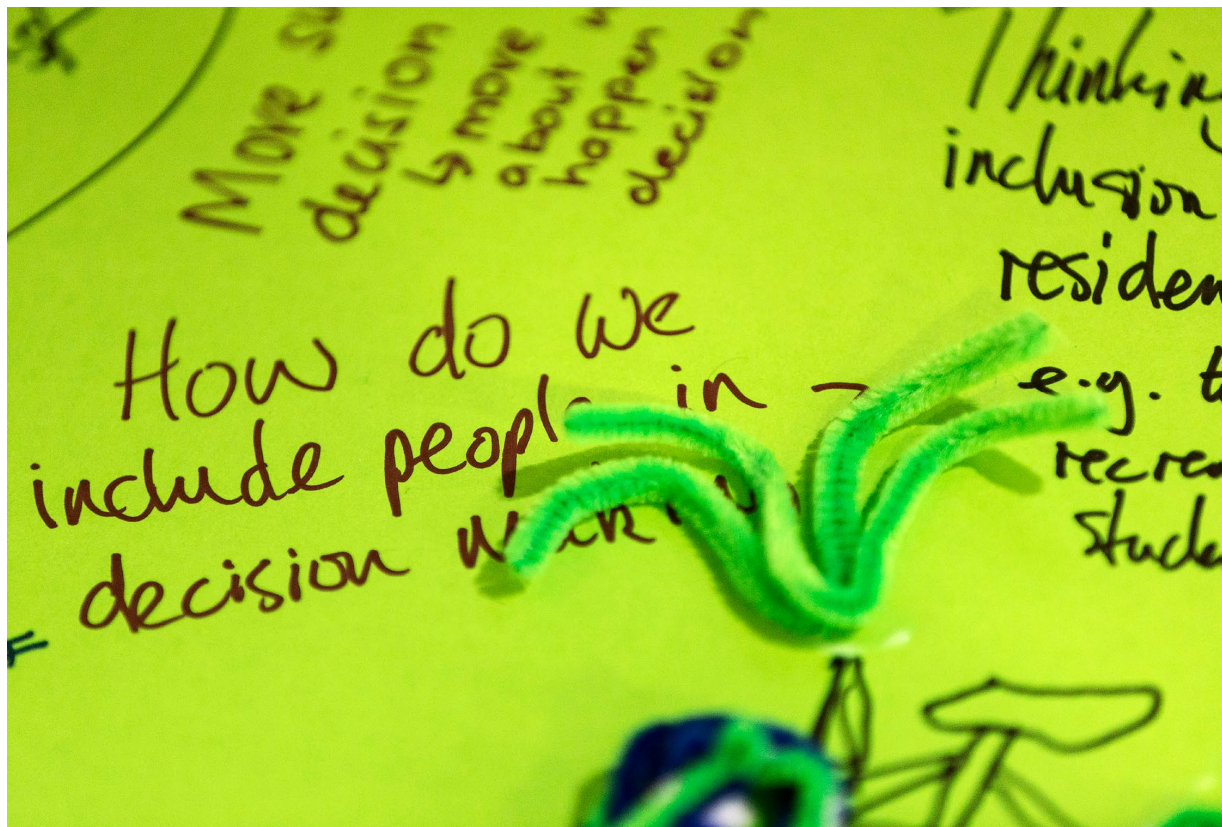
- Developed and supported a range of disability education and awareness initiatives including promotion of International Day of People with Disability
- Conducted a number of internal education and awareness training programs including:
  - Accessible and Inclusive Events Training
  - Disability Awareness online learning module for all staff and included in the New Starter induction program
- Established Access and Inclusion Awards encouraging local businesses to make their services more accessible
- Established Inclusive Event Guidelines.

**We heard that:**

- Most people think that negative attitudes and behaviours are influenced by a lack of knowledge and awareness
- People living with disability want the opportunity to share their stories and experiences with Council and the community.

**You told us there are opportunities to:**

- Ensure we utilise the expertise of people living with disability about accessibility and disability inclusion
- Advocate for improved transport options in hard-to-reach areas of the Northern Beaches.



**Focus Area 1 – Behaviours and Attitudes**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Actions</b>	<b>Performance Measure</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
FA1.01	Build community awareness about disability and promote inclusion	Number of programs and events delivered each year	Community Development	Ongoing
FA1.02	Incorporate storytelling and other creative approaches into Council communications and engagement to increase awareness and understanding of disability and inclusion	New approaches implemented	Community Development, Communications	Ongoing
FA1.03	Engage the local disability sector to identify relevant actions and/or advocacy relating to community transport, services and support, lower cost activities or other identified priorities	Engagement undertaken and opportunities identified and realised	Community Development	Ongoing
FA1.04	Partner across Council to find ways to celebrate International Day for People with Disability each year	International Day of People with Disability celebrated each year	Community Development	Years 1 - 4
FA1.05	Investigate ways to ensure the grants program supports the improvement of disability inclusion and accessibility for the community	Improvements identified and implemented	Community Development	Year 2 & 3
FA1.06	Implement inclusive events guidelines across all Council run events	Percentage of events delivered each year that incorporate the inclusive event guidelines	Events	Ongoing
FA1.07	Include information relevant to people living with disability in mainstream communication	Number of Weekly Newsletters that include information targeted at people living with disability is increasing each year	Communications	Ongoing
FA1.08	Include images of people living with disability in regular marketing and communication materials produced by Council	Number of marketing and communication materials that include images of people living with disability is increasing each year	Communications, Graphic Design & Production	Ongoing



Code	Actions	Performance Measure	Responsibility	Timeframe
FA1.09	Review and improve training about inclusion and access for Council staff, in particular for staff in customer facing roles	Staff training updated and rolled out to organisation	Human Resources	Year 1
FA1.10	Deliver inclusive and accessible library programs that encourage connection for all people	100% of program planning and implementation is aligned to inclusive practices	Library Services	Ongoing
FA1.11	Explore the provision of devices that enable accessible library features in the home	Programs delivered	Library Services	Year 2
FA1.12	Increase the number of library materials offered in a range of formats and ensure the inclusive collection is maintained	Inclusive collection maintained	Library Services	Ongoing
FA1.13	Promote opportunities for local arts and cultural activities that are accessible and inclusive through the Culture Map live	Culture map includes accessible and inclusive activities	Arts & Culture	Ongoing
FA1.14	Implement and maintain the Inclusion Policy and Working Together Agreements between families and educators to support inclusion of children living with disability	Policy reviewed regularly and Working Together Agreements in place for all children living with disability using the service	Children's Services	Ongoing
FA1.15	Continue to provide inclusive and accessible childcare services for children living with disability	Number of children living with disability attending Council provided Long Day Care, Vacation Care, Pre-school, and Family Day Care services	Children's Services	Ongoing

## Focus Area 2 - Creating liveable communities

**Aim: To increase participation of people with disability in all aspects of community life. Use targeted approaches to address barriers in access to infrastructure, transport, social engagement, housing, learning, transport, health, social and cultural engagement and wellbeing.**

Liveable communities are places where people have the opportunity to live, learn, work, play, to belong and to grow old. Liveable communities help to promote social inclusion and opportunity.

People living with disability encounter many barriers in the built environment and Council has a role to play in ensuring everyone has the same opportunities to access:



The built environment  
and public spaces



The natural environment, in particular  
our beaches and parks



Services, retail and hospitality  
venues they need and want



Appropriate transport options

Creating liveable communities involves more than just increasing physical accessibility. Liveable communities are those where everyone has access to participate in community activities, decision making, housing and a range of opportunities for social engagement.

Council plays a key role in enabling and facilitating liveable communities. As a service provider, landowner and consent authority, Council can directly influence the accessibility and inclusivity of the LGA.

Where Council does not have responsibility, we can use advocacy and partnerships with other levels of government and organisations to support the needs of our community.

**Key achievements in the last five years:**

- Undertaken an accessibility audit of Council's public facilities and assets (ongoing)
- Conducted an annual review of accessible toilets
- Reviewed accessible parking provision
- Improved access to beaches and rockpools
- Implemented a playground renewal program with a focus on all abilities play
- Upgraded footpaths, kerbs, ramps and bus stops.

*"I'm a carer and can see the many improvements made by Council, for example wider footpaths and general areas easily accessed."*

**We heard that:**

- Community members recognise the significant improvements made to improve physical access to a range of public spaces and places
- Access to appropriate amenities is critical to being able to participate in the community
- Accessibility legislation, standards and guidelines provide the minimum expectations for access and inclusion but talking with people that have lived experience of existing and potential barriers will lead to the best outcomes.

**You told us there are opportunities to:**

- Improve connectivity between public spaces, Council buildings and amenities.

**Focus Area 2 – Creating Liveable Communities**

Code	Actions	Performance Measure	Responsibility	Timeframe
FA2.01	Improve consultation and engagement with people living with disability during the design and delivery of capital projects to better understand access requirements for users of infrastructure	Number of projects per year that have proactively engaged people living with disability is increasing	All asset owners	Ongoing
FA2.02	Ensure all new footpaths works are constructed to Council's standard specifications for width to enable safe and easy access and pram ramps are upgraded to continue to improve pedestrian safety and accessibility	% of New footpaths 1.5metre width	Transport & Civil Infrastructure	Ongoing
FA2.03	Advocate for improved transport options on the Northern Beaches	Advocacy undertaken	Transport & Civil Infrastructure	Ongoing
FA2.04	Deliver new or upgrade existing accessible parking spaces, working towards all accessible parking spaces being compliant with current legislation as part of Council's carpark renewal program	Number of compliant spaces delivered per year	Transport & Civil Infrastructure	Years 1 – 2
FA2.05	Ensure all bus stops adjoining new and renewal footpath capital works are DDA compliant and continue to deliver a proactive bus stop renewal program that makes existing bus stops DDA compliant	Number of DDA compliant bus stops built each year	Transport & Civil Infrastructure	Ongoing
FA2.06	Conduct road safety audits around identified schools each year to improve safety and identify areas of concern	4 road safety audits conducted around schools each year	Transport & Civil Infrastructure	Years 1 – 2
FA2.07	Provide ongoing education about safe utilisation of the road and pedestrian transport network including use of shared paths	Number of education programs delivered	Transport & Civil Infrastructure	Year 1

Code	Actions	Performance Measure	Responsibility	Timeframe
FA2.08	Improve access to unisex accessible toilets in public spaces and Council assets and incorporate adult change table facilities where possible	2 or more new/renewal amenities works include accessible facilities each year	Property	Ongoing
FA2.09	Implement a capital works program to improve accessibility to Council owned buildings	Number of buildings where access has been improved during capital projects each year	Property	Ongoing
FA2.10	Improve connectivity between community centres and surrounding infrastructure such as parking, transport hubs, amenities, etc	Transport & Civil Infrastructure, Parks & Recreation and Property to meet annually to discuss planned Capex and to coordinate programming of intended works	Property, Parks & Recreation, Transport & Civil Infrastructure	Ongoing
FA2.11	Investigate options around the use and implementation of Master Locksmiths Access Key (MLAK)	Year 1 - Options identified and preferred approach selected  Years 2-4 - Preferred approach implemented	Property	Years 1 – 4
FA2.12	Undertake an audit of accessibility of Council owned buildings to ensure Council is an accessible place to work and prioritise recommendations of audit	Year 1 - audit completed Year 2 - 4 - Prioritise outcomes of audit and begin works	Property	Years 1 – 4
FA2.13	Investigate the inclusion of hearing loops in key Council facilities	Hearing loops installed in appropriate locations	Property	Ongoing
FA2.14	Investigate how Council could create quiet or safe spaces for people with sensory needs in public spaces	Report completed	Transport and Civil Infrastructure, Parks & Recreation, Property	Year 1
FA2.15	Improved access to beach rock pools at key locations including Bilgola Beach and Freshwater Rockpool	Locations identified and access improved	Parks & Recreation	Years 2 - 3

Code	Actions	Performance Measure	Responsibility	Timeframe
FA2.16	Identify more locations each year to improve access to the natural environment	3 or more locations identified and access improved to the natural environment each year	Parks & Recreation	Years 1 – 4
FA2.17	All playground upgrades are designed for all abilities	100% of playgrounds delivered are designed for all abilities	Parks & Recreation	Years 1 – 4
FA2.18	Work with businesses and the broader community to identify barriers to access in town and village centres	Number of improvements identified and implemented each year	Place & Economic Development	Ongoing
FA2.19	Improve access to walking tracks	2 or more walking tracks have improved accessibility each year	Environment & Climate Change	Years 1 – 4
FA2.20	Trial the use of QR codes to increase access to the natural environment	Trial of QR codes undertaken	Environment & Climate Change	Year 1
FA2.21	Ensure the Northern Beaches Community Engagement Policy and Strategy provides for equality of opportunity for people with a disability to participate in Council's community engagement and decision-making process	Update and implement Policy and Strategy	Community engagement	Year 1
FA2.22	Collate list of engagement channels to reach people living with disability that can be used in community engagement planning to determine appropriate approach and tools	List of stakeholder channels developed and distributed	Community engagement	Years 1 – 2
FA2.23	Advocate and plan for housing to meet the needs of our community through Council's Local Housing Strategy	Housing Strategy implemented	Strategic planning	Ongoing



Code	Actions	Performance Measure	Responsibility	Timeframe
FA2.24	Review and update requirements for universal design as part of the development of the Northern Beaches Local Environmental Plan (LEP) and the Development Control Plan (DCP)	LEP and DCP updated to include universal design guidelines	Strategic planning	Year 1
FA2.25	Include inclusive and accessible arts and cultural infrastructure in Place Plans and other key planning documents	Place Plans include recommendations about accessible arts and cultural infrastructure	Strategic planning	Ongoing
FA2.26	Identify and promote volunteering roles for people living with Disability	% of Council volunteer roles that are inclusive of people living with disability each year	Volunteering	Ongoing

### Focus Area 3 - Supporting access to meaningful employment

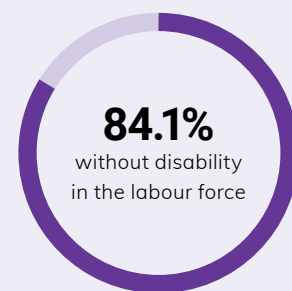
**Aim: To increase the number of people living with disability accessing meaningful employment, enabling people with disability to plan for their future, exercise choice and control, and increase their economic security.**

Employment supports people living with disability to have more autonomy over their lives, be financially independent and have a better standard of living. Paid employment can also increase mental and physical health and wellbeing.

Employment rates for people living with disability in Australia are significantly lower than those without disability across all sectors:

53.4% of people with disability participating in the labour force, compared with 84.1% of people without disability.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>This lower rate of participation has remained unchanged for over 15 years.



People with disability are half as likely to be employed full-time (28%) than people without disability (55%).



People with disability are more likely to be unemployed (10.3%) compared for those without disability (4.6%).



Source (<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/health/disability/disability-ageing-and-carers-australia-summary-findings/latest-release>).

**Key achievements in the last five years**

- Developed guidelines for inclusive recruitment practices and the continued implementation of this is now business as usual.
- Continued to offer equitable employment and volunteering opportunities across Council
- Established inclusive workplace practices. One element of this is the development of the 'Working Remotely Toolkit' which assists in overcoming some of the access barriers to our facilities.

**We heard that:**

- There is a need to increase employer awareness and knowledge about how to remove barriers to employment for people living with disability
- Common practices in recruitment and hiring processes often cause people living with disability to be excluded from consideration
- There are often challenges in workplaces understanding the way adjustments and adaptations can be used to make workplaces more inclusive and boost employment opportunities for those living with disability
- Community services are critical for providing support for those living with disability seeking opportunities.

**You told us there are opportunities to:**

- Explore ways to promote and support the work of community services in increasing meaningful employment
- Reduce barriers to employment by looking to promote more diverse employment opportunities and pathways to access them.

**Focus Area 3 – Meaningful Employment**

Code	Actions	Performance Measure	Responsibility	Timeframe
FA3.01	Identify and build relationships with local Disability Employment Service (DES) providers to support people with disability	Number of relationships established/ programs implemented	Community development	Ongoing
FA3.02	Raise awareness about accessibility adaptations and inclusive hiring and employment practices with the business community through our regular communication pathways	Information distributed annually to the business community	Place & Economic Development	Ongoing
FA3.03	Investigate inclusive employer certifications to continue to make Council a more inclusive place to work	Inclusive employment certification identified and undertaken	Human Resources	Year 2
FA3.04	Review hiring and notification process to ensure inclusion of all abilities	Council hiring and notification process updated	Human Resources	Year 2
FA3.05	Provide employment transition opportunities for people living with disability	2 positions each year	Library Services	Ongoing



## **Focus Area 4 - Improving access to mainstream services through better systems and processes**

**Aim: To ensure that people with disability can make informed choices about available services and to access mainstream Council services and other opportunities easily and efficiently.**

People living with disability often face barriers navigating the systems and processes required to access the services and supports they need. Council has a significant role to play in the improvement of access to services and information given the range of services we provide, including general customer service, information requests, community feedback and complaints, facilities and programs, and decision-making processes.

Difficulty accessing information and systems can be impacted by:

- a lack of availability of different formats of information to meet diverse needs
- lack of awareness and understanding of customer facing staff members
- inflexible processes
- limited opportunities for feedback and input.

In recent years, new information and communication technologies and an increase in availability of alternative formats have improved access to information for everyone.

### **Key achievements in the last five years:**

- Audited all of Council's media platforms, documents, forms and booking systems to identify strengths and gaps.
- Amended Council's website to meet the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0.
- Updated online information for consistency, readability and ease of use across customer service, compliance and planning business units.
- Continued promotion of the availability of accessible systems, processes, and formats.



**We heard that:**

- Most people are happy with the increased availability of online services and information that has occurred recently due to the COVID-19 response
- Respondents highlighted the impact of mask wearing on their ability to communicate effectively
- Signage and wayfinding is often difficult to understand.

**You told us there are opportunities to:**

- Explore the increased use and promotion of accessibility technology like hearing loops, videos and subtitles and captioning to increase access to information and services

**Focus Area 4 – Systems and Processes**

Code	Actions	Performance Measure	Responsibility	Timeframe
FA4.01	Investigate additional ways to promote existing accessible infrastructure and then develop and implement a plan to communicate with the community.	Plan developed and implemented	Parks & Recreation	Years 1 – 2
FA4.02	All relevant staff to undertake training on inclusive and appropriate language for communication and document writing	Training completed	Community Development	Year 2
FA4.03	Advocate and provide guidance to teams across Council about best practice in designing inclusive communication, marketing and written material	Internal advocacy and guidance provided	Communications & Community Development	Ongoing

Code	Actions	Performance Measure	Responsibility	Timeframe
FA4.04	Identify and distribute relevant information about events and opportunities supporting disability inclusion through council communication channels (including the Disability Newsletter)	Events and opportunities sourced and distributed monthly	Community Development	Ongoing
FA4.05	Provide referral services to connect people living with disability and their carers to service providers and community groups to increase community participation	Referral services provided	Community Development	Ongoing
FA4.06	Raise awareness of accessibility at Council run events	Attendee feedback on knowledge of event accessibility is increasing	Events	Ongoing
FA4.07	Ensure Council website is compatible with assistive communication technology and is disability friendly, including consideration of images, contrasts, language etc and utilising appropriate subtitles, graphics and transcripts for video content	Ensure Council website maintains AA rating under WCAG 2.0 and 2.1 standard	Communications	Ongoing
FA4.08	Ensure all written communication is Plain English and formatted in way that is accessible (font, size, colours etc)	All written communication is plain English	Communications, Graphic Design & Production	Ongoing
FA4.09	Relevant staff undertake training in writing to meet diverse needs of the audience	Training completed	Communications	Year 2

Code	Actions	Performance Measure	Responsibility	Timeframe
FA4.10	Engage people living with disability to investigate the need for alternative communication options such as hard copy, online, email etc	Engagement undertaken and opportunities identified and realised	Communications, Community Development	Years 1 – 2
FA4.11	Corporate writing and style guidelines are followed when preparing material to support community engagement projects including communicating with community members and stakeholders	All written communication is plain english and meets corporate writing guidelines	Community Engagement	Ongoing
FA4.12	Investigate the process to be recognised as a Communication Accessible organisation and report on proposed approach	Report completed and proposed approach implemented	Customer Service	Years 2 – 3

## Delivering the Plan

### Implementation, monitoring and evaluation

The implementation of the Northern Beaches DIAP 2022-2026 is the responsibility of all areas of Council.

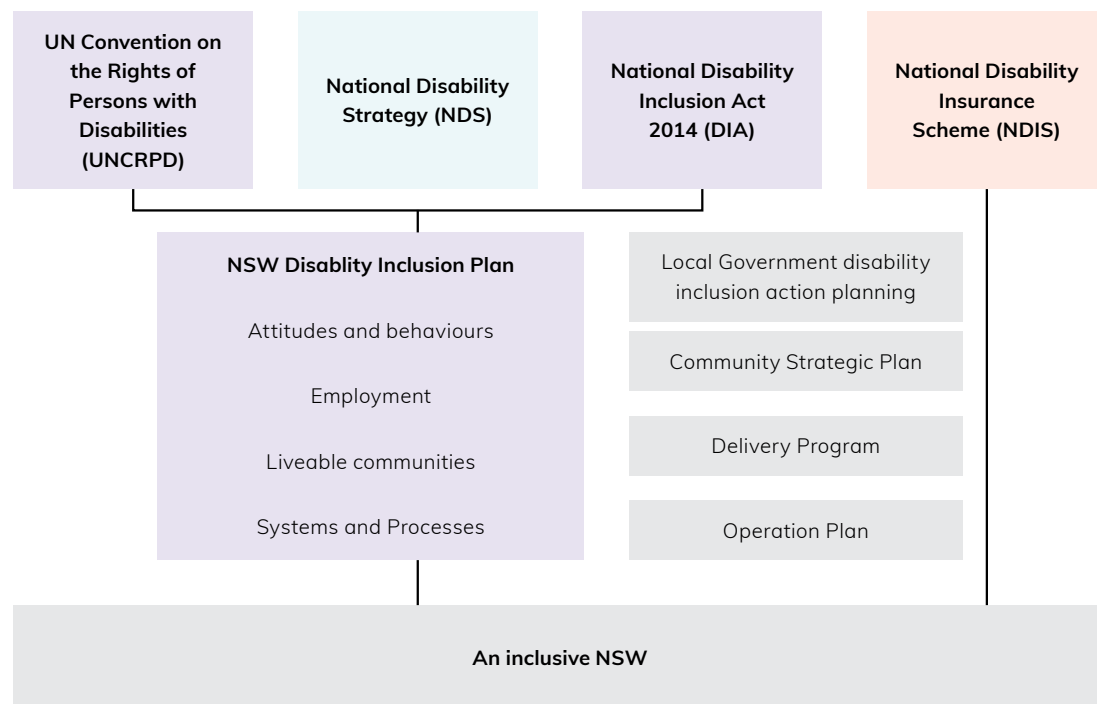
Each year, Council will report on its progress against the Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022-2026 as part of its Annual Report. The section of the Council's Annual Report relating to the implementation of the plan will be provided to the Minister for Disability Services and the NSW Disability Council.

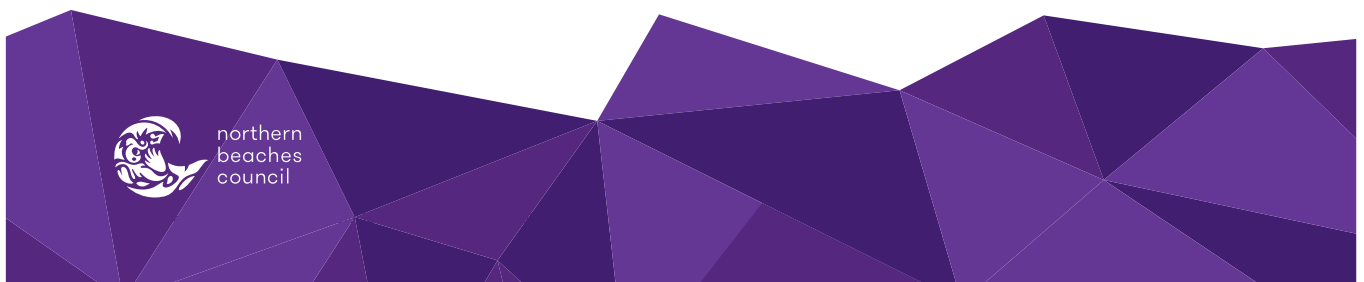
The Disability Inclusion Action Plan will continue to be reviewed and updated every four years.



## Appendix 1

Relevant legislative and policy documents









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## Community and Stakeholder Engagement Report

### Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) 2022-2026 (Stage 1 of 2)

Consultation period: 6 October 2021 to 28 November 2021

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## 1. Summary

This report outlines the outcomes of stage one community and stakeholder engagement for the Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) 2022-2026 conducted between 6 October 2021 and 28 November 2021.




We consulted with the community, disability service providers groups and organisations, and our Council staff to understand the existing barriers and identify opportunities for improvement related to each of the four key focus areas. The opportunities have formed the basis for actions within the draft DIAP.

Over 250 people participated in this consultation stage and shared their experiences and suggestions for creating a more inclusive and accessible Northern Beaches. Key feedback themes are outlined below.

Throughout the consultation, people also shared the reasons they love living, visiting and working on the Northern Beaches. Key highlights were:






- love for the beaches and natural environment
- connection to the community
- infrastructure improvements they have witnessed in the last few years allowing them to participate in community life.

### 1.1. Key outcomes

 Total contributions across all activities <sup>1</sup>	252	
 How responses were received	Written comments (email/letter) Online self-select survey Online vision board Online workshop	Number received: 17 Completions: 194 Contributions: 30 Attendees: 11
 Feedback themes	Access to what the Northern Beaches has to offer Focus on infrastructure Awareness and education	Opportunities for employment Opportunities for engagement

<sup>1</sup> May contain multiple comments from one person

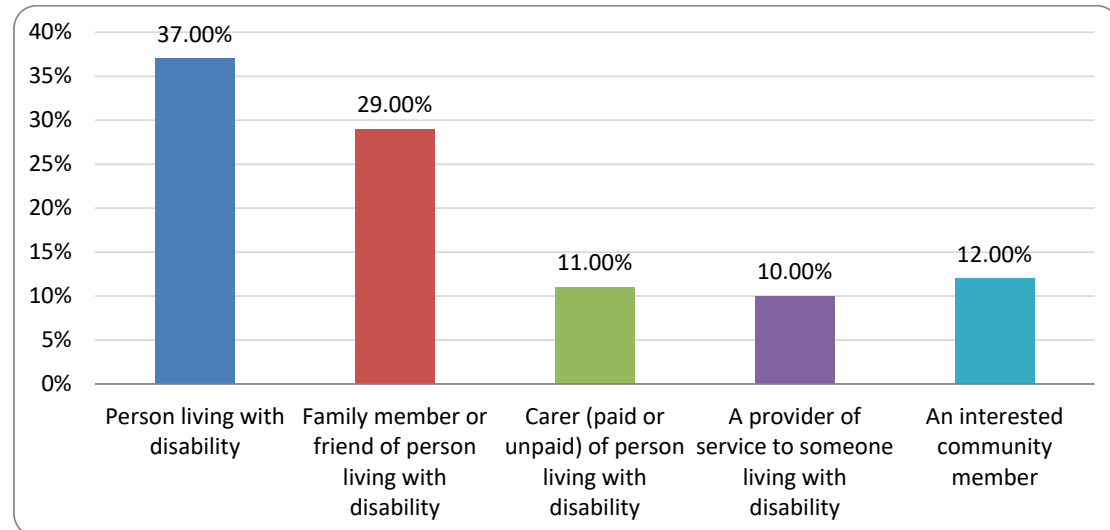
## 1.2. How we engaged

 Have Your Say visitation stats	Visitors: 2096	Visits: 2601	Average time onsite: 53 seconds
 Social media	Council Facebook posts: 2 (including one boosted to Instagram)		Reach: 49,736 Clicks: 606
	KALOF Facebook post: 1		Reach: 321 Clicks: 1
	Library Facebook post: 1		Reach: 1,872 Clicks: 5
	LinkedIn post: 1		Reach: 2,339 Clicks: 37
 Videos	Video with overview of consultation activities: 1		Views: 83
 Electronic direct mail (EDM)	Community Engagement (fortnightly) newsletter: 3 editions		Distribution: Approx. 22,000 subscribers
	Council (weekly) e-News: 2 editions		Distribution: Approx. 150,000 subscribers
	Disability Newsletter: 2 editions		Distribution: 1,286 subscribers
	Creative News: 1 edition		Distribution: 1,820 subscribers
	The Drift Library Newsletter: 1 edition		Distribution: Approx. 87,336 subscribers
	Stakeholder email: 2		Distribution: 65 people
 Face-to-face sessions	Online workshops (Teams): 2		Attendance: 11 participants

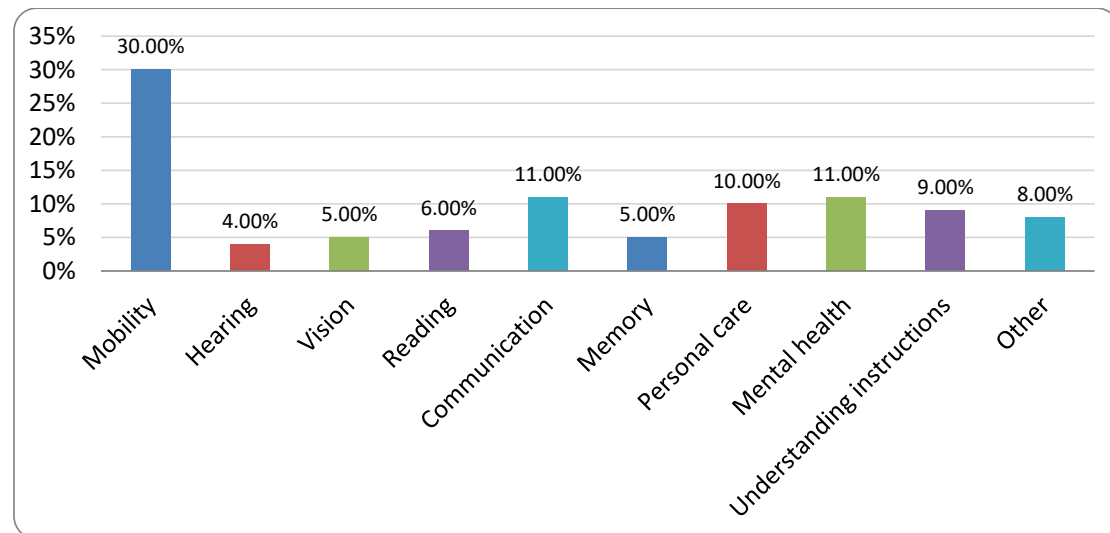
### 1.3. Who responded

The data represented below was gathered in the community survey and only includes those respondents who provided this detail.

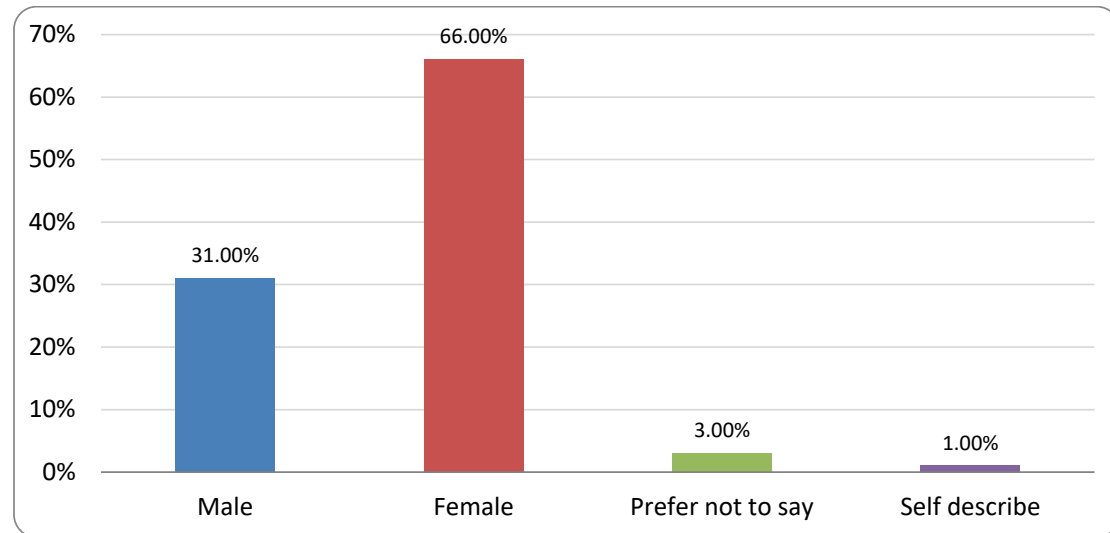
#### Description respondents



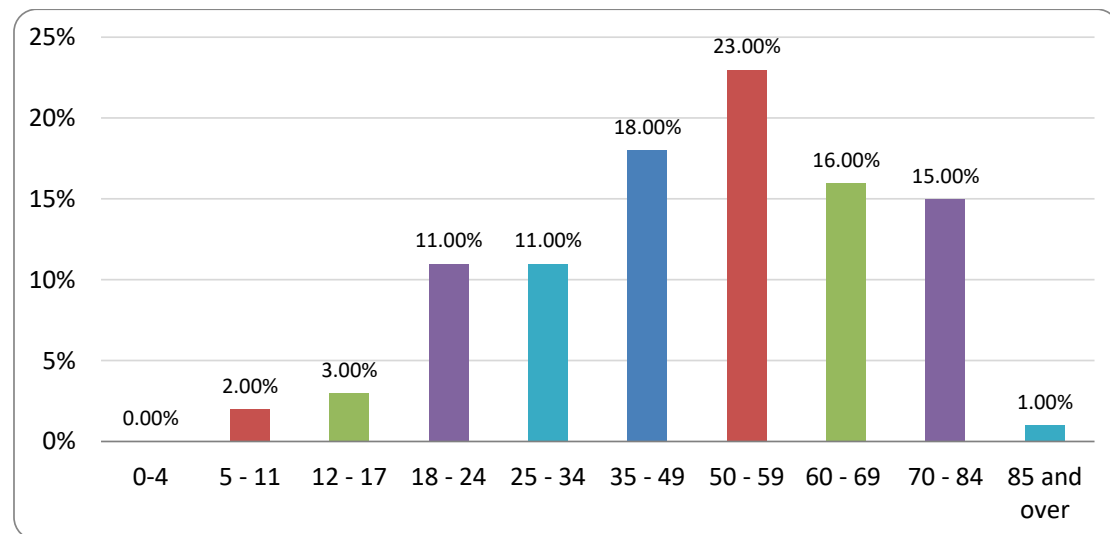
#### Areas identified as needing support or adaptations



### Gender



### Age group



## 2. Background

Building on the success of the previous DIAP 2017-2021, we are developing our next DIAP 2022-2026. The new DIAP will outline our plans to ensure people with disability feel included and can participate fully in their local community over the next four years. Our goal for the future is to further embed accessibility and inclusion principles in Council culture and processes.

DIAPs are required to align with the following four focus areas of the NSW Government Disability Inclusion Plan:

1. Develop positive community attitudes and behaviours.
2. Create liveable communities.
3. Support access to meaningful employment.
4. Improve access to mainstream services through better systems and processes.

The Community and Stakeholder Engagement Plan was devised on a two-stage approach:

- Stage 1: community consultation to gather people's experiences and ideas about how to make the Northern Beaches a more accessible and inclusive place to live, work and visit across the four focus areas.
- Stage 2: public exhibition of the draft DIAP 2022-2026 to understand level of support and suggestions from the community.

## 3. Engagement objectives

Community and stakeholder engagement aimed to:

- build community and stakeholder awareness of participation activities
- provide accessible information so community and stakeholders can participate in a meaningful way
- identify community and stakeholder concerns, local knowledge and values
- provide vulnerable and marginalised groups access to the engagement process.

## 4. Engagement approach

Community and stakeholder engagement for the Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) 2022-2026 was conducted over a seven-week period, from 6 October 2021 to 28 November 2021, and consisted of a series of activities that provided opportunities for community and stakeholders to contribute.

The engagement was planned, implemented and reported in accordance with Council's [Community Engagement Matrix](#) (2017).

A project page<sup>2</sup> was established on our have your say platform with information provided in an accessible and easy to read format.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://yoursay.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au/diap-2022-2026>



To ensure we were providing the information as clearly as possible and asking the right questions, we asked a group of representatives from disability service providers for feedback on our engagement content prior to the start of the consultation.

The project was primarily promoted through our regular email newsletter (EDM) channels and social media. We also sent emails directly to a range of stakeholder groups.

We offered different ways for people to provide feedback, including:

- an online community survey, linked from the project webpage, asking about people's experiences of living with disability and what could make things better on the Northern Beaches
- a [vision board](#), embedded on a project sub-page, for those who just wanted to share a few words (or images) about what would contribute to an inclusive and accessible Northern Beaches
- Workshop in Box resources to help disability service providers or people with caring responsibilities facilitate a discussion about inclusion and accessibility in their own setting
- a fun and tactile Chatterbox activity to engage family, friends, participants and colleagues in a conversation about inclusion.

We created and embedded a video on the project page explaining the various consultation activities.

We held some online sessions for community members and service providers. This was an opportunity for people to ask questions and share their feedback with the project team in a more conversational manner. Some disability service representatives attended this session to support participants in their programs to engage in the discussion.

Email and written feedback were also invited. Contact details for the project manager were provided to allow people to speak directly with them and provide feedback over the phone.

We asked a uniform set of questions of participants in all activities. Results provide responses across a spectrum of demographics, expertise, experience and understanding of our local government area.

#### **4.1. Reaching diverse audiences**

As part of this initial consultation, we undertook community-wide and targeted engagement to identify and understand the diverse experiences and needs of people living with disability.

We included information about the consultation in various Council newsletters and social media. We also reached out to a range of internal and external stakeholders to ask them to promote the consultation to their networks.

With the NSW government COVID-19 restrictions impacting our ability to meet with people in person, we supported organisations in the disability sector by providing additional engagement tools for them to use with their service users.

### **5. Findings**

We consulted with people living with disability, their family, carers, friends, service providers and other engaged and interested community members on how Council could improve accessibility and inclusion on the Northern Beaches.

As part of this consultation, people living with disability shared the reasons they love living, visiting, or working on the Northern Beaches, including their love for the beach and natural environment, their connection to the community, and the infrastructure improvements they have seen made in the last few years that allow them to participate in community life.

- *"I love the connections I've made with people over the years. I would say it's the community themselves who make me feel a part of the Northern Beaches".*
- *"Being able to enjoy most, if not all of what the Northern Beaches has to offer; from walks along the bay and ocean, or through the bush, to being able to access most venues including restaurants".*
- *"Northern Beaches is like an extended family. Everyone knows everyone."*
- *"The laid-back lifestyle - no one is too busy to give you a hand when you need it or even ask are you alright?"*

In their feedback, people expressed support for a range of Council initiatives implemented in the last four years since the first DIAP, including the recently completed physical access improvements in Collaroy, accessibility upgrades to children's playgrounds and the increased availability of online services and information.

Key themes that emerged during consultation about how Council could further support inclusion and accessibility on the Northern Beaches included:

- access to what the Northern Beaches has to offer
- a focus on infrastructure
- awareness and education
- opportunities for employment
- opportunities for engagement

People said they want improved access to places such as our beaches and bush walks, playground, reserves and open spaces, health and community services, local businesses, shops/restaurants and Council facilities and events.

During the consultation, we heard various suggestions on how we could improve access to some of these, ranging from improved infrastructure to signage and communication aids.

Requests for infrastructure improvements were numerous and varied throughout the consultation, and key considerations included that improved:

- transport options and local pedestrian infrastructure (e.g. footpaths and crossings) will allow people with reduced mobility to be more independent in their daily activities
- access to appropriate public amenities/toilets is critical for many to being able to participate in the community.

While feedback suggests there is increasing awareness and consideration of disability, many comments indicated that more needs to be done to educate the community and Council staff about inclusive practices, including a focus on:

- education of employers about inclusive employment practices, including in recruitment
- invisible or hidden disability such as chronic pain and mental health conditions that are often misunderstood

- sensory needs, in particular the need for quiet spaces during busy events and gatherings
- people's ability and what they can do not just on supports required for people with disability.

Many people expressed a desire to be more involved in Council decision-making and offered to share their knowledge and experiences to help us make more informed decision. We were asked to implement earlier and more targeted consultation with people with disability in the planning of Council projects, programs and events to ensure a better outcome for our diverse community.

We were also asked to talk to people that have lived experience of existing and potential barriers to find ways to go beyond minimum accessibility standards.

## 6. How we used your feedback

An initial review of community feedback revealed a number of different ways for Council to support inclusion and accessibility on the Northern Beaches. We then collated and shared feedback with staff who read through the comments and identified further opportunities for improvements.

Council will explore how we:

- utilise the knowledge and expertise of people living with disability about accessibility and disability inclusion when planning and delivering programs, events and infrastructure projects
- advocate for improved transport options in hard-to-reach areas of the Northern Beaches LGA
- improve connectivity between public spaces, Council buildings and amenities.
- promote and support the work of community services in increasing meaningful employment
- reduce barriers to employment by looking to promote more diverse employment opportunities and pathways to access them
- increase use and promote accessibility of technology like hearing loops, videos and subtitles and captioning to increase access to information and services
- make online services and information accessible to everyone using tools like Easy Read, Plain English and screen reader compatibility.

These opportunities have formed the basis for proposed actions across the four focus areas of the draft DIAP.

Document administration	
Version	1.0
Date	23 February 2022
Status	Final
Related Projects	Better Together – Northern Beaches Social Sustainability Strategy
Notes	Community and stakeholder views contained in this report do not necessarily reflect the views of the Northern Beaches Council or indicate a commitment to a particular course of action.



northern  
beaches  
council

# Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2022 to 2026

## Easy Read



[www.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au](http://www.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au)

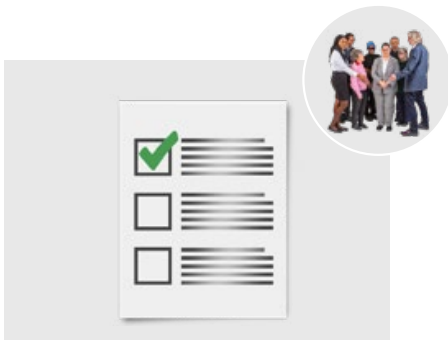


Easy Read



This info is about the Disability Inclusion  
Action Plan from the Northern Beaches  
Council.

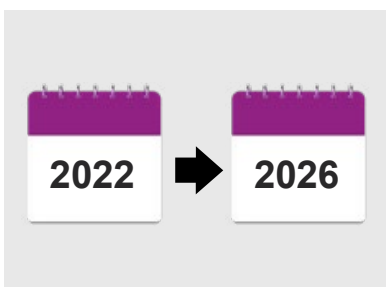
We will say **plan** for short.



The plan says what Council will do for people  
with disability.



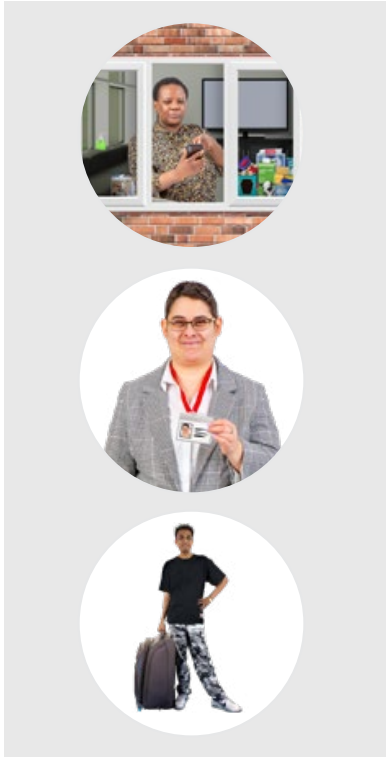
The plan is for 4 years.



It goes from 2022 until 2026.



## Why we need the plan



Lots of people with disability come to the Northern Beaches to

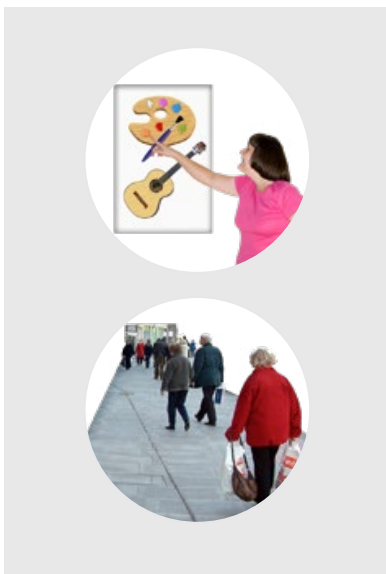
- Live
- Work
- Visit



Council wrote this plan to make life better for people with disability.



We also want to make things easier for their families, carers and support workers.



We want to make sure people with disability can

- Do the things they want
- Get to the places they need to go



We want everyone to be part of the community.

## How we made the plan



We talked to many different people to make this plan.



We talked to

- People with disability
- Carers and support workers
- Friends and family of people with disability
- Disability service providers
- People from the community



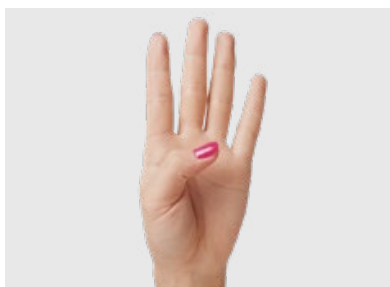
We asked them what can be better for people with disability on the Northern Beaches.



We wanted to know what the biggest issues are for people with disability.

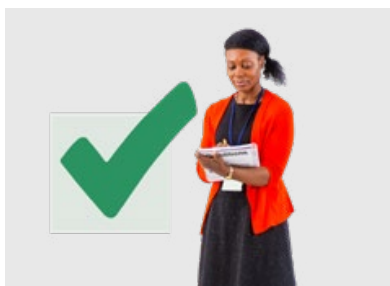


We used this information to write this plan.



We will work on these 4 things.

1. Change the way people think about people with disability
2. Make our community a better place to live
3. More jobs for people with disability
4. Accessible information and services



This info says what we will do about each of them.

## 1. Change the way people think about people with disability



We want to change the way people think about people with disability.



People might think

- It is too hard to include people with disability
- People with disability cannot do many things because of their disability



We want the community to understand disability better.



This will help to include people with disability more into the community.

## This is what we want to do



We want to train Council staff to support people with disability better.



We want people with disability to share their stories with the community.



This will help the community learn more about disability.

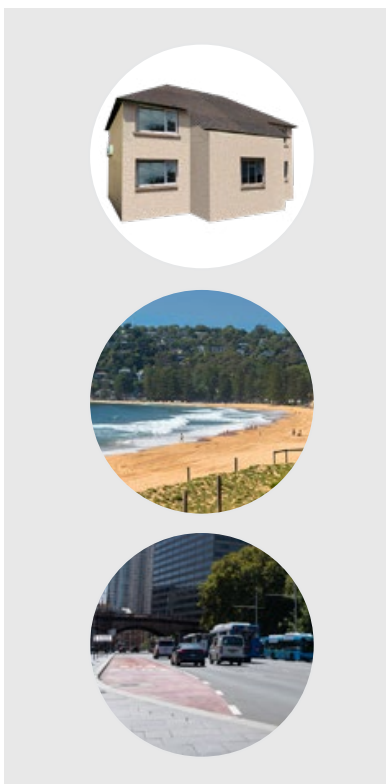


We want to make sure more events include all people.





We want to hear more from people with disability about what the community can do better.



Council looks after many different projects.

This could be things like

- Buildings
- Beaches
- Roads and footpaths



We want to make sure people with disability can be part of all the projects.

## 2. Make our community a better place to live



We want the Northern Beaches to be a great place to live for people with disability.



People said we need to make it easier for people with disability to get around.

### This is what we want to do



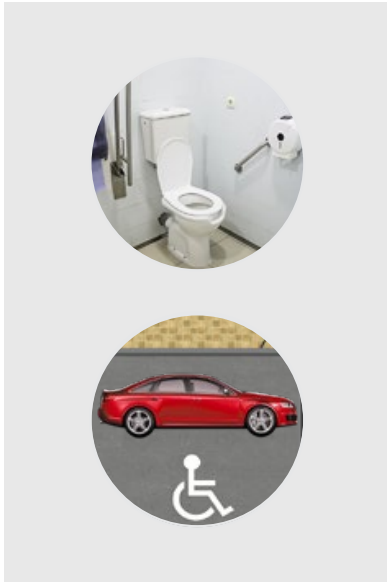
We will build better footpaths.



We will make sure parks and public places are easy to get to and move around.



We will make it easier to go to beaches and rock pools.



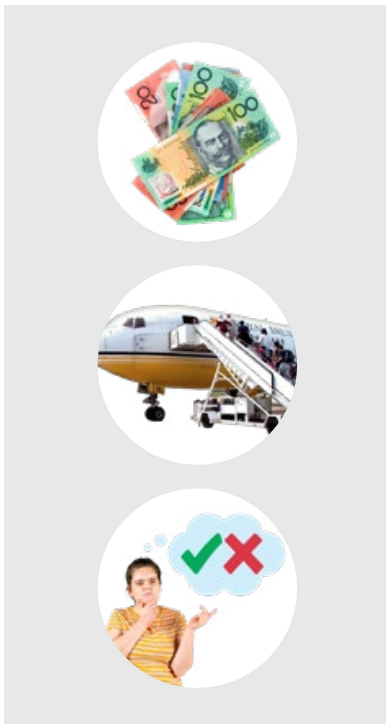
We will build more

- Accessible toilets
  
- Accessible car parks

### 3. More jobs for people with disability



We want more people with disability to have jobs.



When people have a job it helps them

- Make money and be independent
- Make plans for the future
- Make choices in their lives

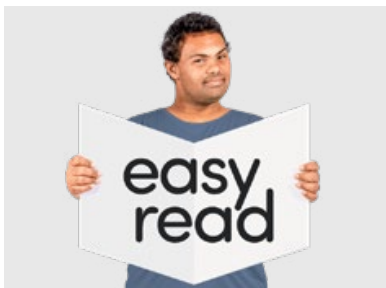


We want the community to see how great it is to work with people with disability.

## This is what we want to do



We want Council to have more jobs that people with disability can do.



We will write information about jobs in a way everyone can understand like Easy Read.



We will make sure that job interviews are accessible for everyone.



We will hire the best person for the job no matter if they have a disability or not.

## 4. Accessible information and services



It is important to have information in a way that everyone can understand.



This helps people find services and support.



Services must be easy to use so that people can get the support they need.



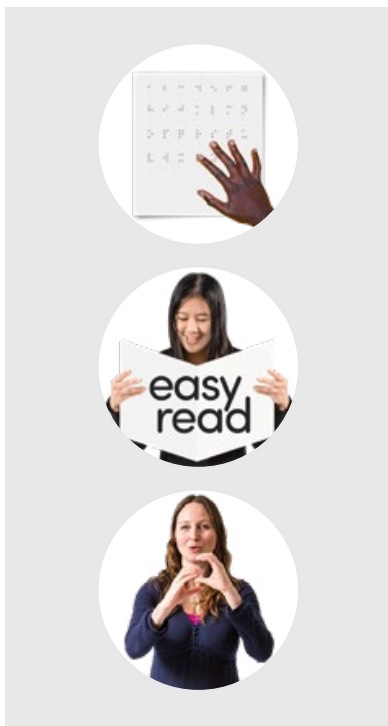
## This is what we want to do



We will have our information in different ways  
so that lots of people can use it.



We will make sure information online is easy  
to find.



This means information in

- Braille
- Easy Read
- Auslan

## Making sure the plan works



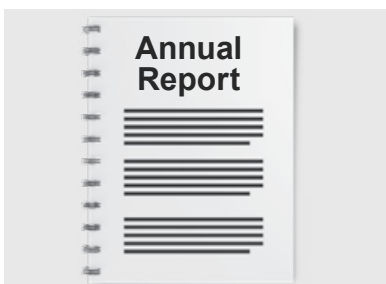
We will keep talking to the community about the plan.



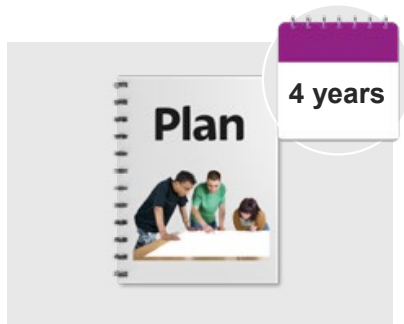
We want to hear what you think is going well.



We will put into our Annual Report how we are going with the plan.



The **Annual Report** talks about all the things we did in the last year.

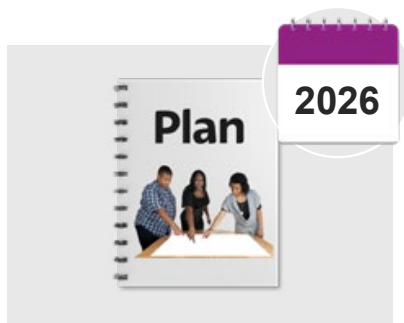


When the plan ends after 4 years we will look at how things went.



We will talk to the community to see

- What we did well
- What still needs to change.

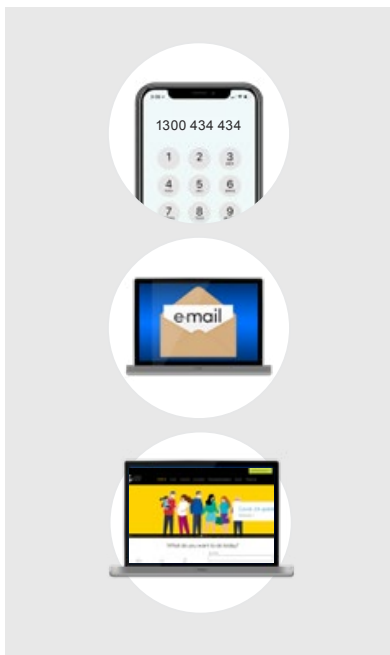


We will use all of that information to write a new plan in 2026.

## Contact



You can contact us if you want to know more about the plan.



You can

- Phone us on **1300 434 434**
- Send an email to  
**council@northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au**
- Go to our website  
**www.northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au**

Council for Intellectual Disability made this document Easy Read. **CID** for short.  
You need to ask CID if you want to use any pictures in this document.

You can contact CID at **business@cid.org.au**.

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