

WOLLONGONG CITY COUNCIL

END OF TERM REPORT

2017 - 2021



Acknowledgement of Country

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which our city is built, Dharawal Country. We recognise and appreciate their deep connection to this land, waters and the greater community. We pay respect to Elders past, present and those emerging and extend our respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who call this city home. We recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the first people to live in the area. We respect their living cultures and recognise the positive contribution their voices, traditions and histories make to the city.

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Our Wollongong 2028
From the mountains to the sea

Message from

The Lord Mayor
Cr. Gordon Bradbery AM



They say time waits for no one and as I look back over this term of Council, I don't just see the passing of time, I see four extraordinary years that have been well spent.

When I started my second term as Wollongong City Lord Mayor in 2017, we had ambitious plans for the city. I had led the Council through the post-administration years, an intensive program to address Council's long-term financial sustainability, and a series of high-profile infrastructure improvements including the North Beach Bathers Pavilion, the Crown Street Mall and the start of work on the Grand Pacific Walk.

For this term, our infrastructure to-do list included flood-reliable access to the fast-growing areas of West Dapto, an upgrade to the Blue Mile Tramway link with a shared path and seawall, and the adoption and rollout of the Urban Greening Strategy.

Since 2017, we have continued to deliver for our community. My focus, and that of my fellow Councillors, has been on driving change that will make our city – from Helensburgh in the north, to Yallah in the south and out to West Dapto's newest suburbs – an enviable place to live, work and play.

The decisions we have made have been focused on lifestyle improvements. We want to provide our city's youngest members playgrounds and skateparks, we want everyone to have access to libraries that deliver a wide range of services and programs, and we want our pools and rock pools to be maintained and accessible.

We have also had a strong sustainability focus with the delivery of the Cycling Strategy and the rollout of the Food Organics Garden Organics (or FOGO) collections. We've worked hard to deal with climate change and play our part by winding back our carbon emissions, while addressing environmental challenges and asset protection. As part of the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy

we have made significant inroads into meeting our obligations. This will continue to be a big issue as we confront population pressures and working to protect the amenity of our beautiful city.

As we wrap up this term of Council, we see significant and ongoing investment in all these areas. We're delivering new pop-up cycleways across the city, planning new community centres and libraries for Warrawong and Helensburgh, and Port Kembla's ever-popular saltwater pool is undergoing improvements with the addition of accessible amenities.

Improvements to accessibility has been a major motivation to all of us in this term of Council. The way we deliver major events like Australia Day, New Year's Eve and Viva la Gong has allowed everyone to get involved more easily. In the last financial year alone, we have upgraded amenities at Austinmer Bathers Pavilion, installed four new accessible unisex toilets in two parks and two community facilities, and ticked off 55 new and upgraded footpath and kerb ramp projects.

This term of Council has not been without its challenges. Last year we revamped our plans and operations in the face of the COVID-19 crisis, with our energy focused on supporting our community. As Councillors, we had anticipated the end of our term, only to have it extended by an extra 15 months.

I am very proud of how the Councillors and Council staff, who all work on behalf of this wonderful community, responded to all the challenges of 2020 and 2021. It's testament to the passion and commitment they have for this city, and those who call it home.

I am sure everyone will agree, Wollongong has changed significantly in the past four years and it is a better place to live, work and play. What I have referenced here has been the tip of the achievement iceberg. There's an energy to Wollongong that leaves me in no doubt. Our city's future is a bright one.

Message from

The General Manager
Greg Doyle



As I reflect back over this term, it's hard to recall a more unpredictable period. We've had floods, bushfires and a global pandemic. Life in Wollongong has changed as a result of COVID-19.

As an organisation we've faced this challenge together, adapting and shifting the way we work to ensure we can continue to deliver the services that mean so much for our community.

Our plans are shaped by community feedback. Our priorities are guided by what's important to the people that live in our city. As this term of Council comes to its end and I look at what's been accomplished, I am really proud of what we've achieved. I want to thank and acknowledge our staff for their dedication and commitment to delivering on our promise to create an extraordinary Wollongong. Listening is something we've prioritised.

Over the past four years we've focused on the liveability of our city. Our City Centre is vibrant with colour and we've increased the services we provide for our community. Our pools and beaches are maintained and safe and our amenities are clean. Our libraries are loved by people of all ages and we've increased what we offer through online platforms as we saw a reduction in the opportunities for face-to-face interaction.

We've made significant progress in many of our long-term projects.

- We completed and were awarded for our work on the Kararra Bridge at West Dapto – the biggest project ever undertaken by Wollongong City Council.
- We've completed several sections of the Grand Pacific Walk – the pathway extending along our coastline between the Royal National Park and Lake Illawarra.

- Our work on the Cycling Strategy earned us the prestigious UCI Bike City label in recognition of everything we're doing to make Wollongong the place to ride.

We've also invested in ways to make our city more sustainable. Our work on the Urban Greening Strategy has seen the planting of thousands of trees, shrubs and grasses. We've rolled out Food Organics Garden Organics (FOGO) waste collection across the LGA. Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019 and adopted emissions reduction targets to net zero emissions by 2030 for our Council operations. We've also created plans for the future including our Climate Change Mitigation Plan and Sustainable Wollongong 2030: A Climate Healthy City which outline the steps we'll take toward a more sustainable future.

All of this work has been underpinned by a continued focus on good governance, transparency, community participation and informed decision making. This has been complemented by a diligent financial strategy, ensuring the ongoing financial sustainability of our organisation. Our sound financial position allows us to plan, deliver and operate more services to the community that we serve – investing more in our infrastructure to build playgrounds, cycleways and roads; improving accessibility to the community services we provide like our libraries, art gallery and youth services; upgrading and improving the assets our community love, like the Austinmer and Port Kembla beach amenities.

I am really excited about the future of Wollongong and seeing what the next term brings for our Council.

Our Councillors

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Cr. Vicky King

WARD 3

Sadly, Cr Vicky King passed away in Feb 2020. She served her community for 19 years as a Councillor. This seat remained vacant due to the postponement of the Sept 2020 Local Government Elections.

Our City

The Wollongong Local Government Area (LGA) is divided into three wards with four Councillors elected to represent each ward. The Lord Mayor is elected by all voters and represents the entire Wollongong LGA.



About our End of Term Report

Our Wollongong 2028 is a whole-of-community plan that outlines our community's agreed main priorities and aspirations for the future. The aim of this report is to illustrate how we are moving towards meeting the goals set out in our Community Strategic Plan, Our Wollongong 2028.

Our Wollongong 2028 was developed with extensive community input and feedback from community, government, business, education institutions, non-government organisations, and community groups' representatives as well as Councillors and Council staff.

This is a plan for the whole Local Government Area, and one in which all levels of government, business, educational institutions, community groups and individuals play an important role. While Council has a custodial role in initiating, preparing, and maintaining Our Wollongong 2028, as well as setting out the strategies on how we will achieve the goals within it, we are not wholly responsible for the implementation.

Other partners such as state agencies and community groups may also be engaged in delivering the long-term objectives of the Community Strategic Plan.

In late 2017, ahead of developing this plan, Council exhibited a Discussion Paper. The Discussion Paper outlined the current state of play to be considered by the community, government, and partners. It looked back at what Council had achieved and asked questions to encourage discussion and conversation about our community's future, to ensure Our Wollongong 2028 is on track.

Four key questions were considered throughout the development of Our Wollongong 2028:

- **Where are we now?**
- **Where do we want to be in ten years' time?**
- **How will we get there?**
- **How will we know we've arrived?**

The Discussion Paper was widely distributed and more than 1,000 stakeholders were engaged throughout the consultation process. They participated in activities as diverse as an online survey and face-to-face community engagement opportunities, workshops with government

agencies and peak bodies and forums. The results of the engagement were analysed to help inform the development of Our Wollongong 2028. The document was also influenced by social justice principles of equity, access, participation and rights, as well as consideration of social, environmental, economic, and civic leadership issues.

Results from a series of engagement activities in 2017 informed the development of the Our Wollongong 2028 Community Strategic Plan.

Our Wollongong 2028 Community Strategic Plan includes the community vision;

From the mountains to the sea, we value and protect our natural environment and we will be leaders in building an educated, creative and connected community

To support the achievement of our community vision, six interconnected community goals, each with objectives and strategies were created which guide Council, business and community in delivering Our Wollongong 2028.

- 1. We value and protect our environment**
- 2. We have an innovative and sustainable economy**
- 3. We have a creative, vibrant city**
- 4. We are a connected and engaged community**
- 5. We have a healthy community in a liveable city**
- 6. We have affordable and accessible transport**

The End of Term report presented here, outlines the key achievements of Council from the election of the current Council in September 2017, with statistical data presented to the end of the 2020-2021 financial year.

It includes details about our progress against the Community Strategic Plan and key achievements throughout the term. The report also illustrates how we measure our progress towards achieving each goal against community indicators. These indicators seek to identify the cultural, social, environmental, economic and governance trends and outcomes for our community at a local, regional and state level. While some indicators fall under the responsibility of Council, others are impacted by a range of state and federal government agencies, non-government agencies, businesses, community groups, adjoining councils and residents.

The End of Term Report should also be read in conjunction with Attachment A.

Attachment A – Resourcing Strategy Progress Report

While the Community Strategic Plan expresses the community's long term aspirations, the Resourcing Strategy outlines Council's responsibilities and how these will be achieved through the allocation of our resources (finances, assets, people and information technology).

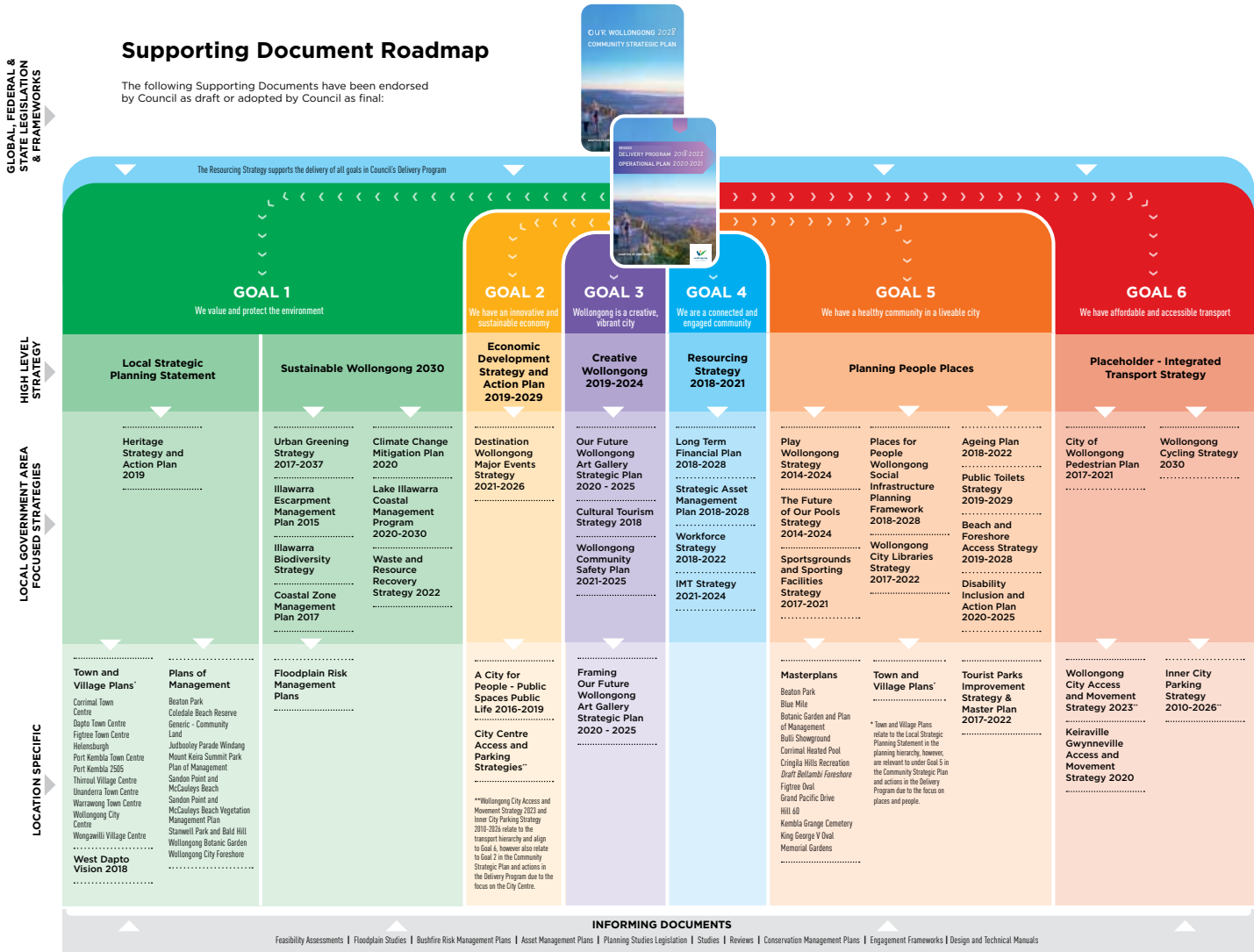
Wollongong City Council's Resourcing Strategy is a long-term plan that covers ten years. It is made up of four components: Long Term Financial Plan, Strategic Asset Management Plan, Workforce Strategy 2018 – 2020 and IMT Strategy 2018 – 2020.

Attachment A provides a status update of how we have progressed over the Council term with regard to our allocation of resources.



Supporting Documents

Council also has numerous strategies and plans referred to as Supporting Documents. These documents, such as town and village plans, the Play Wollongong Strategy 2014-2024 and the Disability Inclusion Action Plan are used to translate aspirations into actions. These Supporting Documents reflect the important planning processes which happen across Council and are considered in the development of the Delivery Program and Operational Plan.



Across the term, Council developed and endorsed a broad range of Supporting Documents to guide the future direction of the LGA. Some of these include:

- Ageing Plan 2018-2022
- Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2020-2025
- Public Toilets Strategy 2019-2029
- Beach and Foreshore Access Strategy 2019-2028
- Wollongong City Access and Movement Strategy 2023
- Places for People Wollongong Social Infrastructure Planning Framework 2018-2028
- Wollongong City Centre Urban Design Framework
- Wollongong Community Safety Plan 2021-2025
- Creative Wollongong 2019-2024
- Framing Our Future Wollongong Art Gallery Strategic Plan 2020-2025
- Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan 2019-2029
- Community Safety Plan 2021-2025
- Climate Change Mitigation Plan 2020-2022
- Coastal Zone Management Plan 2017
- Lake Illawarra Coastal Management Program 2020-2030
- Sustainable Wollongong 2030
- Urban Greening Strategy 2017-2037
- Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy 2022
- Beaton Park Plan of Management 2018
- Generic Plan of Management for Community Land
- Helensburgh Town Centre Plan 2020-2045
- Mt Keira Summit Park Plan of Management 2019
- Port Kembla Revitalisation Plan 2018-2043
- West Dapto Section 94 Development Contributions Plan 2017

- West Dapto Development Contributions 2020
- West Dapto Vision 2018
- Botanic Garden Plan of Management 2020
- Heritage Strategy and Action Plan 2019-2022
- Wollongong Local Strategic Planning Statement 2020
- Cringila Hills Recreation Masterplan
- City of Wollongong Pedestrian Plan 2017-2021
- Wollongong Cycling Strategy 2030
- Keiraville Gwynneville Access and Movement Strategy 2020
- Wollongong Cycling Strategy 2030
- Resourcing Strategy 2018-2028 including: Long Term Financial Plan, Strategic Asset Management Plan, Workforce Strategy, IMT Strategy

Future Councils will be in a position to continue existing and new programs of work arising out of these Supporting Documents such as:

- Coastal Management Planning and Riparian Corridor Management Study and Policy
- West Dapto future community infrastructure, feasibility assessments on proposed recreation facilities
- Wollongong City Access and Movement Strategy 2023
- Grand Pacific Walk Project
- Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2020-2025
- City Libraries Strategy 2017-2022
- Climate Change Mitigation Plan 2022
- Climate Change Adaptation Plan
- Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan 2019-2029
- Draft Housing and Affordable Housing Strategy
- Floodplain Risk Management Plans

Our Planning and Reporting Framework

In accordance with the Local Government Act 1993 and Local Government (General) Regulation (2005), all councils in NSW are required to report under the Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) Framework. Wollongong City Council transitioned to IP&R in June 2012 with the endorsement of its first Community Strategic Plan, Wollongong 2022.

On 25 June 2018, Council adopted Our Wollongong 2028, its refreshed Community Strategic Plan. This refreshed Plan involved significant contribution by the community in its development with the outcome of adjustments in the interconnecting goals and refinement of objectives and strategies.

Our Wollongong 2028 includes the community's vision, goals, objectives, and strategies for the future. This Strategic Plan is underpinned by Council's Resourcing Strategy, Delivery Program and Operational Plan. Council reports on progress towards achieving the Delivery Program and Operational Plan in its Quarterly Review Statements, Budget Review Statement and Annual Report. Under the NSW Government's Integrated Planning and Reporting Legislation for Local Government, Council is required to produce a report on its progress in implementing the Community Strategic Plan during its term. Achievements towards Our Wollongong 2028 are contained in this report (Council's End of Term Report).

The following diagram demonstrates Council's planning and reporting framework.

Wollongong City Council



Summary of Key Statistics

	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-2021
Total number of residents*	213,841	216,071	218,114	219,798
Total number of ratepayers	82,089	82,961	83,905	85,114
Rates levied (income)	\$159.8M	\$164.7M	\$171.3M	\$174.9M
Average general residential rate	\$1,444.05	\$1,477.69	\$1,512.55	\$1543.86
Increase in average residential rate	1.8%	2.3%	2.4%	2.1%
State government rate ceiling	1.5%	2.7%	2.6%	2.0%
Specific purpose grants revenue (incl. capital and operating)	\$21.1M	\$33.8M	\$16.3M	\$17.1M
Available working funds balance	\$23.1M	\$29.4M	\$25.4M	\$23.4M
Operating performance ratio	2.8%	-0.5%	-1.62%	0.95%
Debt service ratio	3.3%	3.3%	3.4%	2.1%
Asset maintenance ratio	0.98	1.00%	1.01%	93.43%
Capital Works Program	\$95.9M	\$115.8M	\$89.9M	\$77.8M
Number of positions (permanent FTE)	1,097.26	1,117.55	1,166.37 ¹	1,243.1
Population per employee (permanent FTE)	194.9	193.3	187.0	176.8
Governance and Admin expense per capita	\$153	\$198 [†]	\$183	\$166
Environmental expenditure per capita	\$302	\$300	\$287	\$306
Community services, education, housing, amenities expenditure per capita	\$151	\$163	\$175	\$169
Recreational and Culture expenditure per capita	\$267	\$282	\$300	\$303
Public order, safety and health expenditure per capita	\$69	\$69	\$77	\$81
Roads, bridges and footpath expenditure per capita	\$251	\$242	\$246	\$220
Material diverted from landfill (Domestic waste collection)	45.2%	48.0%	44.9%	50.3%
Development Applications assessed	1,502	1,430	1,409	1,496
Wollongong Botanic Garden visitation	418,177	413,359	358,979 ²	352,791
Wollongong Art Gallery visitation	101,030	119,208	69,728 ²	49,045 ²
Illawarra Performing Arts Centre and Town Hall visitation	170,351	144,500	95,293 ²	62,343 ²
Library visitation	1,020,671	1,023,880	903,176 ²	989,537
Pools attendance	1,152,239	1,282,194	900,029 ²	507,447 ²

* 2019 Estimated Resident Population - Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Regional Population Growth, Australia (3218.0). Compiled by .id

Note: The allocation of costs between the services has varied over the reporting period making direct comparison at this level inaccurate. [†]Increase in costs allocated to Administration in 2018-19 relates primarily to a significant variation in the value of future employee leave entitlements due to the impact of decreased interest rates on the net present value calculation, the reassessment of prior year worker's compensation estimated values, and the upfront costs associated with the purchase and first stage implementation of an Enterprise Resource Planning System. ¹ 2019-20 FTE figure includes Grant funded positions (previously not included). ² Impacted by Covid-19 - facilities closed from March 2020 under the NSW Public Health Order.

Emergency Resilience, Disaster Response and Recovery

This term of Council saw significant challenges. A bushfire emergency during the 2019-2020 summer, followed by significant rainfall in February and the global health and economic challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic. These challenges contributed to what Council was able to deliver and the way in which it served and supported the community.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Council has applied a community oriented, risk-based approach to the delivery of services. Council has focused on protecting vulnerable members of the community as well as balancing the integral role it plays as a major employer, landlord, contractor and service provider.

Council's 2021-2022 COVID-19 Assistance for Community and Business measures, include 12 additional areas of support for residents and ratepayers, businesses, sporting organisations, and creative industries.

The package builds on a range of successful measures that were implemented, or remain underway, since early 2020 in response to the pandemic.

During 2020-2021, Council deployed a specific COVID-19 Assistance Package to support community and business. Additionally, Council's 2021-2022 Budget contained a range of initiatives in response to COVID-19 that are underway or in planning.

These initiatives include:

- CBD Outdoor Dining Incentives – providing practical and financial assistance for CBD businesses to establish outdoor dining areas;
- Investible New Business Development Program – to provide support to local businesses with navigating these challenging times;
- Supporting local suppliers – fast tracking payments to Council suppliers for goods and services to inject money back into the economy more quickly;
- Strengthening Local Procurement – through doubling the local content weighting for tenders from 5% to 10%;
- Accelerated Assessment Program – for significant local employment generating development applications;
- Enhanced CBD Marketing and activation;
- Endorsing the Wollongong CBD Night Time Economy Policy – to provide clarity to local operators regarding permissible trading hours in the CBD;
- Live Music Industry Support Program;
- Improving our places and spaces – by enhancing service provision for City cleansing and amenity throughout high usage sites, in response to the unprecedented demand on our local public places and spaces;
- Enhanced waste services – free garden waste and recycling drop offs throughout the LGA;
- Implementation of the Food Organics Garden Organics (FOGO) program;
- Continued the Small Business Planning Team Service – to deliver an improved application service for new small businesses which is supported by a range of guidance material;
- Preparing an employment and industrial lands study;
- Preparation of an LGA-Wide Retail Centres study;
- Providing a voice for our community – advocating for major projects and pieces of infrastructure, including Wollongong Harbour and significant State infrastructure.

The additional support measures made in 2021-2022 include:

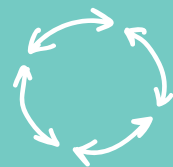
- Set a 0% interest rate on overdue rates and charges for the 2021-2022 first instalment until 30 November 2021, allowing those in need an opportunity to defer payment of the first rate instalment without penalty until that date.
- Allow all ratepayers who are still facing financial difficulty due to COVID-19 beyond November 2021 to discuss further rate deferral opportunities with Council.
- Allocate \$200,000 for small grants to local and experienced not-for-profit organisations to support their delivery of emergency food supply and general care packages for residents experiencing significant hardship.
- Allocate \$60,000 to a Quick Response Grants Program for Community Programs.
- Waive 2-hour parking fees at targeted off-street locations until 31 December 2021.
- Offer support to sporting groups who meet an eligibility criteria by waiving fees for the use of facilities for training and competition for 1 July 2021-31 December 2021.
- Waive fees between 1 July 2021-31 December 2021 for fitness trainers, swim and surf schools.
- Licensees of community facilities, who meet eligibility criteria, will be able to apply for up to \$5,000 financial support for essential outgoings.
- Waiving outdoor dining fees across the Local Government Area between 1 July 2021-30 June 2022.
- Provide rental waivers and deferrals to eligible commercial Council tenants from 1 July 2021-31 December 2021.
- Waive first annual inspection and administration fees for food and personal grooming businesses between 1 July 2021-30 June 2022.
- Develop a program of assistance, including a buy local campaign, extended outdoor dining initiatives and support for creative industries.



OUR Values

We are a purpose-led, values driven organisation. Our values are part of everything we do every day and provide the foundation of our organisational culture, and guide how we deliver the strategies and actions outlined in this document. We live these values through:

- Enabling daily work that encourages collaboration, innovation, interdependence, belonging and inclusion
- Living the values in everyday work through behaviours and interactions
- Supporting and enabling people to deliver on the promise of an Extraordinary Wollongong.



SUSTAINABLE

use our community's resources responsibly



COURAGE

challenge the norm to be better



ONE TEAM

together we deliver excellent service



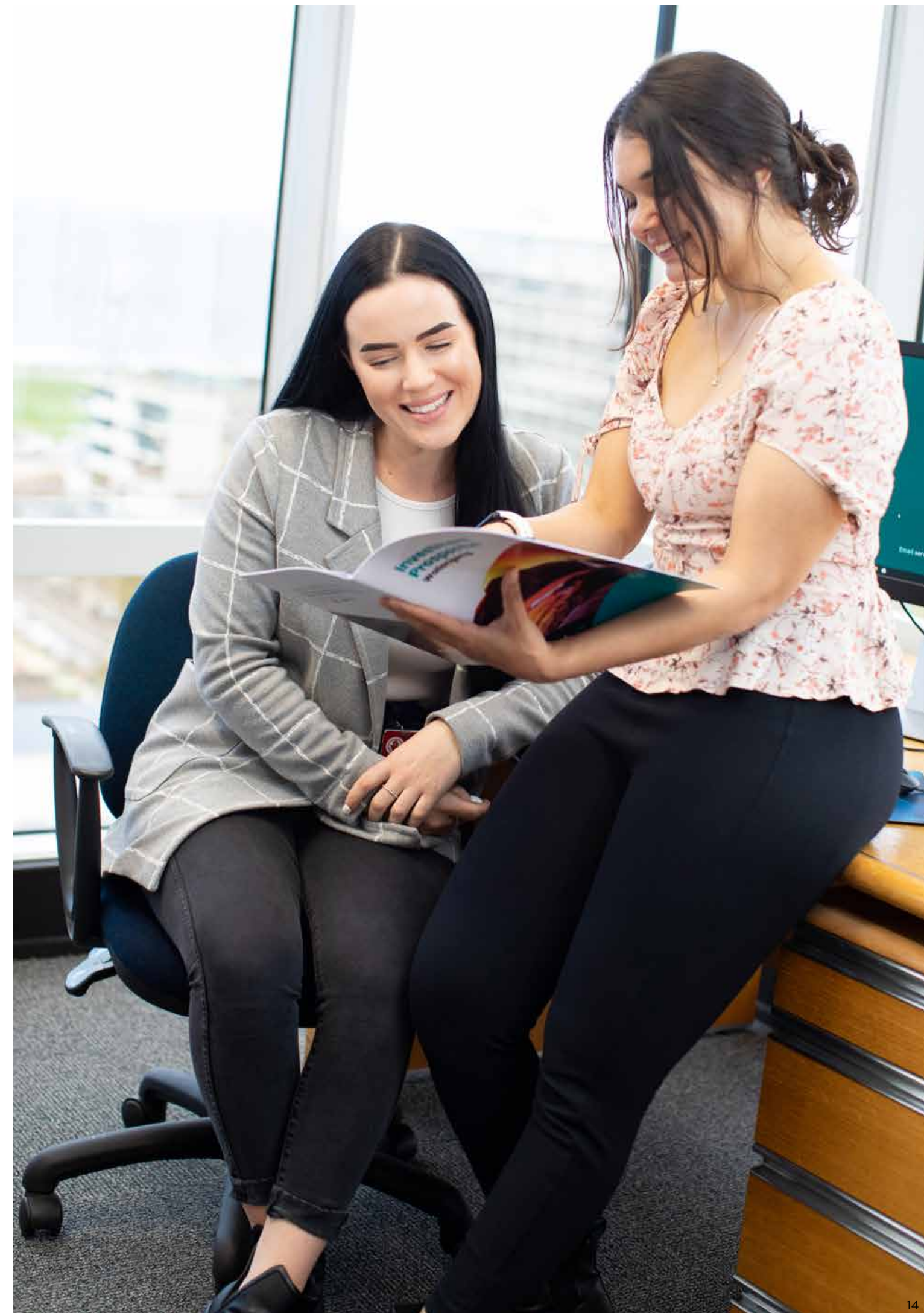
RESPECT

inclusive and considerate



INTEGRITY

honest and reliable



Sustainable Development Goals

Wollongong City Council (WCC) has taken a proactive approach to aligning its strategies and plans with the global goals and relevant local indicators.

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's) were included as a focus in the Our Wollongong 2028 Community Strategic Plan – Council's 10-year planning document. This led to discussions with local partners including the University of Wollongong, Healthy Cities Illawarra and Shellharbour City Council regarding opportunities to work together.

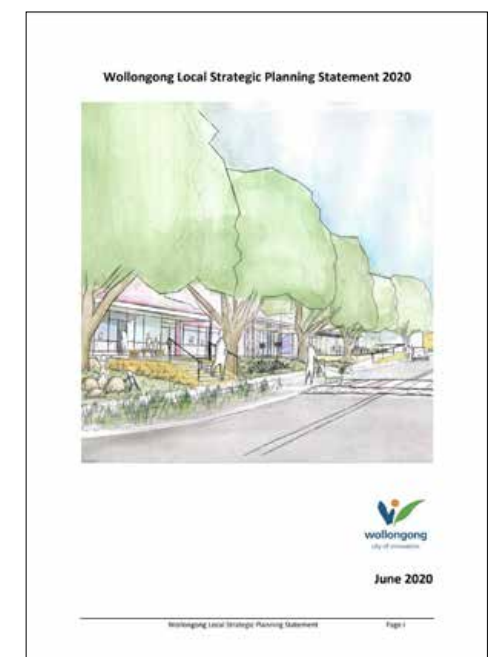
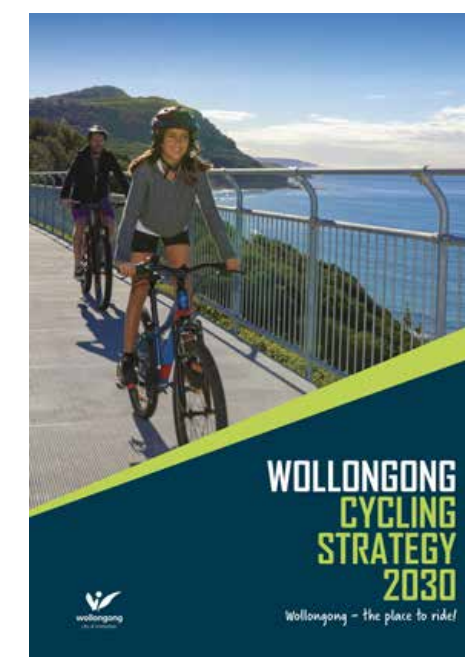
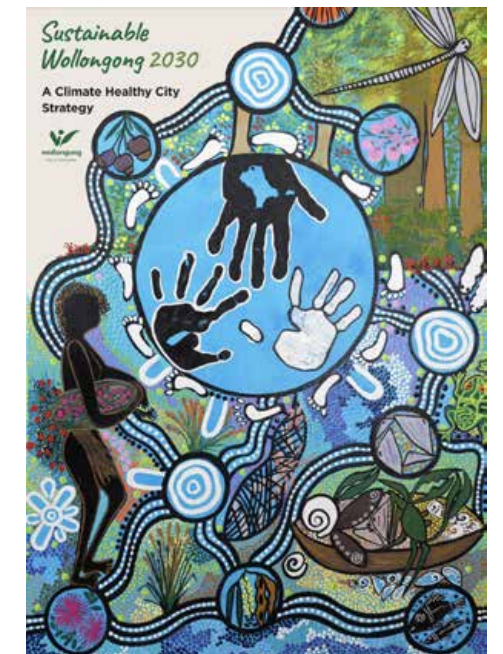
Council's Delivery Program is the vehicle used to deliver services and projects to the community. Council's Delivery Program 2018-2022 committed to 'develop a project and work with partners to further explore the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and how they align to the community's goals'.

Over the term, WCC has carried out a number of actions that aim to consider the SDG's at a localised level. This includes:

1. Assessing the SDG targets across 17 goals for relevance to local government through the Our Wollongong 2028 Community Strategic Plan as well as the development of key strategies and plans;
2. Identify existing community indicators (and other measures) for each relevant target and where possible, link to State, regional (or other) indicators;
3. Engage Council's internal planners to build capacity and understanding of the SDG's.

Council has a focus on the SDG's as part of our global context setting when developing localised strategies and plans. A number of Council's strategies now include reference and alignment to the goals, these include: **Sustainable Wollongong 2030; Wollongong Cycling Strategy 2030; Local Strategic Planning Statement; and Climate Change Mitigation Plan 2020.**

All 17 SDG's are addressed in Our Wollongong 2028 as well as the strategies above with the highest number of references across the documents to Goals 11 – Sustainable cities and communities, 17 – partnership for the goals, 13 – Climate action and 9 – Industry innovation and infrastructure.



Council strategic priorities

Councillors are committed to making Wollongong a better place to live, work, visit and play. To focus Council's attention on this outcome, the Councillors identified five key focus areas for the life of the Delivery Program. These are known as the Council Strategic Priorities.

Activating
Our
Suburbs

Urban
Greening

West
Dapto

Active
Transport &
Connectivity

Business &
Investment



Activating Our Suburbs

Project Sponsor:
Director Community Services

Project Manager:
Manager Community Cultural and Economic Development

Progress: ON TRACK

Image: Karrara Bridge mural artists, Bafcat (Mitchell Geurin) with co-design work by artist Warwick Keen and young Coomaditchie artist Jess Brown

Council is committed to enhancing and activating spaces and places across our Local Government Area (LGA) through sound planning and focused programs.

Throughout Council's term, an ambitious plan of action to establish the city, towns and villages to be connected and liveable spaces offering a variety of attractions and opportunities for people to work, live, play, learn, visit and invest, was set.

Over the term, Council has made significant progress in activating its towns and village spaces. Highlights include:

- July 2018, Council delivered and supported a range of NAIDOC week celebrations and activities, including the NAIDOC Awards Dinner which celebrated and recognised the achievements of local Aboriginal elders, community members and organisations.
- Wollongong City Libraries hosted two Indigenous artists in residence at Dapto and Warrawong Libraries, as well as delivering an Indigenous Film Festival, celebrating the International Year of Indigenous Languages in conjunction with NAIDOC Week.
- September 2018, the Dapto Square Activation project was completed. This included art murals by young people, a play space for young children

and tables, seats and shade for everyone to enjoy. The Creative Container also arrived in Dapto Square, with a range of projects delivered including Yarn Bombing which was a tree decoration place making project which consisted of 12 creative textile workshops held with a range of local community members.

- Council continued working with Family and Community Services NSW, Mission Australia, Barnardos South Coast and the residents of Warrawong, Bundaleer and Illawong Gardens to implement a community developed Action Plan for each location. As part of this Plan, a community garden was launched in November 2018 at Illawong Gardens.
- Support was provided to Mission Australia to conduct the Saltwater Festival in April 2019, held at Howard Fowles Park Warrawong with over 300 people attending on the day. Council also supported the South Sea celebration in Bellambi in May 2019.
- The first 'Clean-Up Bundaleer Day', where residents can place their household rubbish on the street to be collected occurred in January 2019, with over 20 tonnes of rubbish collected and sorted where possible.
- The Neighbourhood Youth Project funded by Council continued to be delivered throughout

2018–2019 in Berkeley, Dapto, Helensburgh and Port Kembla. Council's Youth Services team provided services, programs and engagement for young people in Wollongong, Bellambi, Corrimal, Cringila, Bundaleer Estate Warrawong, Koonawarra and Kanahooka.

- In 2018–2019 in response to the City for People (Public Spaces, Public Life) brief, a suite of three pilot projects were implemented to promote visual connectivity, vibrancy and street comfort in and between key city centre sites including Globe Lane (architectural seating, synthetic turf), Western Crown Street (four vibrant and lit wayfinding sculptures including seating) and in Lower Crown Street (series of large trees illuminated by colourful projected spotlights).
- Council partnered with Vision Australia to design a braille map for Luke's Place all-inclusive playground in Corrimal, and Charles Harper playground in Helensburgh was officially opened.
- Paint the GONG REaD mascot, Bright Spark, visited children and parents/carers in suburbs across the region.
- The Connecting Neighbours Program has enabled community members to deliver projects in their suburbs with the support of Council. The grant program funds ideas generated by the community to bring people together and make neighbourhoods a better place. Since its launch in 2018, 90 grants have been awarded.
- As part of the Port Kembla 2505 Revitalisation Implementation Plan, Council staff worked with the local community on renewal plans for basketball courts in Port Kembla. The Port Kembla Community 'Welcome' Mural and CD Project at the Macedonian Centre Port Kembla was completed and launched in September 2019. A new Mosaic Wall at the Coomaditchie amenity block was completed in March 2020.

- The Fowlers Road Bridge mural was completed in March 2020, with artist BAFCAT and community members and/artists Warwick Keen and Jess Brown.
- Community engagement (including school-based visual arts and poetry workshops) design and implementation of four cuboid solar-powered lightboxes (which will become permanent exhibition boxes near Luke's Place) was completed in May 2020. One new mural was completed at Corrimal Community Centre. Two new large murals completed in Corrimal (Corrimal Soccer Club/ Tennis Club) by artist OX King in June 2020.
- In late 2020, Carve a Trail - Harry Graham Park, Figtree was delivered to relocate the activities of a 'homemade' bike trail built along the creek which created environmental damage to a more appropriate location in the park.
- Teenz Connect Program at Warrawong Library was reactivated in late 2020. Teenz Connect is a weekly program of interactive and skills-based activities providing a safe place for young people to build relationships and connection.
- COVID-19 restrictions on public gatherings limited Council's ability to provide activation activities throughout 2020.

Council's \$400M four-year Infrastructure Delivery Program includes a suite of programs and projects which directly respond to our strategies and priorities to activate and enhance our community centres, public domain and open spaces.



Image: Paint the Gong Read



Image: Paint the Gong Read



Urban Greening

Project Sponsor:
Director Infrastructure and Works

Project Manager:
Manager Open Space and Environmental Services

Progress: **ON TRACK**

Image above: Verge Garden example, Coledale

Top right: Tree signage campaign

Bottom right: Planter boxes, Crown Street

program then started during autumn without impacting total program delivery. A commitment to improved processes and communication continued to be delivered with Council now using software to plan, prioritise and program tree maintenance works as well as ongoing work to streamline the decision-making process and policy framework for trees across public and private realm.

The Urban Greening Program continues to exceed the 2:1 tree removal / replacement target. More than 1,000 street trees have been planted in suburbs identified as having low canopy cover including Unanderra, Corrimal, Port Kembla and Dapto. To date, more than 6,000 trees have been planted as part of this program across urban areas throughout the term.

Council's commitment to shade all 55 local park playgrounds stands at 47 completed, with the remainder to be shaded prior to end of financial year (30 June 2021).

Community verge garden guidelines were launched in October 2020. Verge areas (Council owned land in front of homes between the adjacent road kerb) provides an opportunity for the community to participate in greening our public spaces.

In January 2021, 11 connecting neighbours verge garden grants were awarded resulting in community based verge projects commencing across the city.

The community was also involved in Urban Greening initiatives such as installing transitional landscapes/ meadows between natural areas and parks. This involved corporate sponsorships, grant funding and working with local community groups and volunteers across the city.

By the end of 2020, 5,000 trees had been planted since the commencement of the Urban Greening project.



Urban Greening formed a significant focus throughout the term of Council. The Urban Greening Strategy 2017-2037 was endorsed by Council in December 2017 and represents a key document guiding the strategic improvement in the quality and quantity of vegetation in the built environment across the local government area.

It contains a set of principles, a vision and four goals for urban greening. Each goal is supported by a series of prioritised actions, which outline the steps required to realise a holistic and strategic approach to urban greening. The implementation of key priorities within the Urban Greening Strategy, in conjunction with projects and services that impact sustainability and quality of our environment, were delivered throughout the term.

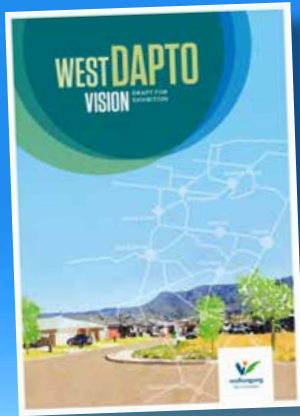
Throughout 2018, Council started an online inventory of tree assessment data to better understand the condition of our existing trees. This inventory allows Council to proactively plan and

schedule new tree plantings, manage workflows, risks and schedule maintenance. In addition, a live register of trees removed from public land in the city was established and is now published on Council's website to inform the community of tree removals and reason.

Securing appropriate and ongoing supply of high-quality trees from the market is essential to meeting our targets, and throughout the term Council worked to secure a supply agreement to ensure we're able to access quality tree stock for the program. The Wollongong Botanic Garden is playing a critical role in supplying wild-sourced local native trees species to be grown at professional nurseries to ensure advanced local native trees can form part of our future urban landscape.

Implementation of tree planting aligned with Council's Infrastructure Delivery Program continued in projects such as car parks, footpath renewals and providing shaded accessible pathways to parks infrastructure including BBQs and picnic shelters.

Council made a commitment to stop planting from December through to February 2020 due to Level 2 Sydney Water restrictions. An accelerated planting



West Dapto

Project Sponsor:
Director Planning and Environment

Project Manager:
Urban Release Manager

Progress: **ON TRACK**

Image: West Dapto

Council continued to work collaboratively with key agencies to provide the infrastructure needs to support growth and employment lands within the West Dapto Urban Release Area. This required coordinated planning for access improvements including new roads and bridges which are needed to support the additional 17,000 future housing lots and 8,500 jobs required over the next 30 years.

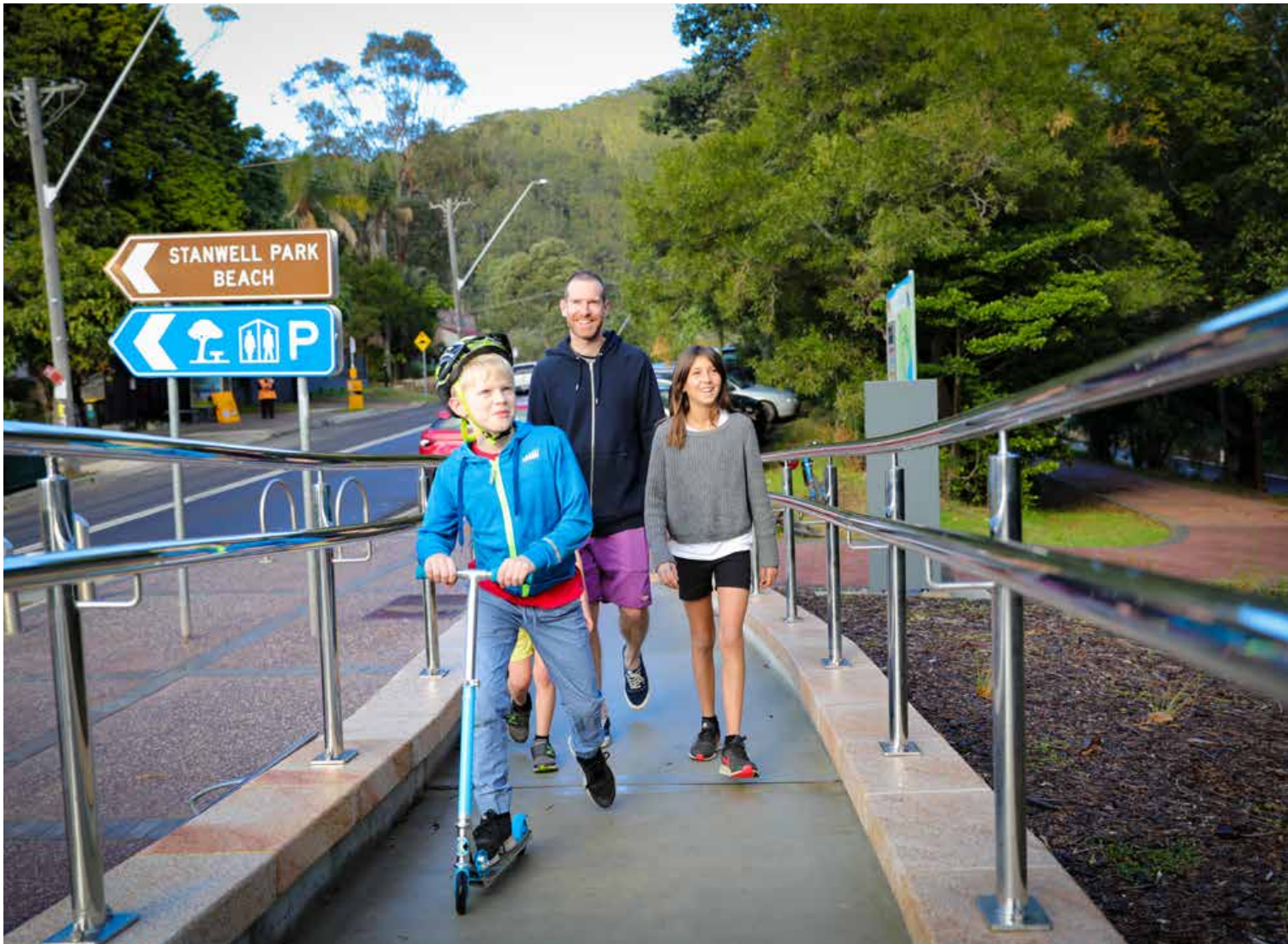
Key highlights over the term include:

- Adoption of the West Dapto Vision in December 2018. The Vision will guide planning decisions for the release area through the establishment of strategic planning principles across the key topics of:
 - Transport
 - Water Management
 - Conservation
 - Open Space
 - Community Facilities
 - Town Centres
 - Housing
 - Employment

- Council's largest civil infrastructure project, Karrara Bridge, was opened on 28 April 2020. This major project will provide flood reliable access to existing and future residents of West Dapto. The project was delivered at a cost of approximately \$71M and is a vital part of the Fairwater Drive to Fowlers Road link project.
- On 23 September 2020, Council received advice from the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces to adopt the West Dapto Development Contributions Plan 2020. This followed the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) May 2020 recommendations. Council subsequently adopted the Contributions Plan on 7 December 2020. This is a significant achievement for the community and is a culmination of significant effort and preparation over the term. Funds from the Contributions Plan will assist in delivering major infrastructure projects including the West Dapto Road-Wongawilli Road bridge upgrade, Cleveland Road upgrade and the Northcliffe Drive extension project.
- Council continued to assess Planning Proposal requests, Neighbourhood Plans and Development Applications that facilitate urban development. By the end of June 2021, Neighbourhood Plans have been adopted within Stages 1, 2 and part of Stages 3 and 4 which will combined facilitate land for over 5,107 lots. Neighbourhood Plans to support a further 7,325 lots are currently being assessed. Council has granted Development Consent for 2,196 new lots.
- Towards the end of 2020, the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment also announced the State Voluntary Planning Agreement (SVPA) funding program which will allocate funding to projects that support development in a nominated collection area. West Dapto is located within a nominated collection area and accordingly, Council started work on applications for project funding. Council was successful in receiving \$400,000 in funding to develop a Strategic Business Case for the extension of Northcliffe Drive. This project will investigate the construction of a second (northern) connection to the West Dapto urban release area.
- On 21 April 2021, the NSW Government announced \$25.5M under the Restart NSW Housing Acceleration Fund to upgrade West Dapto Road from Shone Avenue to Rainbird Drive. West Dapto Road upgrade is part of Council's plans to meet the changing needs of current and future residents.
- Between 2018 and 1 July 2020 Council successfully obtained \$12M in State Local Infrastructure Growth Scheme (LIGS) funding toward essential local infrastructure. LIGS supported a cap on development contributions during that time.

- The Illawarra and Shoalhaven Special Infrastructure Contribution (SIC) has been determined and came into effect from 4 June 2021. The SIC has been determined to help fund the delivery of infrastructure in Nowra/Bomaderry and West Lake Illawarra. The SIC provides for developer contributions to be collected from new development within the Illawarra Shoalhaven SIC area. West Dapto, Tallawarra and Calderwood are urban release areas within the West Lake Illawarra SIC area. These contributions are in addition to local developer contributions and will contribute toward the cost of roads and intersection upgrades, education, biodiversity planning and delivery.





Active Transport & Connectivity

Project Sponsor:
Director Infrastructure and Works

Project Manager:
Manager Infrastructure Strategy and Planning

Progress: **ON TRACK**

Image: Grand Pacific Walk, Stanwell Park
Right: shared path and bike racks

Throughout its term, Council planned and progressively worked towards an integrated and active transport network with improved connectivity across the city. A series of actions were undertaken across the term to facilitate the upgrade of public transport, bicycle networks and pedestrian access. This renewed focus is complemented by a significant investment in footpaths and cycleways throughout the term.

Actions identified within the Wollongong Cycling Strategy 2030 and Pedestrian Plan are incorporated into the Infrastructure Delivery

Program and operational programs for progressive implementation.

The planning for improved pedestrian and cycle facilities has also been undertaken in the context of the NSW 'Movement and Place' framework, which aims to create successful streets and roads by balancing the movement of people and goods with the amenity and quality of places. This is particularly the case in town and village centre strategies such as Helensburgh Town Centre Plan, Keiraville-Gwynneville Access & Movement Strategy and the Corrimal Town Centre Plan. This has resulted in a focus on creating centres that are more accessible and attractive for active transport, ultimately delivering more liveable, successful places.

Following extensive community engagement, the

Wollongong Cycling Strategy 2030 was adopted by Council on 16 November 2020. The Strategy is focused on delivering an improved riding experience for all users and sets out what actions Council will pursue over the next decade to ensure Wollongong is the place to ride. Some of the key aims for the Strategy include increasing cycle participation across the city, increasing people's level of comfort with riding and boosting the cycling network length from 130 kilometres to 215 kilometres. The targets are focused on five pillars: safe, convenient, planned, business, tourism and events and innovation.

The 2020-2021 financial year saw a significant budget increase for new footpaths and the implementation of actions in the Pedestrian Plan and Cycling Strategy. Council's record investment in new footpaths continued; with a total of 35 new footpaths programmed to be constructed in 2020-2021. Council is investing \$10M in new cycleways across the next four years (including works on the next stages of the Grand Pacific Walk). Council continues to plan and build momentum towards the 2022 Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI) Road World Championships to stimulate cycling related tourism and community participation. The new Cycling Strategy, supported by an accompanying implementation plan, aligns to the UCI 'Cycling City Pillars'. The new Strategy's priorities and expectations also align with delivery of the anticipated UCI 2022 World Road Cycling Championships legacy infrastructure projects.

In the first for the city, in 2020-2021 Council received \$470,000 grant funding from the State government for pop up cycleways in Wollongong. With cycleways identified in Wollongong, Port Kembla, Thirroul and Towradgi. Council delivered

its first route in early 2021 following community feedback about cycling in the city.

Council is currently engaging with the community in relation to provision of bicycle parking at 26 strategic locations across the network. Following review of feedback, Council intends to install the bike racks which are important in encouraging community participation in cycling.

Stage 1 of the Grand Pacific Walk was officially completed in December 2018. The 3.5 kilometre link from Stanwell Park to Stoney Creek Bridge, Coalcliff includes a viewing platform with expansive views along the coast and out over the Pacific Ocean. Work then commenced on scoping and planning further stages of the Grand Pacific Walk, aiming to progressively fill in missing links in off-road paths between Coalcliff and Austinmer.

Council held the 'Ride The Gong' event at Fairy Meadow Beach Reserve in April 2021, after seeing the cancellation of the event in 2020 due to COVID-19. The event was a success and was the first year it included a family fun ride along the coastline cycleway. Council also hosted 'Pedal The Park' in MacCabe Park, Wollongong in April 2021. Both these events helped to promote and facilitate cycling participation in Wollongong for all ability levels.

Throughout its term, Council delivered a number of initiatives to actively engage and deliver outcomes for people with disability. The Public Toilet Strategy 2019-2029 was endorsed in May 2019 and the Beach and Foreshore Access Strategy 2019-2028 was endorsed in June 2019. Engagement for the Warrawong Community Centre and Library were promoted to people with disability and support agencies among other engagement activities.





Business & Investment

Project Sponsor:
Director Community Services

Project Manager:
Manager Community Cultural and Economic Development

Progress: ON TRACK

Image: Wollongong city skyline
Top right: Australia Day Aquathon
Right: Twinkl Australia
Far right: Antique Motorcycle Club of America weekend



Council's final strategic priority is to continue to grow the Wollongong economy through attracting business, investment, major events and tourism to the region.

Throughout the term, Council committed to promote our local advantages, including our proximity to Sydney, supportive business environment, innovative business environment, innovative ecosystem, vibrant CBD and superb liveability to attract businesses and encourage local jobs growth. Council worked with key stakeholders, including State and Federal Governments to further promote our city and attract greater investment in infrastructure and other key assets.

The Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan 2019 - 2029 was endorsed by Council in September 2019. A key focus of this Strategy includes a job target of 10,500 new jobs in the Wollongong LGA over the next decade. In 2018 - 2019, more than 1,800 new jobs were created in the LGA.

The new Invest Wollongong brand was launched in October 2019. More than 100 local business leaders, Councillors and government representatives attended the rebrand of Advantage Wollongong to Invest Wollongong. A new Invest Wollongong website went live with a focus on marketing automation and customer relationship management. A new Investment Prospectus was also launched showcasing case studies outlining why companies have chosen Wollongong as their home. The new Invest Wollongong brand is performing well, with targeted campaigns to highlight the many benefits of locating a business in Wollongong LGA rolled out. Wollongong sponsored an insert in the Australian Financial Review: "Wollongong Australia's best kept office leasing secret" in February 2020. 47,000 hard copies were distributed over Australia showcasing the benefits of working in Wollongong as well as a digital advertising campaign on realcommercial.com.au.

In late 2019 Council, via Destination Wollongong, contributed funding towards four major events. These events included the National Junior Table

Tennis Championships, the OZ Geo Muster, Australian Cross-Country Championships and the Antique Motorcycle Club Meet, contributing an estimated \$3.9M to the local economy.

Other events successfully held throughout the term include:

- Australian Supercross Championships, Australian IRB Championships; Splendour in the Grass sideshows; the Antique Motorcycle Club of America Motorcycle Weekend; Australian Police Rugby Union Championships; Yours and Owls Festival; Beach Netball Festival; NSW Touch Country Championships; the Ocean 6 Ironman Series (signature event funding); Corona SunSets Festival at North Wollongong Beach; Illawarra Folk Festival; Illawarra Titans Battle of the Countries; Australia Day Aquathon; Shimano Super Criterium; Tribal Clash and Ainsley's (celebrity chef, Ainsley Harriot) Market Menu; Spiegel Tent Wollongong; Wollongong Triathlon Festival; Touch NSW Junior State Cup Final; Down Under CrossFit Championships

(signature event funding); Hockey Men's Masters Championships and the Dancesport Australia National Championships; Women's Big Bash League cricket; Sheffield Shield cricket and more.

Council introduced the Events Concierge Service to manage and facilitate enquiries that include Filming and Photography Applications.

Extensive planning and engagement commenced as the city prepares for one of the World's largest international cycling events, UCI Road World Championship, second only to the Tour de France, which is coming to Wollongong in September 2022.

Throughout the term, Wollongong CBD continues to undergo a rapid transformation with a significant number of cranes in the sky and several large office developments either under construction or in the pipeline. The Wollongong CBD is seeing an additional 28,000 sqm of A-grade office space under construction or newly completed, representing a 36 per cent uplift on current stock levels.

Our Wollongong 2028

The Community Goals are about the end result we want for children, adults, families, businesses and communities. Each Goal contains Objectives. These are a series of sub-goals required in order to achieve the Community Goals.

Goal 1

We value and protect our environment

- Our natural environment, waterways and terrestrial areas are protected, managed and improved.
- We practice sustainable living and reduce our ecological footprint.
- The sustainability of our urban environment is improved.
- We recognise and celebrate our heritage.
- Set targets and reduce our greenhouse gas emissions through our participation in the Global Covenant of Mayors for climate and energy.

Goal 2

We have an innovative and sustainable economy

- Local employment opportunities are increased with a strong local economy.
- The region's industry base is diversified.
- The profile of Wollongong as a regional city of the Illawarra is expanded and improved.
- Wollongong continues to expand as a place of learning.

Goal 3

Wollongong is a creative, vibrant city

- Creative, cultural industries are fostered and thriving.
- Community access to the arts, and participation in events and festivals is increased.
- Strong diverse local cultures are supported.

Goal 4

We are a connected and engaged community

- Residents have easy and equitable access to information and play an active role in the decisions that affect our city.
- Our residents have an increased sense of community.
- Our council is accountable, financially sustainable and has the trust of the community.

Goal 5

We have a healthy community in a liveable city

- There is an increase in the health and wellbeing of our community.
- Participation in recreational and lifestyle activities is increased.
- Residents have improved access to a range of affordable housing options.
- Community safety and community perception of safety is improved.
- The public domain is maintained to a high standard.

Goal 6

We have affordable and accessible transport

- Wollongong is supported by an integrated transport system.
- Connections between our city and Sydney are strengthened.
- Provide connected and accessible places and spaces.

Goal 1

We value & protect our environment

As a community we value our heritage and protect our natural environment. We have enhanced our wildlife corridors and the city's unique natural beauty through a green network that connects the escarpment to the sea. We manage our resources effectively and work together to decrease our impact on the environment.

Our beautiful city is well maintained and cared for, and the urban environment is well planned and managed so that population growth and urban expansion are achieved in a sensitive and sustainable way.

We have the capacity to deal with the many pressures facing our unique environment, such as sea level rises and other climate change related issues. We balance the need for development with the desire of the community to protect and preserve our city's natural environment.

Objectives

- Our natural environment, waterways and terrestrial areas are protected, managed and improved.
- We practice sustainable living and reduce our ecological footprint.
- The sustainability of our urban environment is improved.
- We recognise and celebrate our heritage.
- Set targets and reduce our greenhouse gas emissions through our participation in the Global Covenant of Mayors for climate and energy.

Community Indicators

Goal 1: We Value and Protect Our Environment

Measure (definition)	Baseline	End of Term 2012-17	End of Term 2017-21	Performance/ Comment
Increase average urban tree canopy cover by 20% by 2020 (priority areas)	n/a	17% (2017)	-	Next survey due 2022
Maintain water quality at our beaches (good to very good) and Lake Illawarra (fair to good)	100% (Beaches) 90% (Lake Illawarra recreational) 100% (Lake Illawarra ecological health) (2011)	100% (Beaches) 100% (Lake Illawarra recreational) 100% (Lake Illawarra ecological health) (2015-16)	100% (Beaches) 90% (Lake Illawarra recreational) 91% (Lake Illawarra ecological health) (2020-21)	Remains at 100% Remains at 100% Result remains high, although decline since 2015-16
Increase waste diverted from landfill (including recycling and organics) to 70% by 2022	49%	47% (2015-16)	50% (2011)	Increase since 2011 but remains below the target of 70%
Decrease the city's ecological footprint: - Natural gas consumption - Electricity consumption - Emissions per permanent residents - Water consumption - Waste generated	1.05M (GJ) 2.4M (kWh) 11.45 16.49M (kL) 145,465 (T) (2011-12)	1.10M (GJ) 2.30M (kWh) 10.64 18.40M (kL) 126,537 (T) (2015-16)	1.14M (GJ) 2.10M (kWh) 14.49 18.01M (kL) 125,841 (T) (2019-20)	Increase since 2011-12 Increase since 2011-12 Baseline^ Increase since 2011-12 Decrease since 2011-12 ^Due to a change in calculation to align with GCoM commitments
Increase the proportion of the residents who are satisfied that new development is sympathetic with the environment	3.2 out of 5.0 (2014)	3.1 out of 5.0 (2018)	2.9 out of 5.0 (2021)	Decline since 2014

Supporting Documents



both Wollongong and Shellharbour Councils in mid-2020 with certification from the Minister for Local Government in November 2020. It appeared in the NSW Gazette on 18 December 2020 marking the final stage of the project to prepare the CMP for Lake Illawarra and the first CMP for an estuary certified and gazetted. This important document provides a long-term strategy for coordinated management of the Lake Illawarra catchment. The CMP comprises nine management Strategies and 37 Actions. The Strategies include improve water quality, manage foreshore and bank, manage the entrance channel and the protection and promotion of cultural heritage. The Actions are to be implemented by a range of land managers over the next 10 years.

Council has continued to monitor water quality in Lake Illawarra, resulting in a six-year dataset generated by Council. The Lake and surrounds are sampled every six days. The results are presented to the Estuary Management Committee and continue to demonstrate a positive improvement in the water quality of the Lake.

Completion of the CMP has facilitated successful grant applications. Under the NSW Government's Coastal and Estuary Grants Program, funding has been received to the value of \$521,499 to continue the water quality monitoring program and undertake ecological restoration works around the Lake.

Floodplain Risk Management Plans and Major Projects

Council allocated additional resources to implement its revised culvert blockage factors. The review of eleven Flood studies to implement Council's blockage factors was completed. This required significant community engagement. Council also committed additional resources to implement the new national guidelines for flood estimation (Australian Rainfall and Runoff – AR&R 2019) through the review of floodplain risk management studies and plans. These reviews are in progress.

The reviews are undertaken in accordance with the NSW Floodplain Development Manual and overseen and informed by three floodplain risk management committees which comprise state government agencies (SES, TfNSW, DPIE), community representatives and Council staff.

The flood studies and plans keep the community informed about flooding, support emergency management planning, ensure flood risk is considered by developers on flood prone land and inform the investigation, design, construction, operation and maintenance of priority flood mitigation works.

At the end of term, the status of flood study review and floodplain risk management study and plan review per catchment is:

- Brooks Creek Catchment Flood Study Review was adopted by Council in June 2018.

- Mullet Creek Catchment: Flood Study Review was adopted by Council in June 2018. Mullet Creek Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan is in progress.
- Duck Creek Catchment: Flood Study Review was adopted by Council in June 2019.
- Minnegang Creek Catchment: Flood Study was adopted by Council in October 2019.
- Kully Bay Catchment: Flood Study was adopted by Council in October 2019.
- Wollongong City Catchment: Flood Study Review was adopted by Council in September 2019. Wollongong City Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan review is in progress
- Collins Creek Catchment: The Flood Study Review was adopted by Council in September 2019. Collins Creek Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan Review is in progress.
- Allans Creek Catchment: Flood Study Review was adopted by Council in December 2019. Allans Creek Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan is in progress.
- Fairy and Cabbage Tree Creeks Catchment: Flood Study Review was adopted by Council in December 2019.
- Hewitts Creek Catchment: Flood Study Review was adopted by Council in December 2019. The Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan Review is in progress.
- Towradgi Creek Catchment: Flood Study Review was adopted by Council in December 2019. The Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan Review is in progress.

The implementation of floodplain risk management plans continue to be delivered through the Infrastructure Delivery Program.

Seven high flood risk properties were acquired through the State Government Voluntary Purchase Scheme.

Key flood risk mitigation works were delivered including:

- JJ Kelly Park swale drain
- The Lowering of Gurungaty Causeway
- Brokers Road dam rehabilitation
- Hutton Avenue Bulli, pipe lining
- Wellington Drive Balgownie, debris control structure
- Foothills Dam channel lining

Concept designs for major flood risk mitigation projects were completed in close consultation with the community and NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment, they include:

- Ursula Road Flood Mitigation Scheme
- Bellambi Gully Flood Mitigation Scheme
- McMahon Street Detention Basin



Image: DHL Corporate Tree Planting William Beach Reserve

- West street Swale
- Brooks Creek Debris Control Structure
- Six Debris control Structures in Allans Creek and Collins Creek catchments

Development controls for flood risk and stormwater management were also reviewed with the stage 1 review of chapters E13 and E14 of Wollongong DCP completed and adopted by Council.

SMART Waterways phase 1 was also delivered with the installation of SMART water level and culvert blockage sensors. Phase 2 is underway to develop a pilot flash flood warning system for Fairy and Cabbage Tree Creek Catchment.

These projects present significant flood management benefits to our community.

Pursing Biodiversity Certification of the West Dapto Urban Release Area

Council has continued to advocate to the NSW Government for the resolution of funding mechanisms to support the biodiversity certification of West Dapto. The current mechanism available for industry funding of the required conservation measures is through a NSW Government Special Infrastructure Contribution (SIC) plan.

Throughout 2020 and 2021, Council continued to advocate to NSW Government for the resolution of funding mechanisms to support biodiversity certification of West Dapto. On 4 June 2021 the Illawarra and Shoalhaven Special Infrastructure Contributions (SIC) determination came into effect. \$20M has been identified in the SIC determination for West Dapto biodiversity. Council will advocate for the certification to be finalised as soon as possible now that a funding mechanism has been confirmed.

Urban Greening partnership

November 2020 saw the launch of a partnership with Greater Bank to plant 5,000 trees across Wollongong's LGA as part of Urban Greening and Greater Bank's 75th anniversary. The Lord Mayor highlighted the benefits of Council and community partnerships working together to make Wollongong a greener place.

Council has also partnered with DHL who have provided corporate support to plant more than 5,000 trees to date across various sites in the City.

Annual Bushfire Hazard Reduction Works Program

Council's Annual Bushfire Hazard Reduction Works Program was conducted each year throughout the term. The Program seeks to reduce ground fuel in high priority Council and community land areas.

In 2020, Council received \$47,700 through the Rural Fire Service - Rural Fire Fighting Fund Grant Program to undertake hazard reduction works over 13 sites.

Environmental Programs

Throughout the term, Council has developed and implemented a range of programs and events to encourage community participation in reducing Wollongong's ecological footprint. Such programs include the Rise and Shine Program, Clean Up Australia Day, World Environment Day, National Recycling Week, International Composting Week and other waste education activities.

The Community Service Order program managed community service personnel to assist keeping the city's roadsides, natural areas and open spaces clean from litter and rubbish. This valuable service complements Council resources and volunteer activity in keeping the city clean and green.

Throughout the term, natural area volunteer programs have continued to be supported and resourced by Council including Bushcare, FireReady, Dunecare and Greenplan.

Botanic Garden Greenplan sales also continued. The Greenplan plant sales offer a wide range of ground covers, grasses, trees and shrubs native to the Wollongong LGA, as well as other Australian natives. Worm farms and compost bins are also available for purchase to Wollongong Council ratepayers. The delivery of this service continued throughout COVID-19 restrictions with a key highlight being a successful trial of an online ordering and delivery service.



Objective - 1.2

We practise sustainable living and reduce our ecological footprint

6 Star Energy Rating - Water and Energy savings

During the term, Council's now 34 year-old Administration Building was awarded the highest sustainability rating from the Green Building Council of Australia, 6 Star, representing world leadership. Only 21 buildings in Australia and 10 in NSW have received the 6 Star Green Star Performance rating* from the Green Building Council of Australia. No other building of this age has achieved 6 Star Green Star in Australia. It is also the only local government building to achieve this certification. Council's work on maintaining and managing the Administration Building—reducing its energy and water consumption—has been an ongoing project for 15 years.

In 2017, Council installed sustainable and tuneable lighting systems with the installation of Eagle Indigo Maestro Beta luminaires and an Organic Response lighting control. Introducing this sustainable feature, along with other improvements, has helped Council reduce the Administration Building's annual consumption of electricity by more than 200,000 kWh and subsequently emissions have fallen by 184 tonnes per year. In further savings, the lights are only operating at 40 to 50 per cent of their rated outputs, which increases their longevity.

More broadly, Council continues to integrate water and energy saving actions into its projects as business as usual. Council also continues to engage with peak industry bodies such as the Green Building Council of Australia and Council has staff qualified in the application of their main rating tools being Buildings and Performance.

Throughout 2020 and 2021, Council undertook the Administration Building solar car-park project, with initial designs received in December 2020 and construction planned for completion by the end of June 2021. This system will be a first for the area and demonstrates leadership, while further reducing the Administration Building's operational impact and environmental footprint.

Waste Minimisation

During its term, Council has developed and implemented a range of waste minimisation and education programs including:

- Food Organics and Garden Organics (FOGO) trial in 2019 and subsequent city wide rollout in 2020.
- Council participated in an On-Call Household Cleanup diversion project with the Illawarra-Shoalhaven Joint Organisation and Green Connect. This saw the collection of 72m³ of household items and achieved a landfill diversion rate of 97%.
- Launch of the Community Recycling Centre (CRC), recognised as outstanding by the EPA.
- Awarded two Betty Awards for Council's Asbestos Awareness campaigns.

- Awarded Excellence in the Environment Award for the "Operation Nappy" program promoting re-usable nappies to avoid disposables going to landfill.
- Introduction of a Plastic Free Wollongong Trial with the Boomerang Alliance, Surfrider Foundation and other community groups leading to a Single Use Plastics management policy for Council operations and events. Ongoing promotion of Plastic Free July each year.
- Installation of the anti-litter artworks along Wollongong's foreshore.
- Installation and promotion of cigarette butt-bins across hot spot areas.
- Conducted a Council facility waste audit to separate green organics, recyclables, construction/demolition and general waste streams to minimise the amount of waste generated by Council operations going to landfill.

Other areas in which Council has developed and implemented a range of programs to encourage community participation in reducing Wollongong's ecological footprint include: Rise and Shine Program, Clean Up Australia Day, World Environment Day, National Recycling Week, International Composting Week and other waste education activities.

March 2018 saw the official opening of the Community Recycling Centre at Whytes Gully Waste Facility, Kembla Grange. The Centre now accepts a large range of problem waste that cannot be collected from kerbside collections including paints, gas bottles, fire extinguishers, batteries and fluorescent tubes - free of charge.

Residents are also able to dispose of mobile phones, scrap metal, computers and televisions, as well as fridges and freezers, in a responsible way. Managing waste in a sustainable manner is a significant challenge faced by communities and the opening of the Centre is an exciting new step in efforts to address this serious challenge. The Centre also raises community awareness by engaging householders in good management of resource recovery and disposal options for their problem waste. The Lord Mayor Cr Gordon Bradbery AM attended the official opening. The project was made possible with support from the NSW Environmental Protection Authority's Waste Less, Recycle More initiative, funded from the waste levy.

Food Organics, Garden Organics (FOGO)

Each year more than 40,000 tonnes of residential waste goes into the landfill site at Whytes Gully. Much of this waste is organic, from the kitchen or the garden. A trial of Food Organics, Garden Organics (FOGO) was initiated in September 2019. The three-month trial was held throughout selected streets within Austinmer, Cordeaux Heights and Warrawang across 1,600 homes.

During the trial, residents were asked to collect their food scraps such as raw and cooked meat, fruit and vegetable scraps and bread into the provided kitchen caddy and empty into their green-lidded bin for the normal organics collection.

Following a comprehensive engagement program, the trial saw high levels of participation and low levels of contamination.

In November 2020, rollout of the FOGO caddies commenced. The FOGO caddies play an integral role in the collection of household food waste that is able to be placed in green-lidded organics bins as part of Council's new FOGO service. The introduction of FOGO saw a changeover from the current fortnightly garden organics service to a weekly service. The red and yellow-lidded bin service remained unchanged.

The introduction of FOGO is expected to divert 6,000 tonnes of food waste from our landfill site at Whytes Gully each year. Wollongong residents currently fill up to 40% of their red general waste bins with food scraps. This equates to around 150kg of food waste per household going straight to landfill each year. While Council currently deploys a range of landfill diversion strategies (including operating the Community Recycling Centre at Whytes Gully), this was an important step to explore ways of keeping organic matter out of landfill. Most recently, the FOGO program recorded through the period between January to April 2021 over 1,600 tonnes of waste being diverted out of landfill. This is equivalent to nearly 44 truckloads of waste each month.

In late 2020, Council was successful in receiving a grant from the EPA to undertake a FOGO trial in multi-unit dwellings which don't have an existing green-lidded bin over a 12-month period with approximately 1,500 participants.



United Nations Sustainable Development Goals

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were mapped and included in the development of the Community Strategic Plan and continue being refined further to consider localised issues. Council now considers opportunities to align the United Nations Sustainable Development goals when developing new Supporting Documents and will integrate these goals as part of the review of the Community Strategic Plan.

Throughout the term, Council has carried out a number of actions aimed to consider the SDGs at a localised level. This includes:

- Assessing the SDG targets across 17 Goals for relevance to local government through the Our Wollongong 2028 Community Strategic Plan as well as the development of key strategies and plans.
- Identify existing community indicators (and other measures) for each relevant target and, where possible, link to State, Regional (or other) indicators.
- Engage Council's internal planners to build capacity and understanding of the SDGs.

Environmental Sustainability initiatives

Throughout the term, Council has introduced, participated and proactively engaged in a range of initiatives that improve the sustainability of our environments. Such initiatives have included:

- Single Use Plastic Bags Policy.
- Review of Environmental Sustainability Strategy.
- First hybrid vehicle leased in Council's fleet.
- Signed contracts for the provision of two additional electric vehicle charging stations at the Stewart Street (East) Car Park.
- Waste Wise Events tender complete.
- Sustainable Wollongong newsletters produced.
- Ongoing school and community education programs delivered by the Botanic Garden Discovery Centre and Council's Green team. This includes workshops, marketing campaigns, promotions and events.

Events were also held to promote environmental initiatives including in 2019 National Tree Day was celebrated with school and community groups participating in planting over 3,000 new trees. The event has been celebrated since 1996 and to mark Council's ongoing support of the day, Lord Mayor and Councillor Gordon Bradbery AM planted an established fig tree near the playground at Stuart Park, North Wollongong. The tree is five years old and has a lifespan that exceeds more than 100 years.



Report Illegal dumping program

Throughout the term, the Report Illegal Dumping (RID) program has had an ongoing impact on the illegal dumping issues across the City. This impact has been achieved by various measures being implemented in a joint effort between Council and the Illawarra Shoalhaven Joint Organisation's (ISJO) Southern Regional Waste Program.

The program is based on investigation and compliance / enforcement activities around 'hot spot' patrols and routine inspections but also utilises surveillance activities via covert camera placement. The Illegal Dumping program also delivered proactive awareness raising activities in conjunction with ISJO to inform contractors and the owner builder industry regarding the impact of illegal dumping of demolition wastes including asbestos. Targeted installation of over 40 x signs across the City also occurred this term seeking the support of our community in reporting illegal dumping.

There has been a significant reduction in illegal dumping incidents recorded on the NSW EPA RID during the term. In the last financial year, in comparison to previous years, in this term there has been an almost 25% decrease in illegal dumping incidents. There has also been a consistent increase in enforcement action undertaken by Council during this term.

In early 2021, Council was successful in receiving a grant from the NSW Environment Protection Authority to fund an Enhanced Surveillance & Clean Up Project (ESCUP). This Project focuses on the prevention and clean-up of illegal dumping along Harry Graham Drive, Clive Bissell Drive and Mount Keira Road. The enhanced surveillance will largely be achieved by the installation of covert surveillance cameras in the project area, which has been historically difficult to prosecute offenders for illegal dumping due to the seclusive nature of the areas and low traffic flow along these roads.



Objective - 1.3

The sustainability of our urban environment is improved

Wollongong Local Strategic Planning Statement

In 2020, preparation of the draft Wollongong Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) commenced and culminated in its endorsement by Council for exhibition on 27 April 2020. The draft Statement was then exhibited from 1-29 May 2020. On 29 June 2020, Council resolved to adopt the LSPS which was then submitted to the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment. The preparation of the LSPS was a newly introduced requirement under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act and is an important document as it sets out how Council will manage growth and change over the next 20 years, including the actions and outcomes that will help Council achieve our vision for the future of the Local Government Area.

The LSPS will work with other documents to inform Council's planning process. Along with the Community Strategic Plan, the Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Plan, the Local Environmental Plan and Development Control Plan, the document reflects our land use priorities. The LSPS also draws on an existing suite of supporting strategies to provide a consolidated source document to set our strategic planning and policy direction.

Helensburgh Town Centre

Throughout 2020, work commenced on the draft Helensburgh Town Centre Study and draft Helensburgh Mainstreet Master Plan. The Plan sets out the community's vision for the Helensburgh Town Centre. Its purpose being to outline clear strategies and actions to meet the current and future needs of the people who live, work, visit, play in Helensburgh.

These Plans were exhibited for community comment throughout May and June 2020.

Feedback from the community was called simultaneously on three strategic projects in Helensburgh - the proposed Town Centre Plan, the Streetscape Master Plan and the option for Helensburgh Library Project. By engaging on the Plans simultaneously, Council was able to streamline community engagement, provide a comprehensive view of future considerations and actions needed to develop the next phase of the project.

Council adopted the Helensburgh Town Centre Study on 26 October 2020. The Helensburgh Streetscaping Masterplan was also adopted and is being progressed to commence implementation. Pedestrian accessibility and safety are the focus of upcoming works in Helensburgh which form the first stage of works under the new Plan.

Together, these Plans provide strategic guidance for the future of Helensburgh Town Centre, with a focus placed on wayfinding and ensuring the area is accessible by foot, bicycle and car and strengthening the town's connection to its natural surroundings. The Plan also includes a proposal for an integrated community centre and library facility.



West Dapto Land Release

West Dapto is the largest growing residential area outside the Sydney region. Overseeing growth in West Dapto is the biggest and longest running project Council has ever undertaken. Throughout its term, Council continued with the implementation of the West Dapto Vision 2018.

During the 2019-2020 period, Council progressed a review of Chapter D16, West Dapto Release Area, of the Wollongong Development Control Plan 2009 to ensure planning decisions deliver on the Vision.

Over the past 10 years, more than 2,000 new housing lots have been approved at West Dapto with around 19,500 homes forecast for the area by 2050. This significant growth and development has prompted a review of suburb boundaries. On 9 March 2020, public submissions were invited for the naming of new suburbs. Information on the historical significance of the names Avondale, Kembla Grange and Huntley was collated as part of the consultation process. There was also a call for local knowledge for suggestions that may influence any new place naming and specifically encouraged to provide name suggestions of local Aboriginal significance, local historical females and names that relate to the features of the suburb.

Council staff worked with two working groups to develop a short list of potential suburb names in accordance with the Geographical Names Board of NSW (GNB) guidelines. The two stakeholder working groups comprised of representatives from Aboriginal, Heritage and Dapto communities. This list was informally considered by GNB. A shortlist of recommended names was exhibited for public feedback following Council's meeting on 29 October 2020. The list will be further assessed by GNB staff for initial advice. Additional reporting to Council will occur before any formal application to GNB to name new suburbs at West Dapto.

Accelerated Assessment Program

Council is a participant in the NSW Government's Council Accelerated Assessment Program which involves adapting and applying the State's "fast-tracked assessments process" as appropriate for Wollongong.

Under the Program, Council accelerated the final assessment and determination process of significant employment generating development applications that completed the substantive planning work and were post the exhibition phase.

Wollongong has a demonstrated track record as an innovator in planning systems, having participated in the best practice assessment guide, standard conditions review, standard DCP review as well as being an early adopter of the planning portal and being the only LGA outside of Metro Sydney to have a Local Planning Panel.

Staff have also identified an opportunity to apply the principles that underpin the Program more broadly to achieve system improvement in the development assessment process for significant proposals that will contribute to local economic development and employment opportunities.

Objective - 1.4

We recognise and celebrate our heritage

Heritage Strategy

The Heritage Strategy and Action Plan 2019-2022 was adopted following a review of the 2014-2017 Heritage Strategy and Action Plan, in consultation with the Wollongong Heritage Reference Group, various Council Divisions and the community through a public exhibition process. The document provides continued direction to Council and the Wollongong Heritage Reference Group, in relation to heritage outcomes for the Strategy period.

The continued evolution and implementation of the Heritage Strategy is important in ensuring the ongoing conservation and increased community appreciation and awareness of our City's unique and valuable heritage. The Wollongong Heritage Strategy Action Plan 2019-2022 and Implementation Plan provides a strategic approach to the ongoing management and delivery of Heritage programs and projects.

At the time of adoption of the Strategy in October 2019, Council had over 490 Heritage sites and cultural landscapes listed in the Wollongong Local Environmental Plan 2009 and through State Environmental Planning Policies. Of these items, 24 are listed on the NSW State Heritage Register as being items of significance to the State of New South Wales.



There are nine listed Heritage Conservation Areas in the Wollongong Local Government Area:

1. Austinmer Conservation Area
2. Brownsville Conservation Area
3. Bulli Conservation Area
4. Old Bulli Conservation Area
5. Garrawarra Hospital Conservation Area
6. Kembla Heights Mining Village
7. Market Street Conservation Area
8. North Beach Precinct and Belmore Basin
9. Illawarra Escarpment Landscape Area.

The nine Key Strategies outlined in the document are:

1. Actively involve the community in the management of Wollongong's heritage;
2. Maintain an up to date list of heritage items;
3. Employ and train staff to manage Wollongong's heritage and provide professional advice to the community;
4. Develop and implement programs and projects that aim to achieve proactive heritage management;
5. Provide funding for heritage projects and programs;
6. Identify and manage key heritage precincts, streetscapes, cultural and natural landscapes;

7. Implement heritage education and promotion programs;
8. Implement best practice heritage asset management procedures as a positive example for the community;
9. Promote sustainable development as a tool for heritage management.

Heritage Award

A renovation at the Resin Brewery site in Bulli took out a prestigious State Award for Heritage Restoration in 2021-2022. Council was involved in the renovation project, providing technical advice to ensure the project was able to comply with both heritage requirements and current building codes. Initially, the building was to be knocked down to provide access to the supermarket; however, community advocacy prompted a sale of the site to the microbrewery.

The development involved significant conservation works to the dilapidated building and some sensitively designed modern additions. Council worked closely with the owners for several years throughout the project that culminated in winning the Adaptive Reuse Category of the Heritage Awards awarded by the National Trust (NSW). The category recognises projects that complement and utilise existing heritage fabric, both repurposed and new developments that are sympathetic to the traditional uses of a site and its structures and protect the heritage integrity.

Local Heritage Grants

Council's Financial Assistance Policy provides for the Wollongong Local Heritage Grant Fund. This Council funded program is aimed at supporting owners of heritage items in maintaining and conserving their properties.

In 2019, Council doubled the funding allocation to the Local Heritage Grant Fund from \$30,000 to \$60,000 which enabled Council to support a larger number of projects and those with a higher value. Council has also periodically been successful in obtaining an additional \$6,500 in funding to support Council's contribution through the NSW Heritage Grant Fund. Applications for Heritage funding are invited annually and assessed in accordance with the requirements of Council's Financial Assistance Policy. The program provides a meaningful incentive for heritage owners to undertake maintenance and conservation works. The fund has been operating for over 20 years and has supported many worthwhile projects.

Council has supported 47 applications since the 2017-2018 financial year with the total grant allocation of \$208,195 and overall project value exceeding \$767,796.

Heritage Reference Group

The Wollongong Heritage Advisory Committee was re-formed by Council under the new name Wollongong Heritage Reference Group during 2018. The Group gives advice to Council about policies, strategies and projects that protect and promote the city's heritage. Throughout 2018 and 2019, the Group supported Council in the development of the Heritage Strategy and Action Plan 2019-2022. The Reference Group continue to meet bi monthly.

Sandon Point Heritage

In May 2019, the Sandon Point Aboriginal Heritage Impact Permit (AHIP) was approved by the Office of Environment and Heritage. The AHIP permits a range of infrastructure improvements to occur, such as improving pathways and beach access. The AHIP also permits bush regeneration works and signage. These projects commenced throughout the term with works undertaken in consultation with the Sandon Point Joint Management partner groups.

Design work to improve access to the beach and along the share path continued throughout 2019-2020 with the ownership of the adjoining sections of Woodlands, Hewitts and Tramway Creek being transferred to Council from Stocklands.

Local Studies Projects

The Illawarra Mercury Photo Negatives project to rescue 1960's images affected by vinegar syndrome progressed throughout the term. By the end of June 2020, 750 negatives were digitised (preserved) and

prepared for cataloguing. In addition, 1,458 images were added to the Illawarra Mercury photograph collection. A further 372 maps were digitised and attached to catalogue records throughout 2019 and 2020, with an additional 106 maps digitized and queued to be attached to catalogue records.

The Local Studies Library also delivered a project for members of the community to capture their experiences of their local neighbourhood and lives, during the period of the pandemic, creating a valuable record for future generations of this historical landmark. This project complements the Illawarra Stories program where the library has collected and uploaded more than 150 interviews ('oral histories') with local people, preserving and making available to the broader community the narratives of who we are as a city.

In November 2020, The Friends of Wollongong City Libraries Local History Prize was awarded to Researcher Andre Brett's paper on the history of railways and the environment in Illawarra between 1870s-1915. The paper has been added to the Library's Local Studies collection, along with the 15 other entries received for the 2020 competition, adding to the documentation of the Illawarra's history. The 'Junior' Local History Prize, run in 2019, saw more than 30 entries from children from local Primary Schools who provided a pictorial study of their local area 'then, now and future'.

Objective - 1.5 Set targets and reduce our greenhouse gas emissions through our participation in the Global Covenant of Mayors for climate and energy

Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy

In August 2017, Council became one of 26 councils in Australia to commit to greenhouse gas reduction through the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy (GCoM). GCoM is an international alliance of cities and local governments with a shared long-term vision of promoting and supporting voluntary action to combat climate change and move to a low emission, resilient society. The GCoM commits Council to respond to the risks and opportunities presented by climate change.

As part of this commitment, an emissions inventory was completed for the City and submitted to the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives for verification prior to submission to the GCoM.

On 9 December 2019, Council resolved to adopt an



aspirational emissions reduction target as part of the Global Covenant of Mayors Program and the declaration of a State of Climate emergency. It resolved the following targets:

- Emissions reduction target of net zero emissions by 2050 for community emissions and
- Net zero emissions by 2030 for Council operations.

The City of Wollongong target will be reviewed in five years. While Council is not solely responsible for the implementation of actions to achieve the whole of City target, Council recognises and adopts a leadership role and will be working with the community and industry to meet the 2050 target.

Climate Change Mitigation Plan

The Climate Change Mitigation Plan (CCMP) 2020-2022 was adopted by Council on 16 November 2020. The CCMP prescribes a series of actions to assist Council and the City meet the emissions reduction targets. The CCMP contains 98 Actions; approximately 47 of these Actions are already underway.

Overseen by Council's Climate Action Working Groups and Project Control Group, was the development of a Climate Change Adaptation Plan (CCAP), including a risk and vulnerability assessment. Finalisation of the CCAP is anticipated by the end of the Council term. An emissions monitoring system for the organisation is also being established that will allow Council to monitor and report on its progress toward the organisational emissions reduction target.

One of Council's key Climate Mitigations actions, the extraction of landfill gas at Whytes Gully commenced during the term with the stage 1 construction of a biogas extraction system and flare. Over the past year gas extraction and combustion of over 1,200,000 cubic metres of biogas via flaring has abated more than 18,000 tonnes of CO₂e. Stages yet to commence include further gas well installations to capture enough gas to generate baseload renewable energy back into the grid for the local community.

Other key actions that have progressed to date include: FOGO rollout, developing a Sustainable Events Guideline, adopting an Electric Vehicle (EV) charging station on public land policy, pursuing a PPA for Council energy consumption, business sustainability programs and developing and environmental education plan.

City Power Partnership Program

In 2020, Council became a member of the Cities Power Partnership and selected the pledges under this program which fall under the themes of energy efficiency, renewable energy, sustainable transport and working together and influencing.

Council's pledges are to:

- Install renewable energy (solar PV) on Council buildings.
- Implement landfill gas methane or capture for electricity generation.
- Encourage sustainable transport use: such as public transport, walking and cycling through Council transport planning and design.
- Set city-level renewable energy or emissions reduction targets.
- Adopt best practice energy efficiency measures across Council buildings and support community facilities to adopt these measures.

The Cities Power Partnership provides a valuable mechanism to achieve our commitment to energy efficiency, renewable energy and sustainable transportation in our Local Government Area.

Key progress against these pledges throughout the term include; completion of an emissions inventory for the LGA, installation of solar panels on Council's Administration Building carpark and Dapto Ribbonwood Centre, Whytes Gully gas well capture and Council's 6 Star Green Star Performance rating from the Green Building Council of Australia for the Administration Building.

Goal 2

We have an innovative & sustainable economy



We are global leaders in innovative and sustainable research, development and new industries. We plan for the impacts of disruptive industries and work together to build a Smart City. Wollongong is established as the regional capital of the south, creating hubs of activity with a thriving and resilient local economy. The City is able to support the establishment of new industries, enterprises and business which attract and retain people to live, work and play. Wollongong is a student-friendly city and our residents are educated and employed. We have access to employment and education through a diverse industry base and world-class institutions.

Objectives

- Local employment opportunities are increased with a strong local economy.
- The region's industry base is diversified.
- The profile of Wollongong as a regional city of the Illawarra is expanded and improved.
- Wollongong continues to expand as a place of learning.

Community Indicators

Goal 2: We Have an Innovative and Sustainable Economy				
Measure	Baseline	End of Term 2012-17	End of Term 2017-21	Performance / Comment
Increase in the number of jobs within the City of Wollongong <small>† previously reported data updated with latest annual results available on Economy.ID. These are modelled estimates of jobs and .id revise the historical series through time.</small>	89,512 [†] (2011)	90,878 [†] (2015-16)	93,563 [†] (2019-20)	Increase since 2010-11
Increase proportion of resident workers of the City of Wollongong who are employed locally <small>^based on an experimental data series sourced by Economy.ID from ABS to rectify data between 2011-16 Censuses not being directly comparable.</small>	73.1% [^] (2011)	66.9% [^] (2016)	-	2021 Census data due for release in 2022
Increase the proportion of people working within Wollongong's CBD	18% (2011)	20% (2016)	-	2021 Census data due for release in 2022
Increase Wollongong City's Gross Regional Product by 1.5% each year till 2028 <small>*Updated with Headline GRP metric provided on Economy.ID. Data is based on a 2018-19 price base for all years and inflation adjusted.</small>	\$11.8B* (2010-11)	\$12.4B* (2017)	\$13.0B (2019-20)	Increase since 2010-11
Decrease unemployment rate to align with the Illawarra (SA4) average by 2028	7.1% (Illawarra SA4 6.9%) (March 2011)	6.9% (Illawarra SA4 6.7%) (March 2016)	6.4% (Illawarra SA4 6.7%) (March 2021)	Decrease since 2011
Increase accommodation occupancy by room/nights (Excludes tourist parks)	27.80% (2012-13)	31.7%* (2014-15)	-	Series of data has ceased to be published by ABS

Supporting Documents



- Those adopted throughout the term include:
- Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan 2019-2029

Objective - 2.1

Local employment opportunities are increased with a strong local economy

Economic Development Strategy

The Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan 2019-2029 was officially adopted by Council in September 2019. It superseded the previous Strategy (2013-2023) adopted by Council in 2013.

The Strategy was developed based on learnings from the previous Strategy, research into best-practise approaches from other Local Governments and following extensive consultation with business and government stakeholders. This included establishing a reference group, meeting with key peak bodies and organisations, conducting a business survey, hosting an investor roundtable, internal staff workshops and meetings and Councillor briefings.

The updated Strategy provides several actions to support an innovative and sustainable economy in the City. A key theme of the Strategy is a renewed focus on increasing the number of high-quality jobs in Wollongong LGA, with the aim of doubling the growth of the past 10 years. **The Strategy identifies three key objectives being:**

- Jobs Target – generate 10,500 new jobs in the next decade to reduce the jobs deficit. This will be more than double the 4,998 net new jobs created in the decade to 2018.
- Lifting median incomes – focus on generating new jobs in industries that are higher-paying, have a greater share of full-time jobs and are expected to grow in the future.
- Target sectors align with talent pool - align the target industries with Wollongong’s talent pool, in particular commuters and graduates of the University of Wollongong (UOW), to create more local job opportunities for residents.

- Key activities of the previous Strategy (2013-2023) included:**
- Directly assisting 68 investors in Wollongong over 2018-2019, ranging from support for small businesses to a number of large-scale enquiries.
 - Launching the Easy to Do Business program in September 2019.
 - Securing a new Economic data provider, Economy.id.
 - Supporting local businesses in Port Kembla and Corrimal via a façade upgrade program.
 - Advocating for improved transport links to Sydney.

- Since its adoption, key highlights that have been achieved include:**
- Publication of (RLB) national crane index, featuring Wollongong for the first time with 18 cranes across the LGA. This generated positive national-level news coverage.
 - Ongoing advocacy around key transport projects – South West Illawarra Rail Link and Picton Road.
 - Contribution to the City Centre Planning Review.
 - Hosting an Easy to do Business annual update with Council staff.
 - Continuing development of new business support program.
 - Ongoing redesign and rebranding of Economic Gardening program.
 - Release of Gateway Cities Report, in partnership with Geelong and Newcastle, highlighting the many ways Gateway Cities can assist Sydney and Melbourne alleviate their population and congestion challenges. This approach was subsequently supported by the Business Council of Australia.
 - In October 2020, the Wollongong Office Market Prospectus was launched seeking to position Wollongong as a legitimate alternative CBD location.
 - Adoption of the CBD Night Time Economy Policy.
 - Supporting the local business community during COVID-19, through facilitating investor enquiries including a number of larger projects, with potential for significant employment outcomes.

Marketing the Wollongong Advantage

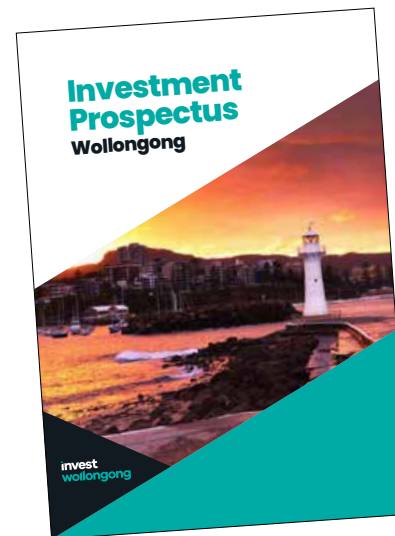
On 20 November 2018, Advantage Wollongong hosted an event Celebrating Wollongong: A City Transformed at NSW Parliament House. The event was co-hosted by the Lord Mayor, then Parliamentary Secretary for the Illawarra and South Coast and the University of Wollongong Vice-Chancellor. The event was well received and the region was positively promoted to a range of investors, businesses and key decision makers. Over 100 people attended the event, including the Premier, Ministers and Members of Parliament. The event celebrated the achievements of Wollongong over the past five years, showcased our advantages, assisted in changing perceptions of Wollongong and launched the new 2018 Advantage Wollongong Investor Prospectus and video, ‘Wollongong: a magnet for talent and new economy businesses.’ Advantage Wollongong commissioned a study into the competitiveness of Wollongong’s shared services sector, compared to Sydney and other metro locations.

Highlights from the report include:

- Staff turnover rates are 8% in Wollongong compared to 19% throughout Australia – demonstrating a strong workforce with lower staff turnover costs for companies. For a 150-seat contact centre, this demonstrates a cost of staff turnover in Wollongong 70% lower than the rest of Australia, resulting in an annual saving of approximately \$220,000 per annum. This represents a range of benefits to businesses, including lower recruitment and training costs and higher productivity for workers.
- The study also found that the operating costs of a 150-seat contact centre were considerably lower in Wollongong compared to other key locations, demonstrating Wollongong represents a \$3.5M or 30% saving for companies looking to relocate, as compared to the Sydney Central Business District. These findings will be used to promote Wollongong's capabilities in the knowledge services sector and a targeted marketing campaign will be undertaken in the coming months to distribute the results.

Key highlights for Advantage Wollongong over the term included:

- Co-hosting an event with Knight Frank at their head office on 20 July 2017.
- Production of a Wollongong Defence Industry Directory, which included detail on the capabilities of local companies in this sector (July 2017).
- On 21 February 2018, Advantage Wollongong hosted an Auscontact Illawarra Site Tour, providing Wollongong with an opportunity to showcase the business benefits of doing business here to over 50 Auscontact representatives. The tour included site visits to two of Wollongong's newest contact centres operated by NEC and NSW - SES.
- Advantage Wollongong hosted a Defence NSW Breakfast on 9 March 2018.
- Launch of an Advantage Wollongong e-newsletter.
- Advantage Wollongong exhibited at Land Forces 2018 at the Adelaide Convention Centre in South Australia with the Parliamentary Secretary for the Illawarra and South Coast, Gareth Ward MP.
- Promotion of positive news stories about Wollongong to a national audience, including: Forge Magazine: 'A city transformed: Wollongong positions itself for a digital revolution' outlining the regions recently endorsed Smart Region Strategy and work of the SMART Infrastructure Facility and "Wollongong on the Rise" in the May 2018 edition of Australian Institute of Company Directors magazine.
- 20 November 2018, Advantage Wollongong held an event Celebrating Wollongong: A City Transformed at Parliament House NSW to showcase Wollongong's achievements. The event was co-hosted by the Lord Mayor, Parliamentary Secretary for the Illawarra and South Coast and the University of Wollongong Vice-Chancellor.

**Invest Wollongong**

October 2019 marked the launch of new investment attraction brand, Invest Wollongong. Building on the work of its predecessor, Advantage Wollongong, Invest Wollongong has a strong focus on highlighting the many benefits of locating a business in Wollongong. This included the release of a new website, a range of marketing collateral and a new stakeholder program. The program is an opportunity for Wollongong's diverse business community to support Invest Wollongong and contribute to attracting more like-minded businesses and individuals to the city. Free to join, businesses who participate in the program will be given the information and support needed to deliver the positive Wollongong message across their networks. A rollout of the first media campaign around the new brand was also completed, targeting publications which are read by tech firms and scale-ups. This campaign resulted in editorial coverage in thirteen publications and sites, with an estimated reach of 1,449,140 people.

Invest Wollongong's social media presence continues to grow, with almost 1,000 LinkedIn followers now tracking the activities of the partnership. Invest Wollongong hosted a visit from key NSW Government representatives in November 2019 as part of a 'famil' tour of the Illawarra organised by Invest Wollongong partner, the NSW Government.

Strengthening of Local Economic Capacity

In June 2020 Council adopted an updated Sustainable Procurement Policy with a key feature of the policy being a change in the scoring methodology for assessing major procurements undertaken by Council. The "Strengthening of Local Economic Capacity" mandatory criterion scoring was increased from 5% to 10% to provide more opportunities for local Wollongong based companies to successfully bid to do business with Council.

Objective - 2.2

The region's industry base is diversified

Innovation

Throughout the term, Council partnered with the University of Wollongong's i-Accelerate program. i-Accelerate is the regions first business incubator providing space to entrepreneurs. i-Accelerate provides mentoring and education programs to help them succeed. Council was part of an intrapreneur program being emersed in the program for a period throughout 2018 and 2019. The partnership investigated Food Organics Garden Organics Systems (FOGO) trial, Charitable Waste and Pensioner Concession Waste Projects. Research work was also undertaken with the artificial intelligence work to identify contaminants from commingled recycling bins with SMART Infrastructure Facility at UOW and Remondis.

Supporting local industry networks

Throughout the term, Council has continued to work on city-wide/regional-wide advocacy projects with a range of local business-based stakeholders.

Council continues to be represented by the Economic Development Manager on the Regional Advisory Council of Illawarra Business Chamber and the Board of i3net. The General Manager was re-appointed to the Regional Development Australia Illawarra Board.

Invest Wollongong sponsored the i3net Annual Manufacturing Showcase in November 2019 and WCC sponsored two awards at the 2019 IBC Business Awards. Both events were highly successful and showcased the achievements and capability of our local business community. This was following a further successful event, the i3net Manufacturing Showcase in November 2018 where several key decision makers from high level national companies attended the showcase to hear more about the region's capabilities. The Lord Mayor provided a welcoming address and showed the new Advantage Wollongong video.

Economic Development staff have attended a vast range of groups, including speaking to members about Invest Wollongong and the Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan. Groups/companies engaged with include Silligong, i3net, IBC, Zig-Zag Hub, Probus and Flagstaff Group.

Crown Street West improvements

Throughout the term, Council worked to plan and deliver staged implementation of Crown Street West improvements. Highlights included:

- Crown Street West - Railway Parade to Gladstone Avenue: The north side is scheduled for construction in 2021. The south side is currently in the design stage and is expected that construction will be undertaken in the 2021-2022 financial year.
- Crown Street West - Construction has been completed.
- Crown Street West - Darling Street to Denison Street: Construction was completed in 2020.





Image: Port Kembla viewing platform

Objective - 2.3

The profile of Wollongong as a regional city of the Illawarra is expanded and improved

Mt Keira Power Supply

2018 saw the acceptance of a contract by Council from Transelect Pty Ltd to carry out the construction of power supply to Mt Keira Summit Park. The second half of 2018 saw the commencement of the construction of the powerline with trenching and backfilling of the underground power cables completed along Queen Elizabeth Drive including the installation of power poles within the Illawarra Escarpment State Conservation area.

In 2020, construction of the new power supply infrastructure to the Mt Keira Summit Park was completed with Endeavour Energy taking over the power line.

Tourism Infrastructure

During 2020, Council successfully secured \$1.1M of grant funding with four applications under the NSW Resources for Regions fund to support iconic tourism infrastructure.

These applications were:

- Cringila Hills Recreation and Mountain Bike Park;
- Grand Pacific Walk extension in Clifton;
- “The Snakepit” a regional basketball and sports facility;
- Development of a series of online videos highlighting the region’s history.

In November 2020, the Port Kembla viewing platform was completed, thanks to a \$400,000 grant under the Port Kembla Community Investment fund that supported the delivery of the new space. The shade-covered platform is on the eastern side of Port Kembla Surf Life Saving Club’s car park and is part of Council’s ongoing upgrade works in the beachside precinct. The location is popular with locals and visitors and is designed to be level and accessible, allowing all members of the community to enjoy the view. The new shaded area is approximately 12 metres long and five metres wide, featuring seating and picnic tables. Council also completed improvements in the adjacent car park as part of this project.

The viewing platform is a key link in Council’s ongoing Grand Pacific Walk improvements and provides a meeting point for those walking, running, or riding the shared pathway between Helensburgh and Lake Illawarra.

Marketing and Activation to reflect the ‘City Experience’

Throughout the term, Council has worked on initiatives to market and activate the ‘City Experience’ to promote and attract visitors to the city.

In December 2020, Council finalised a new marketing approach for the Wollongong City Centre designed to promote and attract a greater number of visitors and to extend visitation times. Branded as the Wollongong CBD Marketing Strategy, it will promote our local boutique bars, food art and culture. The Strategy will provide practical assistance to local businesses with digital marketing to better promote their own business offer and the Wollongong CBD experience.

A new website and social media platforms have been developed that reflect the brand values of ‘vibrant, stimulating and fun’. The spring placemaking project in Crown Street Mall saw the continuation of colourful spring-themed décor, additional COVID-Safe distanced seating, living parklet and plantings. The project outcomes have increased and diversified usage of Crown Street Mall’s public spaces, including the outdoor stage area.

To support marketing of local businesses, a photographer was engaged to capture promotional portraits of business owners and staff, showcasing their outdoor dining areas. This year, due to COVID-19 social distancing restrictions, our 2020 Christmas activation had a strong placemaking focus. The CBD ‘Summer’ Christmas tree was located at the centre of the Mall and was a contemporary reimaging of a traditional Christmas tree, incorporating bright colours to reflect our

local landscape. The summer tree was constructed using certified carbon neutral materials produced in Australia, ensuring minimal environmental footprint and supporting Australian business.

The Grateful Portrait Project featured self-portraits and statements from young members of our community on large panels throughout the Crown Street Mall, outlining what they had to be grateful for in 2020.

The Creative Container located in the lower Mall was decorated and wrapped with a Christmas theme and featured local creative industries and doubled as a performance venue. Live music was performed in socially distanced and COVID-Safe approved ways.

In 2018, the “Centre of it All” marketing and promotion campaign was developed and implemented in partnership with the GPT Group/ Wollongong Central and Council. Initial roll out of the program commenced on 18 March with a focus on the city experiences in the Crown Street Mall with 30 and 60 second advertisements, photographs and editorials for strategic placement across television, radio, print and signage collateral.

Since its inception, the activation program has included a variety of Council and third party events including School Holiday Programs, One Day Sale Campaigns, Cruise ship passenger welcomes, Easter programs including bilby sculpture/ workshops/Easter egg hunt, Lunar New Year; Playing in the City, Nowruz; Free Style Kings Motorcross event, Christmas in the City and Nights on Crown, a regular program of live music, Honk Oz performances, Chinese and Lunar New Year Festivals and delivery of the Crown St Mall Public Art Work.



Image: Crown St Mall parklet



Photo Dee Kramer

Explorer of the Seas

Throughout the term, Council signed an addendum to the Destination Wollongong Funding Agreement to provide additional funding to cover the costs associated with supporting cruise ship visitors to Wollongong. This has seen Wollongong welcome cruise ships to the city including Radiance of the Seas on 29 January 2018 and Explorer of the Seas on 18 March 2018, providing the opportunity to showcase the region to approximately 9,000 cruise ship passengers.

Wollongong also welcomed Explorer of the Seas on 11 February 2019. This ship brought 3,224 cruise ship passengers to the City who spent an estimated \$648,000 (Destination Wollongong data).

Objective - 2.4 Wollongong Continues to expand as a place of learning

Wollongong as a Smart City

In November 2018, the Commonwealth Government announced Council's Grant Application to the Smart Cities and Suburbs program was successful. The Application was for the Smart Illawarra-Shoalhaven Water Management Project; a collaboration between Wollongong City, Shellharbour City, Kiama Municipal and Shoalhaven City Councils, developer Lend Lease and the University of Wollongong (UOW). The objective of the project was to apply smart technologies and develop data analytics to help improve water quality, flood mitigation and community safety during flood events. The total value of the project is \$1.1M, with 40% of the value of the project funded through the Grant. Work commenced in February 2019 with a Smart Cities Coordinator appointed in March to oversee delivery of the project. This project is now complete.

Council has also worked with UOW SMART Infrastructure in developing a proposal for smart pedestrian counting and parking surveys.



Image: Outdoor Library, Crown St mall

Your Library Everywhere

Throughout the term, 10 'outdoor libraries' have been installed at a range of locations across the City, with a particular focus on those areas where community members may have less access to a library. Customised branding that reflects the characteristics of the area where each 'outdoor library' is located has been applied. The Lord Mayor officially launched the outdoor libraries at the Crown Street Mall installation in July 2017.

The Friends of Wollongong City Libraries launched the outdoor library at Beaton Park Leisure Centre in August 2017, in recognition of the funding they provided for this outdoor library. The outdoor library locations throughout the city include Beaton Park Leisure Centre, Bellambi Neighbourhood Centre, Bulli Senior Citizens Centre/Bulli Preschool, Cringila Community Hall, Crown Street Mall, Koonawarra Community Centre, Port Kembla Community Centre, Stanwell Park Children's Centre, Warrawong Community Centre and Botanic Garden.



Image: Paint the Gong REaD

Early Literacy

Paint the Gong REaD is one of 83 sites that form part of National Paint the Town REaD initiative. Paint the Gong REaD encourages children aged five and under to build a love of books and stories. This early literacy program involves reading, talking, singing and rhyming with children from the time they're born. Developing literacy skills early in life helps children through all the later stages of their life. The Paint the Gong REaD mascot, Bright Spark, visited libraries, schools and community events to help get more children involved in this fun program.

A range of local activities have been undertaken throughout the term including; reading tents, Annual Reading Day, Book Box deliveries, National Reading Relay which began in Perth WA and made its way across the country finishing in Wollongong on 22 May 2019. Support continues to be provided to the Combined Rotaries Club for the delivery of the Imagination Library which provides free children books monthly to families experiencing disadvantage.

Goal 3

Wollongong
is a creative,
vibrant city



Wollongong is a creative, vibrant city where our rich cultural heritage is celebrated. We embrace new ideas and have thriving creative industries that reflect the diversity of our community with internationally and nationally recognised events and festivals. Our public spaces are activated, exciting and attractive at all times of the day. All of our communities work together in partnership to strengthen our connection and celebrate the diversity of our city.

Objectives

- Creative, cultural industries are fostered and thriving.
- Community access to the arts and participation in events and festivals increased.
- Strong diverse local cultures are supported.

Community Indicators

Goal 3: We Have a Creative, Vibrant City				
Measure	Baseline	End of Term 2012-17	End of Term 2017-21	Performance / Comment
Increase the proportion of residents who agree Wollongong's cultural history and creativity is reflected in built environment	3.1 out of 5.0 (2014)	3.4 out of 5.0 (2018)	3.3 out of 5.0 (2021)	Whilst not increasing it's at a medium level and remains stable
Increase the proportion of residents who agree cultural diversity and creativity is valued and celebrated	3.9 out of 5.0 (2014)	3.9 out of 5.0 (2018)	4.0 out of 5.0 (2021)	Whilst a slight increase its at a medium level and remains stable
Increase the proportion of people employed in arts and recreation services	1.4% (2011)	1.5% (2016)	-	2021 Census data due for release in 2022
Increase the proportion of residents who agree there are enough opportunities to attend arts and related cultural activities	3.6 out of 5.0 (2014)	3.8 out of 5.0 (2018)	3.6 out of 5.0 (2021)	Slight decline in medium agreement levels since 2018, on par with 2014 <i>*Results may have been impacted by COVID-19 restrictions</i>
Increase the proportion of residents who participate in arts and related cultural activities	57% (2014)	68% (2018)	78% (2021)	Increase since 2014 <i>Due to COVID-19, 2021 question was changed to include last two years. Previous surveys included participation over past 12 months</i>

Supporting Documents

GOAL 3

Wollongong is a creative, vibrant city

Creative Wollongong 2019-2024

Our Future Wollongong Art Gallery Strategic Plan 2020-2025

Cultural Tourism Strategy 2018

Wollongong Community Safety Plan 2021-2025

Framing Our Future Wollongong Art Gallery Strategic Plan 2020-2025

- Those adopted throughout the term include:
- Creative Wollongong 2019-2024.
 - Framing Our Future Wollongong Art Gallery Strategic Plan 2020-2025.
 - Wollongong Community Safety Plan 2021-2025.



Objective - 3.1
Creative, cultural industries are fostered and thriving

Cultural Plan

Following a rigorous community engagement process undertaken over a 12-month period to gain insight and community feedback, the new Cultural Plan: Creative Wollongong 2019-2024, was endorsed by Council in February 2019. Its endorsement recognised Council's increasingly important role in providing creative, safe and liveable cities. Creative Wollongong underpins cultural activity, engagement and enterprise in the region. It seeks to build on the work of previous Cultural Plans while providing a strategic direction for the future growth of creative industries, the support of participation in creative life, and the celebration of the City's unique places and spaces.

A range of strategies and community cultural development projects have been delivered as part of the Cultural Plan, including:

- Creative Dialogue program featuring Arts Law, Creative Plus Business, Renew Wollongong, content creators (film industry) and 'Honk! Oz' musical festival.
- Creative Spaces included 12 Yarn Tree Decoration workshops which took place at Dapto Square. The two main participation groups included the local Aboriginal community with ties to Dapto and Dapto Square and Kanahooka High School students attending the Special Education Unit. This was followed by an exhibition of works by Dapto High School Year 10 students. Sensory and creative workshops were also held, with an exhibition at Kanahooka High School students and Lower Town Hall resident artist Richard Lee.

- Step Up Creative Dance project offered two rounds of five dance choreography and performance workshops to people living in aged care facilities. 84 people over the age of 80 years participated in these workshops. Council partnered with Marco Polo Aged Care Services and Australian Health Professionals physiotherapy team to develop and deliver this program.

During 2017-2018, Council provided nine discreet programs including workshops and forums in partnership with Office of Environment and Heritage, Bionet, Wonderwalls, Music NSW, Yours and Owls, Wollongong Writers Festival and Create NSW.

Other community cultural development projects planned, developed and delivered during this period included:

- The Women Out Loud Community Cultural Development Project which comprised of a 10 week pilot workshop project (including three performance opportunities) in which nine female participants learnt technical performance skills and confidence building practices, using comedy as a tool. Six participants performed at Viva La Gong in November 2017.
- Youth Art Workshops in partnership with Warrawong High School, Barnardos and Wollongong Youth Services. There were 10-12 regular participants involved from Warrawong High School and four regular participants at Bundaleer over 3-4 workshops. Artworks generated by the workshops were exhibited at Viva la Gong 2017.

Comic Gong

From its initiation by Wollongong City Libraries in 2013, Comic Gong has continued to grow. With the idea being to connect with new library audiences via non-traditional media, Comic Gong is a highlight on the community calendar. While it was unable to be delivered in 2020 due to COVID-19 restrictions, a successful event was held in May 2019 with over 11,500 attendees participating during the day. This is a huge growth in attendance of the first event in 2013 of 1,300. The full day event attracts comic, anime and pop culture enthusiasts from all parts of NSW, Canberra and beyond. Economic modelling of the event indicated an economic benefit of over \$475,000.

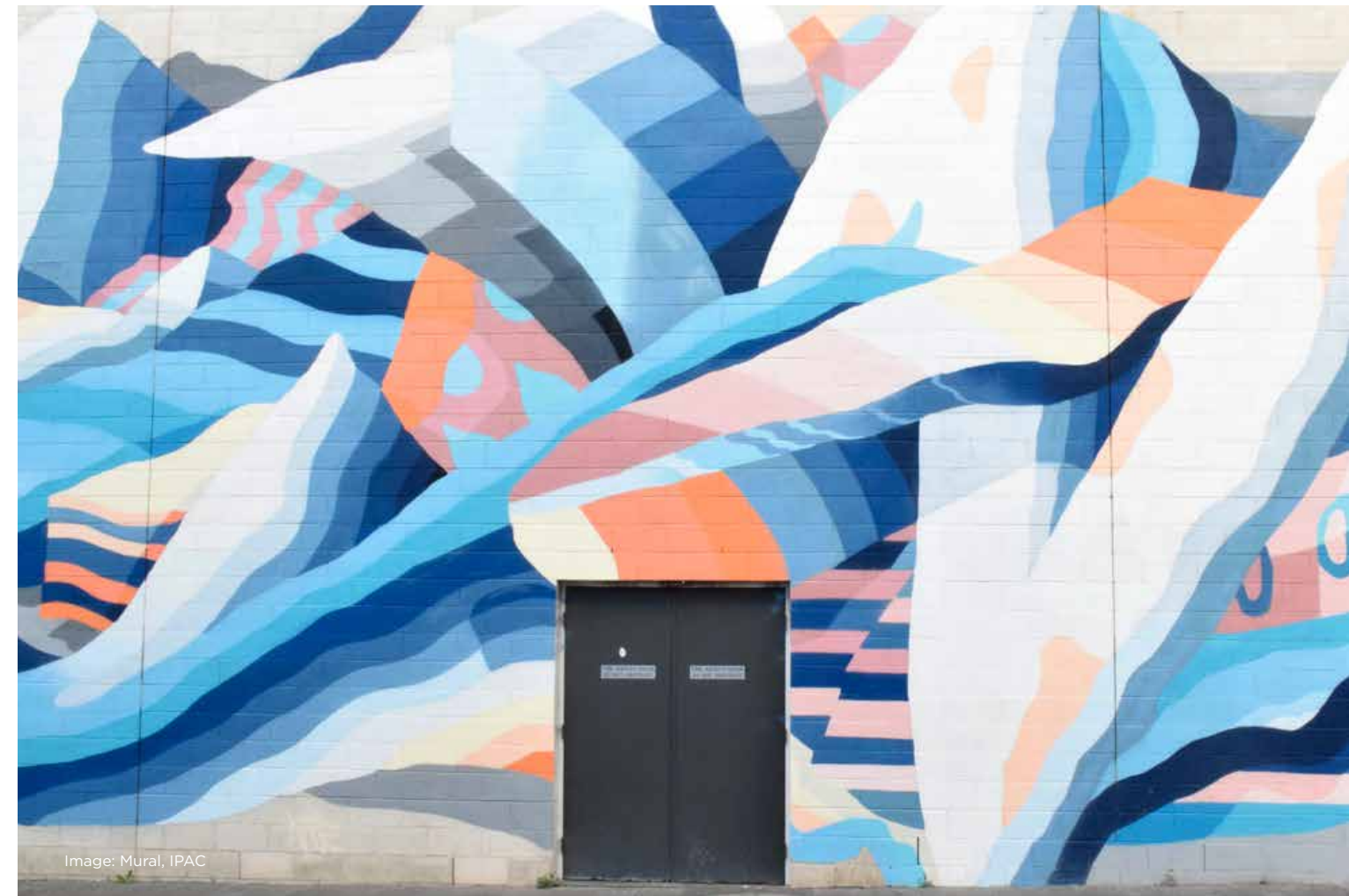
Public Art Program

Throughout the term, Council delivered a range of Public Art outcomes throughout the Local Government Area with the aim to connect local residents and communities by enhancing pride of ownership of places and spaces.

Some of these included:

2018-2019

- Public Art Advisory Panel - Establishment of a volunteer panel who provide advice on public art programs.
- Vernon Collection Management System - Updating public art collection data by adding new artworks, maintenance assessment reports and photos.
- Asset Management Plan - A draft Asset Management Plan was prepared to enable strategic planning of future funding for Public Art over the next 10 years.
- Curio Gallery - 40 local professional and emerging artists presented during the year.
- Town Hall Laneway Art Panel Renewal Project 2019 - Wollongong Arts Precinct - eight local professional and emerging artists presented dynamic and colourful works in this outdoor gallery space.



- Ephemeral Art Project 2018 - Artist Abhiruchi Chikkara completed five digital artworks across the LGA, exploring the fusion of art and technology. These projects included: Thirroul street projections; wearable tech fashion show on the Crown Street Mall stage; light installations in the Globe Lane tunnel; entwine an interactive artwork at Viva la Gong; light up the skate park in Berkeley.
- Sound Art Installation 2018 - Town Hall Laneway - The Sound Art Installation 2018 transforms the laneway into a soundscape of sounds, voices and stories that reference Wollongong's social history and environment.
- Art Light Projection Project Town Hall Laneway - This project creates and transforms the city's outdoor public spaces into exciting and evocative creative spaces during the day and night.
- Recycled Art Panel Projects - Ribbonwood Community Centre: Heininger Hall and Corrimal Op Shop wall.
- Ward based art work - Council in conjunction with local artists, has instigated two public artworks on the shores of Lake Illawarra in Holborn Park, Berkeley, and in Haddon Lane, Woonona. The works, a large artwork of the local Mistletoe Bird and an installation that references the "clinker boats" on the lake, are part of the Public Art program which aims to create interesting and evocative spaces in public areas.

2019-2020

- Launch of the Port Kembla community 'Welcome' mural and community development project at the Macedonian Centre Port Kembla.
- A new mosaic wall at Coomaditchie (amenity block) completed.
- Karrara Bridge mural completed.
- Community engagement (including school-based visual arts and poetry workshops) and design and implementation of four cuboid solar-powered lightboxes near Luke's Place, Corrimal was completed.
- One new mural completed at Corrimal Community Centre.
- Two new large murals delivered in Corrimal (Corrimal Soccer Club / Tennis Club) by artist OX King, completed.
- The Curio Gallery renewal exhibition project continues to work with new artists every six weeks.
- Commenced a new suspended artwork for Crown Street Mall (in partnership with City Centre) and the Town Hall Laneway.
- Commenced first stage of Grand Pacific Walk Public Art project.

2020-2021

- Grand Pacific Walk Public Art Project: new site identified and under review.
- Walking on Aboriginal Land Public Artwork: proposed Community Engagement Plan finalised.
- Curio Gallery 2020 2021: Exhibition Program confirmed, with two artists for October - November 2020. Exhibited 'Flourish' and Wollongong TAFE.
- Public Art Advisory Panel - six new community members have been selected through an Expression of Interest (EOI) process.
- New Public Art Strategy - The current Public Art Strategic Plan 2016 - 2021 concludes in 2021 and the new Strategic Plan is being developed with assistance from the Public Art Advisory Panel. The plan will also include internal stakeholder and community consultation.

Image: Merrigong produced *Trash Talk*

Illawarra Performing Arts Centre

In January 2018, Council entered a new Funding and Service Level Agreement with IPAC for management of both the Illawarra Performing Arts Centre and the Wollongong Town Hall for the period of 1 January 2018 to 31 December 2021.

This Agreement is in keeping with Council's focus on establishing and developing the Arts Precinct as an identifiable destination for arts, culture and community events in the City. The integration of the Art Gallery, Town Hall, IPAC, Library and public space (including laneways) is an important element in the activation of the Arts Precinct and maximisation of Council's investment.

Throughout the term, the Illawarra Performing Arts Centre (IPAC) continued to deliver against its 2019 Program and also finalised its 2020 Theatre Season Program. The first quarter of 2020 presented unprecedented challenges for IPAC/Merrigong, including the bushfire crisis and the closure of theatres through the Public Health Orders as part of efforts to reduce the impact of COVID-19 in mid-March. Throughout the months of January and February however, numerous successful events were hosted across our venues.

The Merrigong 2020 Mainstage Season opened with Strangeways Ensemble's *Trash Talk*. Produced in-house by Merrigong, in association with The Disability Trust, this bittersweet, original and innovative show impressed local audiences and also toured for a season at Riverside Theatres in Sydney. Closely followed by an acclaimed season of Ensemble Theatre's *Black Cockatoo* and the return of Jonathan Biggin's 2019 hit show, *The Gospel According to Paul*.

The IPAC/Merrigong company and venues hosted numerous other creative arts and cultural activities, meetings and developments. In June 2021 included in the adopted budget for 2021 - 2022 was approximately \$364K in additional support to the Illawarra Performing Arts Centre over five years.

Objective - 3.2 Community access to the arts and participation in events and festivals is increased

Delivering culturally diverse library programs

Throughout the term, Council has continued to embrace and celebrate its cultural diversity through a broad range of library programs delivered to the community.

During 2018-2019, Council libraries delivered 2,360 programs to the community, attracting an estimated 68,996 participants. These programs have included a range of inclusive events such as tactile story time for children on the autism spectrum, catering to members of the deaf community and several events aimed at engaging and supporting our LGBTIQ+ community and their families. A particular highlight of the year was the delivery of three successful events celebrating Pride Month in June. The three events were planned to enhance literacy, creativity and inclusion within our local community and included a family-focused story time activity, a celebration of diverse gay histories and a panel discussion.

Rainbow Storytime saw the return of local drag queen Roxee Horror sharing stories, rhymes, games and songs with all ages. The second event welcomed Maeve Marsden's show *Queerstories* to Wollongong. The show has been travelling around Australia for more than two years, with a line up consisting of comedian Annaliese Constable, writer Patrick Lenton, lifelong activist Mystery Carnage, poet Gabrielle Journey Jones and local drag queen James Christie-Murray sharing their stories of pride, prejudice, love, life and humour. The third event, Same Same but Different was co-presented by Council and The Disability Trust. The panel discussion featured the

lived experiences of people with disability, parents and carers and community service providers, sharing their stories about dating, identity family dynamics, mental health and prejudice.

Other library programs have included:

- Presentations to Strategic Community Assistance from Refugee Families (SCARF) Coffee, Community Connections group highlighting Council's library services.
- Tech Savvy sessions delivered to refugee communities and to local Aboriginal Elder's groups.
- Promotion of services to the Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) and multicultural communities.

Framing our Future Wollongong Art Gallery Strategic Plan 2020-2025

On 31 August 2020, Council adopted the Framing our Future Wollongong Art Gallery Strategic Plan 2020-2025. This Plan was the culmination of extensive consultation with the community and other key stakeholders over several years. It will guide the Gallery over the next five years to enhance the cultural and creative experience in Wollongong LGA to ensure it remains relevant to our community, the arts and to contemporary life. The Plan identifies 21 strategies that sit under six key focus areas: Place, Program, Collection, Visitor Experience, Profile and Partnerships.

Young People

Wollongong Youth Services is providing various youth programs across the LGA including at Wollongong Youth Centre, Bellambi Neighbourhood Centre, Corrimal Library, Cringila Community

Centre, Bundaleer Estate, Warrawong Library, Koonawarra Community Centre and Kanahooka High School (after school).

Council also provided direct services to young people across the LGA throughout the term. Prior to COVID-19 restrictions, Youth Services delivered structured programs and events for young people across the LGA including placebased programs, which has allowed Council to have a greater understanding of the needs of local young people and how we can provide services to them.

Team Ignite, a youth led event organising group, supported music events for young people as part of the On Stage Program including, open mic nights, ThursGAYS, All of Us Art and Music Festival and an event in partnership with Illawarra Music Foundry. Program participants also contributed to the youth stage at Council's Australia Day event and Viva la Gong drama performances. The *I Love Wollongong because...* photography exhibition showcases and celebrates young people skills and connection to place.

Throughout the term, information, support and referral has been a key program provided across the City with Council supporting young people in various aspects of their life and linking them to vital services within the community.

COVID-19 restrictions significantly impacted the delivery of service with the closure of Wollongong Youth Centre and community facilities and the inability to access schools.

To support the mental health and wellbeing of young people in the absence of face to face programming, the Aspiring April social media campaign was developed and delivered. Daily quotes were provided focused on positivity and forward thinking. This and other programs were used throughout the period to support the city's young people.



Image: Youth Week sound and light installations

Objective - 3.3

Strong diverse local cultures are supported

Deliver the Living Books Program

Throughout the term, Council continued to deliver its flagship community harmony initiative, the Living Books program. In this Program, 'books' are residents from many walks of life, who share their life experiences and choices. 'Readers' are invited to engage in a half hour conversation with a 'book' in a safe environment.

In October 2018, the 10-year celebration of Living Books was held at the Music Lounge Wollongong Town Hall. Thirty-five volunteer books and key partners who had contributed to the program during the past 10 years attended. The night provided an opportunity to celebrate and reflect on Council's flagship program for community harmony. A playback theatre performance was also included as part of the night and was a highlight for the 'books'. Living Books events have continued to be successfully delivered across a range of schools and community groups across the LGA creating an environment that creates a collaborative environment for both books (volunteers) and readers (community).

Refugee communities

During the term, Council supported newly arrived refugee communities through the delivery of the Illawarra Refugee Challenge and other support services. In 2019-2020, Council coordinated and facilitated Illawarra Refugee Issues Forum [IRIF] working groups focused on housing and employment. The IRIF housing working group developed a new referral protocol established for The Housing Trusts affordable housing properties.

Council contributed as a key partner to a University of Wollongong research program: 'Resilient Together, Engaging the Knowledge and Capacities of Refugees for a Disaster Resilient Illawarra', that investigated the ways that local refugee communities learn and share information about natural hazards, as well as the experiences and practices they draw on in times of crisis and emergency.

During COVID-19, Council focused on communication and information sharing to ensure local CALD communities were supported in their responses to the pandemic. Rapid and regular dissemination of health-related information and translations to the settlement services sector through Council coordinated Illawarra Refugee Issues Forum (IRIF) has been undertaken.

Throughout 2020, Council delivered a new computer skills program for women of refugee background.

Refugee Challenge

From the introduction of the Illawarra Refugee Challenge as a pilot program in 2015, students have had the opportunity to gain an understanding of what it would be like to flee your country and leave everything behind, as well as learn about refugee experiences and journeys.

In 2019, the coordinated event was held in partnership with Multicultural Communities Council of the Illawarra at Illawarra Sports High. The Challenge consisted of six semi-simulated stations in which the students and former refugees conduct discussions, scenarios and role playing. The students look at the reality of water and food supplies, sanitation and education in a refugee camp. Three peer facilitator training sessions were held with 22, Year 11 students. This prepared the students to be facilitators for the five tours held during the Illawarra Refugee Challenge in August. 211 young people from Years 9 and 10 attended the experience. A highlight in 2019 was the inclusion of nine community members from refugee backgrounds who shared their personal experiences through the tour, helped deliver life experiences of their travels and life in refugee camps, as well as participating in a panel session.

In 2020 the program was awarded a highly commended at the NSW Local Government Excellence Awards in the Community Partnership and Collaboration category.

COVID-19 impacted on the ongoing delivery of the Challenge in 2020.

Goal 4

We are a
connected
& engaged
community

We are an inclusive connected community, engaged in our neighbourhood and other social networks. We have opportunities to participate in the social, economic and political life of the city and are empowered to have our say. We have strong and effective local leadership. We respect and acknowledge the wisdom of age, the vitality and enthusiasm of our young people and the diversity of our community. Our Aboriginal community is recognised and valued. We have embraced new technology to ensure all residents have access to information, services and each other. Council's role in delivering on the goal

Objectives

- Residents have easy and equitable access to information and play an active role in the decisions that affect our city.
- Our residents have an increased sense of community.
- Our council is accountable, financially sustainable and has the trust of the community.

Community Indicators

Goal 4: We Are a Connected and Engaged Community				
Measure	Baseline	End of Term 2012-17	End of Term 2017-21	Performance / Comment
Increase the number of households with broadband (active connection) to align with Illawarra area (SA4) by 2028	71.0% (2011)	76.6% (Illawarra SA4 78.2%) (2016)		2021 Census data due for release in 2022
Increase the proportion of residents who feel they have their say on important issues <small>*Question asked on a different scale in 2014 LGA Wellbeing Survey.</small>	33% yes* 23% sometimes* (2014)	3.2 out of 5.0 (2018)	3.0 out of 5.0 (2021)	Slight decline in medium agreement levels since 2018 <small>*Results may have been impacted by COVID-19 restrictions</small>
Increase customer service satisfaction (Council only)	3.6 out of 5.0 (2012)	3.7 out of 5.0 (2017)	3.9 out of 5.0 (2019)	Increase since 2012
Increase the proportion of residents who volunteer to exceed the national average by 2028	17.0% (2011)	18.6% (Australia 19%) (2016)		2021 Census data due for release in 2022
Increase the proportion of residents who feel part of the local community	3.9 out of 5.0 (2014)	3.9 out of 5.0 (2018)	3.9 out of 5.0 (2021)	Whilst not increasing it's at a high level and remains stable

Supporting Documents

GOAL 4
We are a connected and engaged community

Resourcing Strategy 2018-2021

.....
Long Term Financial Plan 2018-2028
.....
Strategic Asset Management Plan 2018-2028
.....
Workforce Strategy 2018-2022
.....
Information Management and Technology Strategy 2018 - 2020
.....

- Those adopted throughout the term include:
- Resourcing Strategy 2018-2028 including: Long Term Financial Plan, Strategic Asset Management Plan, Workforce Strategy 2018-2020, Information Management and Technology Strategy 2018-2020

Objective - 4.1

Residents have easy and equitable access to information and play an active role in the decisions that affect our city

Community Engagement

Council's commitment to engaging with the community was demonstrated throughout the term with the revision of Council's Community Engagement Policy, resulting in a visual, plain English, community focused document.

A broad range of targeted engagement activities have been held throughout the term with many groups and individuals on a range of key plans and projects such as Our Wollongong 2028, Community Engagement Policy, Urban Greening Strategy, Pedestrian Plan 2017-2021 and Housing Our Community in the Future Strategy, Port Kembla Revitalisation Plan, Keiraville and Gwynneville Movement and Access Study, Public Toilets Strategy, Fairy Creek Corridor Master Plan, City Centre and Corrimal Town plans and Beaton Park Plan of Management.

Council continued its commitment to creating a Child Friendly Wollongong engaging children directly in matters that affect them. Children participated in various engagement sessions in relation to play space design and official openings, the Community Engagement Policy, the development of the refreshed Community Strategic Plan, masterplans and the State of Wollongong Children's Report.

Throughout 2020, community engagement methods were impacted by COVID-19 restrictions in the latter part with planned face-to-face information sessions being replaced with alternative methods including videos, an online Q&A, phone calls and video conferencing. This included engagement on Fairy and Cabbage Tree Creeks Flood Study with a mail out to more than 16,300 residents.

Other engagement activities undertaken throughout 2020 include:

- Framing Our Future - Wollongong Art Gallery Strategic Plan 2020-2025.
- Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2020-2025.
- Climate Change Mitigation Plan 2020-2022.
- Sustainable Wollongong 2030 - A Climate Healthy City.
- Community Safety Plan 2021-2025.
- Housing and Affordable Housing Options Paper.
- Local Strategic Planning Statement.
- Wollongong Cycling Strategy 2030.
- Keiraville and Gwynneville Access and Movement Study.
- City Centre Planning Review and Wollongong City Access and Movement Strategy 2023.

The community were also asked their thoughts on a range of infrastructure projects including safety solutions at Brickyard Point Austinmer, Railway Crescent Upgrade Stanwell Park, Point Street Bulli, Central Road Unanderra, refurbishment of Austinmer Bathers Pavilion and Port Kembla viewing platform.



Image: Reconciliation Symposium

Reconciliation Symposium

The first Reconciliation Symposium for the children's services sector was held at the University of Wollongong Innovation Campus in June 2018. Discussions at the two-day conference focused initiatives that support workers in early childhood, family support and education. Approximately 130 delegates and 24 elders for the Illawarra and South Coast participated in the Symposium.

Council joined with Aboriginal Elders and representatives of early childhood and family support services to develop Reconciliation Action Plans. It helped representatives develop skills to engage and communicate with our Aboriginal communities. Nearly all the speakers at the conference were local Aboriginal people (including from the South Coast).

The second event was held on 29-30 April 2021.

Enhanced digital customer services and engagement channels

Council continued to grow and strengthen the strategic use of its digital channels. 2019-2020 saw the following year-on-year percentage increase each channel: Facebook up by 12.9%; Twitter up by 7%; Instagram up by 16% and LinkedIn having a 27.9% growth. This increase in LinkedIn is reflective of Council's increased focus on the platform from an organisational perspective.

Over the latter half of 2019-2020 Council's Facebook page has increasingly acted as a news service for our community providing time-critical updates about changes to services and information updates on COVID-19, as well as providing critical information during the 2019-2020 summer bush fire season to residents and visitors.

In 2019, Council also delivered the new Wollongong

City Council website and in 2020 a new Wollongong City Library website.

Council launched its first community e-Newsletter. This e-Newsletter is a subscription service where individuals can tailor the information they receive to their requirements and interests. The Newsletter includes Council-related news items, as well as providing people the opportunity to opt-in to information updates about certain topics such as sports and recreation, cultural activities, or Botanic Gardens news. The eNewsletter will supplement the quarterly printed Newsletter that is letterbox delivered and provides a more time responsive way to communicate directly with subscribers.

Council's new website

Wollongong City Council's new public website was launched on Thursday, 8 August 2019. This saw the replacement of our 10-year-old site with a contemporary platform that supports accessibility and mobile-responsiveness.

The design of the new website was based on extensive research and community engagement and presented a shift in focus from a Council-centric model to one informed by the user's needs.

Partnerships with the Aboriginal Community

Throughout the term, Council continued to work closely with the Wollongong Northern District Aboriginal Community (WNDAC) group to identify opportunities for funding cultural events. Council also works in collaboration with Aboriginal Community Based Working Group (IACBWG) to progress Aboriginal community interests in the areas of education, health, employment, law and cultural activities.

Objective - 4.2

Our residents have an increased sense of community

Civic activities recognising and celebrating the city's people

Council continues to embrace and recognise its people by way of delivering various events. Throughout the term, Council recognised the contributions of people within the community via events including:

- The Queen's Birthday Honours List, new Order of Australia Medals.
- Hosting monthly citizenship ceremonies in the Administration Building as well as an annual Australia Day Citizenship ceremony held at the Town Hall.
- Australia Day Awards presented to the Wollongong Citizen, Young Citizen, Senior Citizen, Community Group Award, Sports Achievement, Outstanding Achievement or Innovation Award and Arts and Cultural Achievement Awards.
- Civic activities were held including recognition of volunteers and community support provided during Seniors Week, Annual Australia Day Awards Ceremony, Wollongong Citizen of the Year and Senior Citizen of the Year.
- Lord Mayoral Recognition Receptions.

Civic Receptions included:

- In September 2017, Council hosted a Civic Reception for His Royal Highness Prince Andrew, Duke of York, KG at the Wollongong Art Gallery. HRH The Duke of York was in Wollongong as

part of the 'Pitch@Palace' Australia On Tour and launched the University of Wollongong's Global Leadership program at the SMART Infrastructure Facility.

- Welcoming visiting rugby league teams the Wigan Warriors and Hull Football Clubs in February 2018 - teams were in Wollongong for the first Super League game played outside of Europe.
- In September 2018, Council hosted a reception for the Governor General of Australia with representatives from a range of community groups and organisations.
- In September 2019, a reception for Duke of Edinburgh recipients attended by His Royal Highness Prince Edward, Earl of Wessex, KG GCMG was held. HRH The Earl of Wessex was in Wollongong in his role as Chair of The Board of Trustees of The Duke of Edinburgh's International Award Foundation, which celebrated its 60th Anniversary of the Award in Australia. The reception at Wollongong Youth Centre provided HRH the opportunity to meet with local young people who were involved in the Award.
- In December 2019, Council hosted their Excellencies the Governor-General the Hon David Hurley AC DSC (Retd) and Mrs Linda Hurley. The Governor-General and Mrs Hurley visited Council's Administration Building to meet with staff and learn about Council's take on Food Organics Garden Organics (FOGO) trial, plastic-free initiatives and waste diversion.

Council continued to maintain relations with international cities throughout its term, hosting Mayor of Kawasaki City, Mr. Norihiko Fukuda in July 2018, and Deputy Mayor of Longyan, Mr. Wang Jiansheng in May 2019. Mr. Fukuda's visit marked the 30th Anniversary of the Sister City relationship between Wollongong and Kawasaki.

Volunteering Illawarra

Volunteering Illawarra's (VI) vision is to be a regional centre of excellence that promotes volunteering and the value of volunteers to the community. Its primary activity is the operation of a regional volunteer resource centre across the Wollongong, Shellharbour and Kiama Local Government Areas. It is a community service auspiced by Wollongong City Council.

Throughout 2017-2018, 365 new volunteers were referred to non-government organisations with a 91% placement rate.

Highlights for the year include:

- International Volunteers Day on 5 December 2017 with two Volunteer Bridging Information sessions held to promote volunteering to Council staff and community.
- Assistance to the Nowra Family Support Service (NFSS) in developing a new volunteer support program similar to the 'Aunties and Uncles' program - included information about insurance, volunteer management and governance. A training program was also developed and delivered to meet their organisational needs.
- Collaboration with South Coast Private Hospital - two information sessions have been held with patients on the benefits of volunteering and workplace transitions.
- Facilitated partnership between Big Fat Smile and Social Support Centre Based Day Care programs, where pre-school children attend day care to interact and socialise with frail older members of the community.
- Volunteering Illawarra participated as guest presenter at Housing Trust Expo.
- Nine Volunteer Managers Interagency meetings and ten Corporate Volunteer induction sessions for volunteers from across all Council divisions.
- Delivered training session in areas such as Grief and Loss, Kitchen Health and Hygiene, Risk Management, Elder Abuse (New) and Work Health and Safety (WHS) for Volunteers.

During 2019-2020, 154 new volunteers were referred to non-government organisations (NGO) as well as other services in Council who work with volunteers, with an average 90% placement rate. This figure was down a little in relation to previous years, as a result of the closure of VI due to the COVID-19 restrictions.

Training is a significant component of the VI service. Training provided included corporate volunteer induction sessions for Council's library, social support and community transport volunteers; WHS for Volunteers; Managing Poor Volunteer Performance; Understanding Elder Abuse; Leading Volunteer Teams; Kitchen Health and Hygiene and Managing Volunteer Performance and Dispute Management.



Connecting Neighbourhoods

Council piloted the Connecting Neighbours Grant program in mid-2018. The program has enabled Council to support projects being delivered by community members in their local suburbs. The Grant Program funds ideas generated by the community to bring people together and make neighbourhoods better places.

Five - Category 1 (up to \$250) and 11 - Category 2 (up to \$1,000) projects representing geographical spread, diversity of groups and a broad range of project ideas were funded as part of the pilot. Approximately \$10,000 was allocated through the grant process with 770 people participating in 16 project activities. Nine of these projects continued to be delivered beyond the funding.

As a result, the City now has additional free book boxes, a walking school bus, a new transition to school playgroup, new and revamped gardens, a singing group, children with improved cooking skills, adults with improved gardening skills and neighbours who know each other and friendships formed.

With the success of the pilot, the grant program continues to be delivered twice annually, although COVID-19 did impact on this schedule.

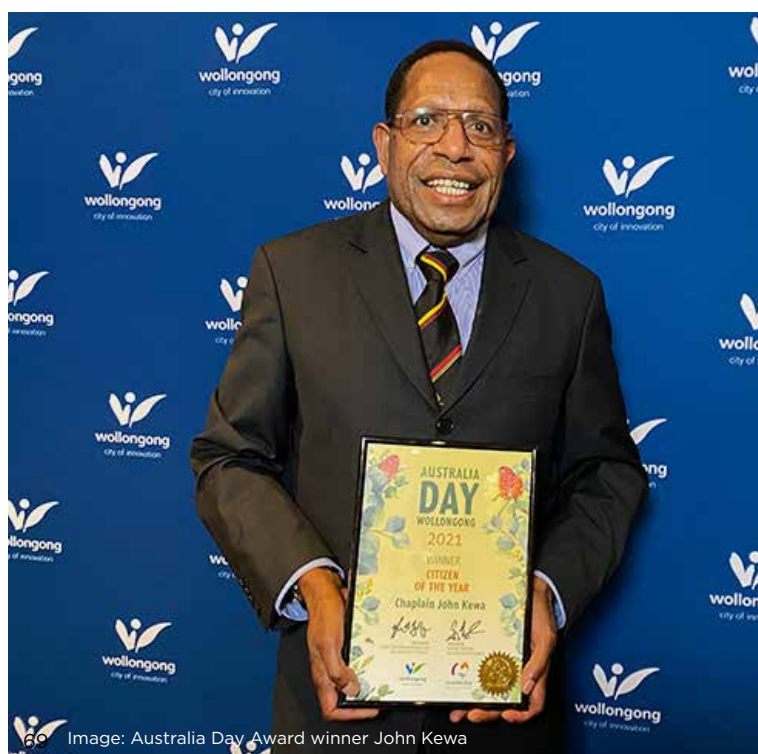


Image: Australia Day Award winner John Kewa



Image: His Royal Highness The Prince Edward, Earl of Wessex, KG GCMG visits Wollongong September 2019.

Objective - 4.3

Our council is accountable, financially sustainable and has the trust of the community

Values Journey

Throughout the term, Council made further commitments to being a purpose-led, values driven organisation with a refresh of its organisational Values.

In 2018, staff came up with the following Values to support our purpose of creating an Extraordinary Wollongong:

- Respect – inclusive and considerate.
- Sustainable – use our community's resources responsibly.
- Courage – challenge the norm to be better.
- Integrity – honest and reliable.
- One Team – together we deliver excellent service.

We live these values by: Creating an enabling PLACE that shapes the choices people make in their daily work and encourage collaboration, innovation, interdependence, belonging and inclusion; PEOPLE actively living the values in their everyday work through their behaviours and interactions; organisational PRACTICES supporting and enabling people to deliver on the promise of an Extraordinary Wollongong.

Information Management and Technology

The adoption and roll out of the OneCouncil project to replace existing disparate legacy systems with a single Enterprise Resource Planning solution has enabled acceleration of many IMT Strategy actions including single source of data, mobility, access to information and integration. These elements will be key considerations and driving factors throughout the OneCouncil implementation.

The OneCouncil journey is all about connection. Connecting with our customers, as a Council and our community.

Work began on introducing OneCouncil with Release One in May 2019 which saw the transition of Council to the cloud. This also saw a strengthening in Council's cybersystem and enabled access to data anywhere on any device.

Release Two in November 2019 saw the integration of Asset Management, Work Management and Request Management system allowing customers to now initiate their own requests and receive automatic notifications once their requests are actioned. Council now has one system for all requests reducing duplication and providing more efficiency and a greater level of customer service.

Diversity Policy

Throughout its term, Council has engaged in a number of organisation wide activities as part of a review of this policy, resulting in the development of a collaboratively drafted 'Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Policy'. It had been determined that it will form both a Management and Council Policy. The Council Policy was unanimously adopted by Council on 31 August 2020. A Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Committee is being formed.

Financial assistance for infrastructure renewals

Throughout its term, Council continued to apply for and expand Commonwealth and State funding to address infrastructure renewals and key regional projects.

Highlights throughout the term include:

- Apply for and expend Commonwealth and State funding on the Fowlers Road extension project - the largest civil project ever undertaken by Council.
 - Successfully secured funding under the NSW Housing Acceleration Fund for the construction and upgrade to residential standards for part of West Dapto Road. Council also obtained funding for an economic business case for the future upgrade of Cleveland Road. This complements the existing Restart NSW \$2.4M funding currently being expended on the Wongawilli Road upgrade project.
- Funds from the NSW Government's Restart NSW – Resources for Regions Program, will support projects that deliver economic growth in mining affected regions. The successful application includes a suite of current and future projects for the Helensburgh town centre, including:
- Upgrade of Rex Jackson Oval car park.
 - Resurfacing of Charles Harper Park car park.
 - Replacement of Charles Harper Park playground.
 - Streetscape upgrades on Parkes and Walker Streets, Helensburgh.
 - Improvements to pedestrian crossing facilities on Parkes Street near the Walker Street intersection.
 - Construction of the Lilyvale/Walker Streets roundabout.



Workplace Health and Safety Journey

Our Safety - Everyone Everyday Everywhere - is a key program for Council. Its vision is that "we work together to achieve a healthy, safe environment, free from harm. We lead the way by caring for one another, looking after the environment and the wellbeing of our community".

Key activities under the program throughout the term include:

- Over 280 management, coordinator and supervisor roles have completed the two-day program to build leadership capability.
- Over 700 staff have completed the all employee program, establishing team improvement plans across the organisation.
- Council identified the top 11 critical safety risks. These were established from detailed analysis of safety incidents data over a three-year period and workshops with operational staff across Council.

Through Council's safety engagement and communication plan, safety videos (which involve Council employees) enables sharing of information and learnings from incidents and celebrates safety innovation achieved across the organisation.

Goal 5

We have a healthy community in a liveable city



Our community is safe, healthy and happy. The city provides diverse and accessible recreation and lifestyle activities to foster community wellbeing for people of all ages, abilities, cultural backgrounds and personal challenges. Our people thrive with a sense of self and a connection to place. We enjoy the relaxed pace, opportunities for being with family and friends, helping our neighbours and meeting new people. We encourage informal and lifelong learning and we share a common goal to make Wollongong a place where as a minimum, all resident's basic needs are met and our quality of life improved.

Objectives

- There is an increase in the health and wellbeing of our community.
- Participation in recreational and lifestyle activities is increased.
- Residents have improved access to a range of affordable housing options.
- Community safety and community perception of safety is improved.
- The public domain is maintained to a high standard.

Community Indicators

Goal 5: We Are a Healthy Community in a Liveable City

Measure	Baseline	End of Term 2012-17	End of Term 2017-21	Performance/ Comment
Increase the city's personal wellbeing index to 80% by 2028	78.8 out of 100 (2014)	78.0 out of 100 (2018)	79.0 out of 100 (2021)	Remains stable, compares favourably against national wellbeing index of 76.5
Decrease the proportion of households under mortgage/ rent stress	n/a	5.83% (2016)	-	2021 Census data due for release in 2022
All residents who feel safe home and in their local area during the day by 2028	4.7 out of 5.0 (95%) (2014)	4.7 out of 5.0 (96%) (2018)	4.8 out of 5.0 (96%) (2021)	High agreement levels remain stable
Decrease recorded offences against persons and property by 10% by 2028 ^ figure updated to include steal from person	2,087 (persons) 3,525 (property) (Jan - Dec 2011)	2,062^ (persons) 2,655 (property) (Jan - Dec 2016)	1,778 (persons) 1,984 (property) (Jan - Dec 2020)	Decline since 2011 Decline since 2011
Increase the proportion of residents who agree they have enough opportunity in local area to participate in sport and recreational activities	4.3 out of 5.0 (2014)	4.3 out of 5.0 (2018)	4.2 out of 5.0* (2021)	Whilst not increasing it's at a high level and remains stable <i>*Results may have been impacted by COVID-19 restrictions</i>
Increase the proportion of the residents satisfied with access to affordable fresh food	4.2 out of 5.0 (2014)	4.2 out of 5.0 (2018)	4.2 out of 5.0 (2021)	Whilst not increasing it's at a high level and remains stable

Supporting Documents

GOAL 5

We have a healthy community in a liveable city

Planning People Places

Play Wollongong Strategy 2014-2024

The Future of Our Pools Strategy 2014-2024

Sportsgrounds and Sporting Facilities Strategy 2017-2021

Places for People Wollongong Social Infrastructure Planning Framework 2018-2028

Wollongong City Libraries Strategy 2017-2022

Town and Village Plans*

Ageing Plan 2018-2022

Public Toilets Strategy 2019-2029

Beach and Foreshore Access Strategy 2019-2028

Disability Inclusion and Action Plan 2020-2025

Tourist Parks Improvement Strategy & Master Plan 2017-2022

Masterplans

Beaton Park

Blue Mile

Botanic Garden and Plan of Management

Bulli Showground

Corrimal Heated Pool

Cringila Hills Recreation

Draft Bellambi Foreshore

Figtree Oval

Grand Pacific Drive

Hill 60

Kembla Grange Cemetery

King George V Oval

Memorial Gardens

Town and Village Plans*

* Town and Village Plans relate to the Local Strategic Planning Statement in the planning hierarchy, however, are relevant to under Goal 5 in the Community Strategic Plan and actions in the Delivery Program due to the focus on places and people.

Tourist Parks Improvement Strategy & Master Plan 2017-2022

Those adopted throughout the term include:

- Places for People Wollongong Social Infrastructure Planning Framework 2018-2028.
- Ageing Plan 2018-2022.
- Disability Inclusion and Action Plan 2020-2025.
- Public Toilet Strategy 2019-2029.
- Beach and Foreshore Access Strategy 2019-2028.
- Wollongong City Access and Movement Strategy 2023.



Image: Ian McLennan Park

Objective - 5.1
There is an increase in the health and wellbeing of our community

Ian McLennan Park

In 2018-2019, Council oversaw completion of construction works on the synthetic turf football field at Ian McLennan Park, Kembla Grange. The project was delivered within the budget of \$2.76M which incorporated financial contribution from Council (\$1.4M), Football South Coast (\$0.8M) and NSW Government Grants (\$0.565M). Council worked closely with Football South Coast and the NSW Government to create a year-round venue and is the first Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) accredited synthetic pitch in the City.

The project was completed in March 2019 with a Licence Agreement signed by Football South Coast for ongoing management and maintenance responsibilities. The project included:

- Synthetic turf to main field to comply with all FIFA and Football NSW requirements.
- LED lighting to synthetic turf field, the natural turf field, and the junior natural turf field.
- Sports field fencing around the synthetic fields.
- Installation of player dugouts for the synthetic turf field.

Disability Inclusion

On 31 August 2020, Council adopted the Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP) 2020-2025 and the Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Policy. These documents include valuable insights and recommendations from community feedback submitted throughout the engagement period.

The DIAP 2020-2025 outlines Council’s actions to promote the inclusion of people with disability across our community by improving access to Council services and facilities. The previous DIAP supported improvements, such as the installation of new accessible footpaths across the LGA, access upgrades to parks and playgrounds, more accessible events and wayfinding throughout the City.

The Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging Policy is an overarching document that directs Council’s ongoing commitment and leadership in creating a City where diversity is valued and where all residents feel they belong. By exploring and developing services, delivering infrastructure and implementing Council processes, these documents work together to create this future by outlining practical strategies that can be enacted by Council. A detailed Implementation Plan has been developed to guide the delivery of this Plan.

An easy to read version of the DIAP was also produced and made available on the Council website. The Plan has also been lodged with the Disability Council and the Department of Communities and Justice.

I want to...

- Search the catalogue
- See library locations
- Comic Gong
- Find a JP
- Find events
- Renew items
- Stream a movie
- Share my COVID story
- Read Library FAQs
- Get skilled

I'm looking for

☒ catalogue ☐ website

Library Website

The new Library website was launched to the public on 14 February 2020 (Library Lover's Day). The redesign of the website began in 2019 and was developed in consultation with the community. It was designed to be more accessible for all, with simpler ways to navigate the site across different devices – Personal Computer (PC), laptop, tablet or phone.

The website has been refreshed to contemporary standards and meets visual accessibility standards for community members who are vision impaired. Feedback from the public has been overwhelmingly positive. In keeping with the launch of the new website, this year's Library Lover's Day theme was titled "Uncover Something New". This was to encourage the community to engage with the new website, which supports more than 230,000 visits each year. There is a large range of books, magazines, and DVD's available from Council's seven city libraries and members can also download eBooks and eAudiobooks, learn a new language through Mango or stream a movie through Kanopy.

Playground renewals

Throughout the term, Council continued in its commitment to offer and maintain diverse and engaging play spaces across the City. During this term, Council has invested over \$5.5M in upgrading and renewing 44 playgrounds across Wollongong LGA including the following projects:

- A new regional playground at Cringila Hills incorporating nature play, inclusive equipment, advanced tree planting and artwork designed by local children. The playground was funded by the NSW Government and Everyone Can Play and Wollongong City Council.
- Upgraded district level playgrounds at Charles Harper Park (Helensburgh), Fairy Meadow Beach Playground (Fairy Meadow beach) and Integral Energy Park (Kembla Grange). Council also installed additional toddler equipment at Kanahooka Park to support upgrade works in 2017.



- Upgraded neighbourhood level facilities at Brownlee Park (Mangerton), Gerringulli Park (Horsley), Mount Kembla Oval (Mount Kembla), Pop Errington Park (Towradgi), Ray Crump Park (Primbee), Robert Rankin Park (Thirroul), Ryan Park Playground (Mount Kembla), Wiseman Park (Gwynneville). A new shade structure was also erected at King George V Oval Playground (Port Kembla).
- Renewed Local level parks including Allan Street (Port Kembla), Baden Powell Park (Corrimal), Baird Park (Stanwell Park), Bass Park (Mount Ousley), Blaker Park (Tarrawanna), Boyton Park (Corrimal), Cormack St Reserve (Dapto), Derribong Drive Reserve (Cordeaux Heights), Dobbins Park (Woonona), Doris Avenue Reserve (Woonona), Fred Finch Park (Berkeley), Foy Avenue (Figtree), Harold Cox Park (Coniston), Harry Graham Park (Figtree), Harry Henson Park (Corrimal), Jim Allen Oval (Wombarra), Kahn Park (Dapto), Karrara Park (Horsley), Leeder Park (Coalcliff), LB Kelly Park (Austinmer), Murray Park (Keiraville), Orana Park (Unanderra), Pine Trees Park (Windang), Robinson Park (Gwynneville), Strachan Park (Woonona), St James Park (Coledale), Taywood Park (Horsley), Timberi Park (Dapto), Wetherall Park (Primbee), William Sweeny Park (Wombarra).

Charles Harper Playground

The Charles Harper Playground was officially opened on 22 October 2019. The new district level playspace in Helensburgh was developed following a design influenced by local children. The inclusive playspace for all children includes a wheelchair accessible trampoline, communication boards and natural play area that features water pumps and a dry creek bed. It also includes:

- Play equipment offering graduated challenges and including interactive elements at ground level.
- Public art panels celebrating local mining heritage and artwork created by local children.
- New footpaths connecting to the recently upgraded accessible barbecue and picnic area.
- Shade sails.
- Ninja-Warrior-style obstacle course.
- Advanced tree planting that will provide natural shade and informal play opportunities.
- New seating and bike rack.

Places for People – Wollongong Social Infrastructure Planning Framework: 2018-2028

Places for People was adopted by Council in December 2018. It provides the strategic direction for Council to identify where and when new community assets are required and where and when existing assets should be renewed, re-purposed or retired. Key elements of the framework include: definitions of the role of Council and other providers in the planning and management of assets; a set of six guiding principles for facilities planning; and a holistic needs analysis methodology to inform planning. The framework enables a grounded and evidence-based approach to future planning strategies for our community infrastructure. In the coming term of Council, the framework will translate into a detailed plan for each facility and for each 'planning area' of the city.

Schools Parking Zone Safety and Education Program

Keeping children safe around schools has been a big focus of road safety efforts over this term of Council. Parking Compliance Officers developed a program of patrols of school zones, traffic rules and parking restrictions to improve safety around our schools. This targeted program has become a key element of proactive compliance activities.

During this Council term a school zone parking safety video was produced as part of this Program to improve knowledge on school zone parking rules and signage for schools across the City. This community awareness message was designed with the target audience of the children in our community. Council also developed a glovebox guide for school zone parking rules that has also been made available on Council's webpage.



Image: Wollongong Botanic Garden

Here are a few safe crossing tips to keep in mind...

- Look out before you step out
- Stop! Look! Listen! and Think!
- Always hold your child's hand

Your driving affects all road users so sticking to the rules and showing courtesy, respect and patience makes driving a better experience for everyone.

By working together we can help keep school zones safe for everyone.

School Zone Parking

GLOVE BOX GUIDE

Take time to refresh your memory on school zone parking rules and signage at your child's school.

Fines are current at time of printing August 2020. For full list of penalties and offences visit: www.rms.nsw.gov.au/documents/roads/safety-rules/demerits-school.pdf

Wollongong City Council
41 Burelli Street, Wollongong
Phone: (02) 4227 7111
Email: council@wollongong.nsw.gov.au

A road safety initiative as part of the Local Government Road Safety Program

School Canteen / Sporting Clubs Food Safety Program

This program involved programmed food safety inspections by Council Environmental Health Officers at all school and sporting ground kiosks / canteens in the City. The program formed part of the Food Regulation Partnership with the NSW Food Authority. The program has been delivered across the term of Council and is aimed at improving food handling and food safety outcomes with a specific emphasis on:

- Safe food handling and use of barbecues at sporting clubs.
- Understanding the importance and proper use of approved sanitisers.
- Temperature control and proper use of food service thermometers.
- Egg safety and Salmonella and COVID-19 Safety Plans.
- The Program includes the Environmental Health Officers providing face-to-face food safety education for school and sporting clubs canteen operators and volunteers as well as the provision of ongoing advice and assistance in ensuring that canteens are constructed and fitted out to achieve best practice food safety.

During the period of COVID-19 related restrictions in 2020, routine physical inspections were suspended and Council staff conducted virtual safety inspections with operators to ensure COVID-19 Safety Plans were in place and operational. Emails, fact sheets and written guidance were also distributed.

Objective - 5.2

Participation in recreational and lifestyle activities is increased

Botanic Gardens Conservation Status

In 2018, the Botanic Gardens Conservation International awarded Wollongong Botanic Garden recognition with "Conservation Practitioner" status. The first garden in Australia and one of the first in the world to receive the status in recognition for its innovative work in plant conservation. This accolade was received for monitoring and propagating the rare *Banksia Vincentia* and the 1,000 specimens of the critically endangered *Bomaderry Zieria* that Council has nurtured at the Garden's workshop.

50 years of the Botanic Garden

In 1951, the Hoskins family donated 46 acres of the estate to Wollongong Council for the purpose of building a Botanic Garden. The Wollongong Botanic Gardens opened its doors to the public on 2 January 1971 with more than 6,000 people visiting in the first year. Fifty years later, in 2021, the Garden is enjoyed by 500,000 visitors each year and is an important space for so many in the community. Today, the Garden plays a key role in the City's urban greening focus with the on-site Greenplan program and nursery propagating approximately 80,000 plants a year that are used across the City or purchased by residents for their home gardens.

A timeline of the Garden history include major milestones such as:

- 1975-1978 Construction of the walled Rose Garden took place.
- 1978 - Council purchased Glennifer Brae Manor and the surrounding grounds.
- 1980s - The Wet Schlerophyll habitat was created, the Woodlands Garden was created, the Herb Garden and the Exotic Rainforest were also developed during this decade.
- 1985 -Glennifer Brae Manor House was listed on the National Trust of Australia Register.
- 2001 - Wollongong Botanic Garden Visitor/ Administration Centre was opened.
- 2008 - The All Abilities Playground was opened to provide a space for children of all development levels.
- 2016 - The first Sculpture in the Garden exhibition was held to showcase the Wollongong Bicentennial Acquisitive Sculpture Award. Louis Pratt's work "King Coal" won the award and became a permanent fixture in the Garden.
- 2018 - Botanic Garden Conservation International awarded Wollongong Botanic Garden recognition with "Conservation Practitioner" status, the first such garden in Australia.
- 2021 - The Botanic Garden celebrates its 50th Year.

While some Jubilee events were postponed, a full year of celebrations was planned throughout 2021.

Cringila Hills Recreation Masterplan

In March 2020, Council adopted the Cringila Hills Recreation Masterplan. The Masterplan's adoption represents a significant piece of work and a strong desire from the community to activate the site. The multipurpose Plan encourages a range of recreational activities to promote a healthy lifestyle.

Under the Masterplan, the Cringila Hills precinct will feature a variety of mountain bike trails, a bike skills park and a BMX pump track. A new playground will be installed with a strong focus on nature play, along with park amenity upgrades that will include tree planting, picnic settings and water refill stations. Formalised walking trails with an accessible walking circuit will also be added to the site. Improvements to the entry of the park will also be made, with improved car parking, signage, new gates and landscaping incorporated in a Vegetation Management Plan a feature.

Development and construction of the multistage project began in 2020 with progress including:

- Detailed design of the Mountain Bike track has been completed and the construction has commenced with approximately 11 kilometres of trails including an additional 2.5 kilometres of walking and shared use trails to be provided. Work is scheduled to be completed by August 2021.
- Completion of the Playground design and tenders for construction awarded.
- The Pump Cycle track concept design has been completed and review of environmental factors approvals are being sourced.
- The Mountain Bike skills park for now has a completed concept design.
- A Vegetation Management Plan is completed with work commencing on site this financial year.



Image: Mountain biking Cringila Hills



Image: Austinmer Beach Pavillion

Pools

Throughout the term, Council continued to maintain and enhance its nine rock pools. Council's rock pools are located in a very harsh environment and repair works are required at regular intervals to maintain this popular service. Council completed refurbishment works at Austinmer, Wombarra, Bellambi and Towradgi Rock Pools.

In 2019-2020 Council completed Stage 1 of improvement works at Helensburgh Toddlers' Pool. The Helensburgh Toddlers' pool reopened in December 2020 following a series of essential improvements. Works included separating the operation of the main pool and toddlers' pool to meet NSW Department of Health guidelines allowing children and parents the opportunity to cool off over the summer months. Other works included installation of a new cartridge filter, pumps and equipment servicing the toddlers' pool; new pipework, fittings, and fixtures; a separate 5,000 litre balance tank and solar heating controller with controls and sensors. With separate filtration systems, any issues affecting one pool will no longer require both the main and toddlers' pool to be closed.

Austinmer Beach Pavillion

December 2020 saw the completion of the refurbishment of the Austinmer Beach Pavillion. Following its closure in May 2020 for an essential refurbishment to address the building's ageing facilities, work on the 92-year-old building included the addition of accessible amenities in line with Council's commitment to improve access for all members of the community to our beaches and public spaces across the city. The seven-month project included paint stripping, concrete repairs, roofing works and the addition of the accessible amenities, including an adult lift and change table, at the front of the building. Internally, there have been improvements to the toilet and shower facilities with new fixtures and fittings. As work got underway, the removal of the building's paint revealed the true condition of its walls and it was clear that the existing roof load capacity would not meet community needs or expectations. To overcome this, Council used prefabricated carbon fibre reinforced polymer plates to strengthen the roof slab.



Image: Dogs on Beaches signage

Fitness Equipment

Throughout the term, Council installed and maintained fitness equipment stations throughout the City to cater for people of all ages and abilities. Many of Council's foreshore parks now have outdoor fitness equipment.

Locations include:

- Charles Harper Park, Helensburgh
- Nicholson Park, Woonona
- Corrimal Beach Reserve
- Wisemans Park, Gwynneville
- Lang Park, Wollongong
- MM Beach, Port Kembla
- Holborn Park, Berkeley
- Kanahooka Park, Kanahooka
- Dimond Bros Reserve, Dapto.



Companion Animal Management

Council's Dogs on Beaches and Parks Policy was reviewed and adopted during this term. As part of this review Council funded and constructed the City's first fenced off-leash dog area at Reed Park in Horsley. This facility has been well received by the community and is an extremely busy recreational resource.

In addition, as part of the review of the Policy, Council developed and implemented a companion animal awareness program. This program included a review of the signposting and messaging about companion animal management and dog control areas throughout the City. Signposting was reviewed and installed in priority areas across coastal areas of the City.

Awareness raising activities aimed at improving the impact and management of dogs in public recreation areas of the City have also been undertaken including the development of promotional materials such as leashes and dog-poo bag holders and ongoing social media and media promotion via media releases, public radio and Facebook. Targeted letter box information drops in priority coastal areas as well as the development of brochures and the placarding and signposting of Compliance Officer's vehicles were also undertaken during this term.

Community Transport Award

2020 saw the awarding of the 2020 Illawarra Volunteer Team of the Year award to the Community Transport Health Bus Team. This team was a joint winner of the Illawarra Volunteer Team of the Year award, along with The Multicultural Communities Council of Illawarra Bus Drivers.

Objective - 5.3

Residents have improved access to a range of affordable housing options

Homelessness Protocol

The Homelessness Protocol was approved by the Executive Management Committee for adoption as an operational framework, in November 2019. The Working Group met in January 2020 to commence the development of procedures to support implementation of the Protocol. A submission to the NSW Legislative Assembly Review of the NSW Protocol for Homeless People in Public Places was prepared in February 2020 and lodged with the review convenors.

Exploring partnerships that provide services for the homeless

The Wollongong Homeless Street Count is a collaborative initiative of the Department of Communities and Justice with the support of the Illawarra Retirement Trust (IRT) Foundation, Wollongong Homeless Hub and Wollongong City Council. In February 2019, Council assisted the Wollongong Homeless Hub and IRT to conduct a count of the number of homeless people within the Wollongong CBD. On the night, between midnight to 3.00am, over 60 people were counted as being homeless. This data will assist emergency accommodation service providers to plan and advocate for appropriate services to be funded to adequately support the needs of homeless people.

The Homeless Street Counts aims to collect accurate and up-to-date information about the number of people sleeping rough in our LGA. The Homeless Street Count will assist the participating collaborative members to develop responses to homelessness according to need.

Council has also been working with Housing NSW, Wollongong Homeless Hub and NSW Police to assist people who are homeless in various locations, to connect with accommodation service providers who can meet their needs.



Housing study

In March 2020, Council endorsed the Draft Housing and Affordable Housing Options Paper for exhibition. This paper provides options and ideas to help Council, developers, NSW Government agencies and homeowners to create a better mix of housing that will suit the needs of a broad range of families. The paper is also about providing housing that is more affordable for people within our community living on very low, and medium incomes.

Currently the City has about 216,071 people who live in more than 80,000 dwellings. The State Government projects that the city's population will grow by about 45,700 people by 2036, and we will need a further 23,800 dwellings. Also, the number of people aged 70 and over will increase to 31,845 by 2026.

The options paper tested a range of recommended priorities including:

- Increase the number of studio and one-bedroom dwellings in the city.
- Review Council planning controls in medium density areas to increase the feasibility of development and to provide smaller dwelling types.
- Identify precincts to increase medium density housing.
- Continue to develop and implement an Affordable Housing Contributions Scheme.
- Adopt and implement an affordable rental housing target for the city.
- Work with community housing providers and the NSW Land and Housing Corporation to renew and improve and increase social and affordable housing supply.



Objective - 5.4

Community safety and community perception of safety is improved

'I Belong In the Gong'

'I Belong in the Gong', was launched in May 2018 as a partnership campaign with NSW Police, the business sector, Wollongong Liquor Accord and Council funded by NSW Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ). The campaign promotes the message that all people are welcome in the city and the safety and well-being of all community members helps promote a friendly, inclusive, or happy place.

The 'I Belong in the Gong' campaign was successful in winning the National Local Government Award in 'Community Safety and Prevention' category in 2019.

The project progressed throughout 2020 and included a lighting audit conducted in the late evening, with a Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) specialist consultant and Wollongong NSW Police. Following the lighting audit, a report and action plan was developed, resulting in several priorities for lighting and wayfinding across the CBD being identified. A cross divisional Council working group assessed and determined actions for implementation, including creative ways of lighting these spaces which are site appropriate. Priorities from the lighting audit have been implemented including the installation of creative lighting in Pig Alley, Wollongong, and lighting behind Wollongong Youth Centre. A phone charging station in the Crown Street Mall has also been installed. These initiatives improve safety for people in the CBD, particularly those enjoying Wollongong's night life options.



Emergency Management

Wollongong City Council, along with Shellharbour City Council and Kiama Council, make up the geographical area of the Illawarra Emergency Committee. For the previous two years Wollongong chaired the Committee. Shellharbour chaired the Committee for 2019-2020 and 2020-2021. To confirm the roles Wollongong also initiated a Memorandum of Understanding, outlining the responsibilities of each organisation in accordance with the State Emergency and Rescue Management Act.

Throughout 2018-2019, Council continued to support Emergency Service agencies in running operations including the Local Emergency Management Committee (LEMC) undertake emergency exercise at the Illawarra Airport. Council also recruited an Emergency Management Officer to support the Illawarra LECM who continue to meet quarterly.

Luke's Place Playground

In December 2019, Council partnered with Vision Australia to design and deliver a braille map for Luke's Place all-inclusive playground in Corrimal. Luke's Place now includes a braille map of the internal space and equipment for carers and children. The special purpose playground also features the region's first carousel which can be used by children of all abilities, featuring colour-coded, textured sections and areas where deaf children or those with limited hearing can interact with noise and vibration, as well as active and quiet zones. The new map provides opportunities for all children to interact with the braille map to learn more about how some children and adults read in this way. These aspects have been included to support education and understanding for the broader community.



Objective - 5.5

Public domain is maintained to a high standard

Graffiti Prevention

Throughout the term, Council continued to coordinate and undertake graffiti prevention actions on Council assets as well as deliver the Community Partnerships Program to remove graffiti from non-Council assets.

A number of graffiti community safety inspections are undertaken each year. Each inspection considers opportunities for graffiti prevention and/ or the removal of graffiti at each site.

In June 2019, Council completed the Unanderra Community Youth Project graffiti prevention mural panels at the Lindsay Maynes Park amenity block. The aim of this project was to both, reduce the graffiti on this Council asset as it has had high incidents of graffiti reported, and to educate young people about illegal graffiti. Young people were engaged in the project from the Unanderra Youth Group. They worked with community artists who assisted the young people in the design and development of nine panels which were then attached to walls of the Lindsay Maynes Park amenity block. Graffiti on this asset has been significantly reduced since the panels have been installed.

In October 2019, over 15 community members participated in the NSW 2019 Graffiti Removal Day at Guest Park Fairy Meadow, organised in partnership with Dapto Rotary Club. Graffiti Removal Day is a joint initiative between NSW Government, Dapto Rotary Club and Council. The Bellambi safety group removed graffiti from various locations in and around Bellambi. The Illawarra Grammar School removed graffiti from a fence in Towradgi.

Throughout 2019, Council's Community Partnership Program continued with the Unanderra Reintegration Centre removing graffiti from Thomas Gibson Park on a weekly basis up until the Centre's closure in February 2020. Council also undertook a successful recruitment program seeking new community partners to remove graffiti from private houses and business (non-Council assets). Council developed a graffiti removal training video for Community Partners which has the flexibility to be used at a time convenient for the partner.

2020 also saw the commencement of the Warner Graffiti Prevention Education Program in Dapto. Education sessions were held at Mount Brown, Koonawarra, Hayes Park and Kanahooka primary schools.

In January 2021, Council launched proactive Graffiti Removal trial in Wollongong to target problem graffiti. The graffiti crew is embracing a proactive approach to where they schedule regular stops at tagging hotspots to remove graffiti before they're reported to Council.

Southern Suburbs Community Centre and Library, Warrawong

During the term, Council acquired land for a new community centre and library to be built in Warrawong at the corner of Greene and King Streets. This exciting project is progressing with key milestones including several of the identified land purchases being completed and outstanding properties under negotiation. Architectural services have been contracted with three initial concept designs delivered by the architect with one option selected to progress with stakeholder engagement being the next stage of the project.

Asset Renewals

The 2018-2019 financial year represented the largest capital investment program undertaken by Council, with approximately \$116M invested in existing and new infrastructure. The size of the program was primarily due to the Fowlers Road extension project for the construction of the main stage, that being Stage 2.

Council's total expenditure for capital in 2019-2020 was \$93.82M of a revised budget of \$96.6M.

\$52.9M was spent on infrastructure renewal. This represents 96% of total infrastructure depreciation value of \$54.8M and 86% of the operational revenue available to capital funding at \$61.4M.

Sports facilities planning

Council coordinated the Sports Facilities Reference Group with a highlight being the development of a new Sports Grants Program to replace the superseded Sports Planning Process. This new grant was launched in August 2019 with a record 20 new applications being evaluated against the key focus areas of the Sports Grounds and Sports Facilities Strategy 2017-2021.

These key areas include increased sportsground capacity; renewal or enhancement of existing sporting Infrastructure with a focus on gender equity; accessibility and storage; and investment in infrastructure to support and accommodate emerging sports and independent recreational pursuits. With more than 67 sports fields throughout the city, the new Sports Facilities Grants Program aims to support local sporting groups by providing funding opportunities for capital renewal and enhancement projects on sports grounds and facilities on Council-owned and managed land.

City Cleaning

Council's public toilets are serviced in accordance with schedules which are based on established community expectations. Service levels are constantly reviewed at an operational level and arrangements are made at various times of the year in response to fluctuations in demand and customer feedback. Generally, highly utilised and high visibility facilities are afforded a higher level of service. If customer feedback indicates that there is a long-term deficiency in a particular location, then priorities may be adjusted to address this, taking into account current resource levels and directing them to where they are most appropriate.

Throughout 2018, Council employed a CBD Maintenance team that has amongst other services been tasked with providing an enhanced level of service to the CBD and Foreshore toilets.

An Enhanced Hot Sport Services trail also commenced throughout the 2020-2021 summer season. This involved additional roving crews on weekends focusing on high visitation sites. Litter and waste collections and monitoring of public bins as well as restocking and cleaning of amenities were undertaken.

Community facilities refurbished

Throughout the term, Council coordinated the refurbishment of community facilities in partnership with its licensees and community groups.

Highlights included:

- Russell Vale Community Centre.
- Wollongong Senior Citizens Centre.
- The creation of a new room within Dapto Library that can be utilised as either a quiet space or an activity area.
- The kitchen at Dapto Ribbonwood Centre.
- A new kitchenette installed at Coledale Community Centre.
- Repainting of Stanwell Park Children's Centre.
- Cringila Community Hall.

Goal 6

We have affordable & accessible transport



Our links and connection with Sydney, both physical and economic will be strengthened. We will have an integrated transport system that focuses on reducing our private car dependency by increasing the use of public transport, cycling and walking. Our pedestrian accessibility is improved and maintained to enhance our residents and visitors usage of our foreshore and access throughout the city. We will be at the forefront of emerging transport technology including planning for innovative transport initiatives such as car and bicycle share schemes and planning for driverless vehicles.

- Objectives**
- Wollongong is supported by an integrated transport system.
 - Connections between our city and Sydney are strengthened.
 - Provide connected and accessible places and spaces.

Community Indicators

Goal 6: We Have Affordable and Accessible Transport				
Measure	Baseline	End of Term 2012-17	End of Term 2017-21	Performance/ Comment
Increase the use of non-car transport options to undertake a variety of activities including work, shopping, school, dining out, socialising.	n/a	41% walk 16% train 21% bus 9% Gong shuttle 5% bike (2018)	29% walk* 10% train* 6% bus* 3% shuttle* 3% bike* (2021)	Decrease since 2017 Decrease since 2017 Decrease since 2017 Decrease since 2017 Decrease since 2017 <i>*Results may have been impacted by COVID-19 restrictions</i>
Increase the proportion of journeys to work by public transport	n/a	6.11% (2016)	-	<i>2021 Census data due for release in 2022</i>
Increase the proportion of journeys to work by active transport (walking or cycling)	n/a	3.23% (2016)	-	<i>2021 Census data due for release in 2022</i>
Decrease peak travel delays *Time lost in peak hour - per trip (avg morning + evening) *Time lost in peak hour - per year <i>*measure has changed since 2012-17 due to availability of data</i>	n/a	6.5mins 46 hours (2017)	+7mins 50 hours (2020)	Peak hour delays minor, although slight increase since 2017 Peak hour delays minor, although slight increase since 2017
Increase the number of kilometres dedicated to walking and cycle ways	92km (2013)	123km (2017)	128km (2021)	Increase since 2013
Increase the proportion of residents who are satisfied with public transport	3.4 out of 5.0 (2014)	3.6 out of 5.0 (2018)	3.7 out of 5.0 (2021)	Increase since 2014

Supporting Documents



- Those adopted throughout the term include:
- Pedestrian Plan 2017-2021
 - Wollongong Cycling Strategy 2030
 - Wollongong City Access and Movement Strategy 2023
 - Keiraville Gwynneville Access and Movement Strategy 2020

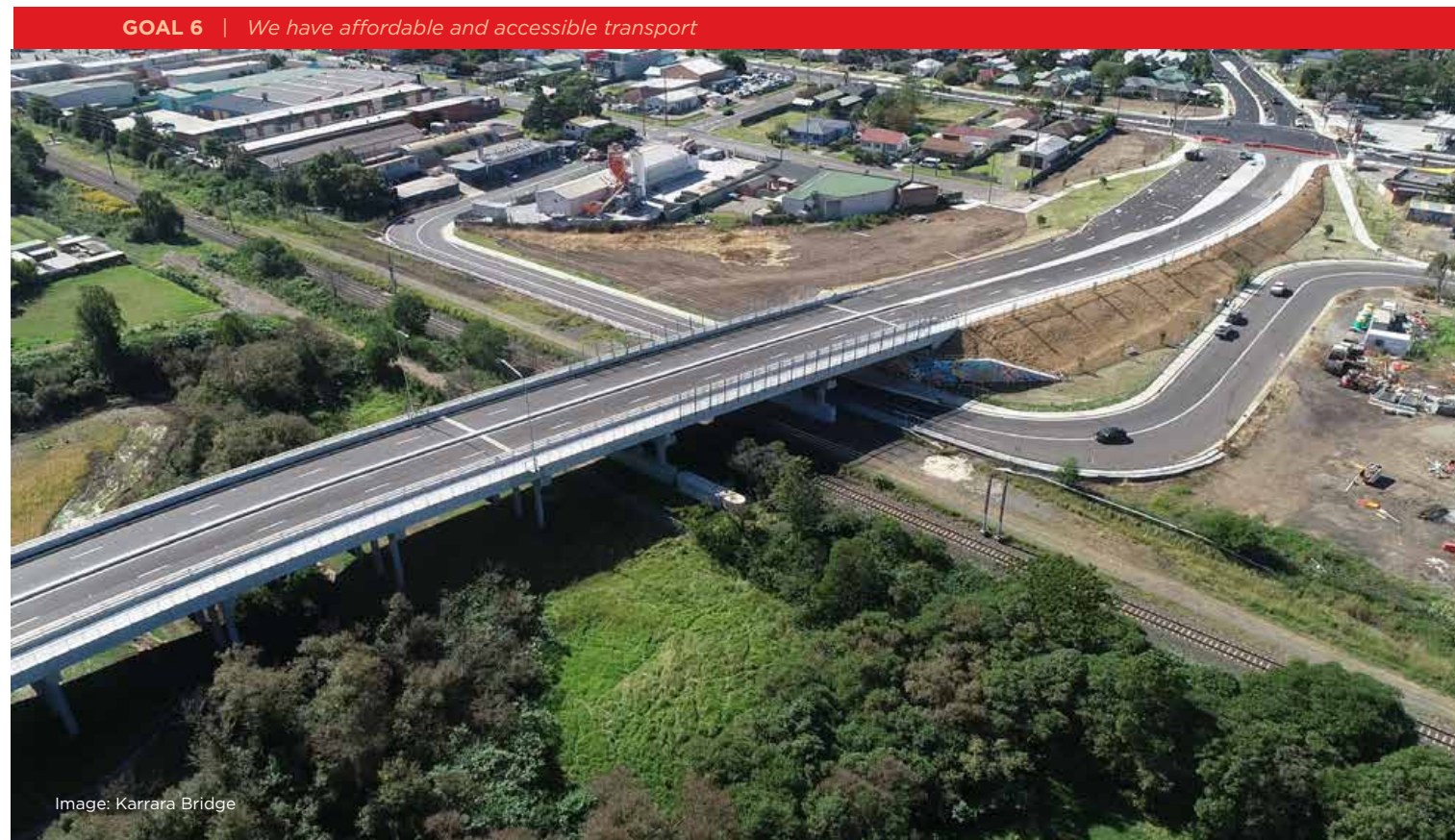


Image: Karrara Bridge

Objective - 6.1

Wollongong is supported by an integrated transport system

Wollongong Awarded UCI Bike Label

February 2021 saw recognition of Wollongong as a global cycle city following the announcement of the awarding of the UCI Bike City Label, joining the ranks of cities such as Vancouver, Paris, Copenhagen and Glasgow.



This represents a significant coup for Wollongong as it's the only time an Australian city or anywhere in the southern hemisphere that has been awarded the prestigious label. The UCI Bike City Label recognises Council's long-term commitment to delivering an improved cycling experience for everyone.

UCI stands for the Union Cycliste Internationale, the world governing body of cycling. The UCI Bike City Label, relaunched in 2015, is an internationally recognised award that supports and acknowledges cities and regions who host major UCI cycling events and invest in developing community cycling, related infrastructure and programs. This year, Wollongong joins the ranks of 18 cities and regions which have been awarded a Bike City Label.

The 2022 UCI Road Cycling Championships will arrive in Wollongong in September 2022 with hundreds of thousands of international visitors expected to make Wollongong home and millions more expected to tune in. The 2022 UCI Road World Championships – Wollongong NSW is supported by Destination NSW, Wollongong City Council and the Government of NSW.

Fowlers Road to Fairwater Drive

2020 saw the delivery of Council's largest infrastructure project - Fowlers Road extension to Fairwater Drive, providing flood reliable access to the greater West Dapto community. Completion of this project will also facilitate significant future growth of the Illawarra region.

The \$71M project began in mid-2017 and includes:

- 1.3 kilometres of four lane road and shared pathway.
- Two bridges spanning a total of more than 230 metres (one over the flood channel and the Karrara Bridge over the South Coast Rail Line and Mullet Creek).
- Marshall Street deviation.
- Upgrades to Princes Highway and Fowlers Road intersection, including additional turning lanes and the signalisation of Fairwater Drive and Fowlers Road intersection at the western end.
- Service relocations including power, water, gas, and landscaping, with the planting of various types of grasses, shrubs and trees.

Council also called for suggestions from the community for naming of the new bridge. After consideration of all submissions, Council resolved



to call the new bridge Karrara Bridge, which is the traditional Aboriginal name for Upper Mullet Creek.

The bridge underpass in Marshall Street features a public art mural, featuring the work of leading street artist. Bafcat (Mitchell Geurin) with co-design work by artist Warwick Keen and young Coomaditchie artist Jess Brown.

The new mural features and celebrates the character and identity of the Dapto area with community input.

It is expected the road link project will service 3.3 million motorists each year (approximately 9,000 per day). The project has created 100 direct jobs and 500 indirect jobs and was funded by \$10M from the Commonwealth Government, \$22.5M from the NSW Government - Restart NSW Illawarra Infrastructure Fund, \$3.2M in interest subsidised loans through the NSW Government, \$600,000 design grant from the NSW Government and approximately \$37.9M from Council, utilising West Dapto developer contributions.

Karrara Bridge Recognition

Council was recognised for its work on the Karrara Bridge by winning the 2020 NSW Engineering Excellence Award at the IPWEA State Awards in March 2020. IPWEA is the technical society of Engineers Australia and is the peak association for teams who deliver public works and engineering services to the communities in Australia and New Zealand.

The project provides flood reliable access, reduced congestion, and better connections for over 19,500 homes and 56,500 people in the largest land release outside the Sydney metropolitan area. The project

was delivered on time and under budget. It created 92 full time equivalent jobs, generated an additional \$274M in supporting activity, and is one of the largest projects of its kind in the local government sector.

Stretching 1.3 kilometres the project includes a four-lane road, shared path, two bridges, landscaping and public art. The main bridge was named Karrara based on suggestions from the community. Karrara is the traditional Aboriginal name for Upper Mullet Creek.

Gong Shuttle

2020 - 2021 saw the announcement of an extension to the Gong Shuttle service. Following negotiations, Transport for NSW, the University of Wollongong and Council, in late December 2020 an offer was received to extend the Gong Shuttle Bus. A funding agreement has since been executed between Council and Transport for NSW to provide the popular service until 2024. The Gong Shuttle is an important piece of Wollongong's infrastructure system and provides an affordable option of travelling around the City. The frequent and free service is unique to Wollongong, with no other CBD in the region providing such a service.

Blue Mile Tramway link reopens

Throughout the term, Council unveiled the shared pathway linking Belmore Basin and North Wollongong Beach in June 2020 three months ahead of schedule following a multimillion-dollar overhaul.

The Blue Mile Tramway Seawall and shared path upgrade was reopened by Senator the Hon. Concetta Fierravanti Wells, Minister for International Development and the Pacific and Wollongong Lord Mayor, Cr Gordon Bradbery AM, who together unveiled the plaque commemorating the significant project.

The area known as the Tramway is approximately 500 metres long and was originally built for coal wagons to haul coal from the Mt Pleasant mine

down to the Harbour. The historic link was closed in March 2017 for a project that was expected to take 18 months to complete. The popular heritage pathway was a complex and detailed job. Each of the 150 precast reinforced concrete panels that make up the new seawall weighed between six and twelve tonnes each, while underfoot, some pavers and 19,000 individual stone cobbles were laid. The project was jointly funded by the Australian Government through its National Stronger Regions Fund and is a key component of Council's broader focus to enhance the foreshore for enjoyment and use of local visitors and the ongoing growth of the city centre.

The works included construction of a new seawall, new balustrade, lighting, seating and an upgraded and widened shared pathway.



Image: The Blue Mile shared path upgrade

Cycling Strategy

Following extensive community engagement, the Wollongong Cycling Strategy 2030 was adopted by Council on 16 November 2020. The Strategy is focused on delivering an improved riding experience for all users and sets what actions Council will pursue over the next decade to ensure Wollongong is the place to ride.

Some of the key aims for the Strategy include increasing cycle participation across the City, increasing people's level of comfort with riding and boosting the cycling network length from 130 kilometres to 215 kilometres. The targets are focused on five pillars: safe; convenient; planned; business, tourism and events and innovation.

The COVID-19 pandemic has seen a dramatic increase in cycling participation rates, presenting an opportunity for Council to build upon this momentum. Further, Wollongong is set to host the Union Cycliste Internationale (UCI) Road World Cycling Championships in 2022. This presents a significant opportunity for our community and has further promoted local and external interest in Wollongong being the place to ride.

Key projects scheduled in Council's four-year Infrastructure Delivery Program 2018-2022 include:

- Construction of a new Regional Pump Track at Cringila Hills Recreation Park (2021-2022).
- Construction of a new Multi-Use Criterium Track (2021-2022).
- Introduction of 15 new cycleway projects, utilising \$1.865M of Commonwealth and NSW Government funding.
- Introduction of 11 new road safety upgrades (\$2.3M) for delivering 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 utilising Commonwealth and NSW Government funding.

Keiraville Gwynneville Access and Movement Study

The Keiraville Gwynneville Access and Movement Study was undertaken in partnership with Neighbourhood Forum 5, the University of Wollongong and Transport for NSW with the final document endorsed by Council on 7 December 2020. The study identifies a range of issues facing the various transport modes for the precinct and actions to address them following extensive stakeholder engagement, data collection, literature review, site investigations and motor vehicle traffic analysis. The Infrastructure Delivery Program (IDP) 2021-2022 to 2024-2025 lists the following projects recommended in the Keiraville Gwynneville Access and Movement Study:

New Footpaths

- Vickery Street - Acacia Avenue to Fairy Creek shared path, Gwynneville.

New Cycle/Shared Paths

- Gipps Road; Robsons Road to Foley Street,

Southern side.

- Fairy Creek Shared Path - Reserve Street to Foley Street via Gilmore Street, West Wollongong.
- Reserve Street - Gilmore Street to Robsons Road; south side, West Wollongong.

Traffic Facilities

- Foley Street Road Safety Upgrades

Objective - 6.2

Connection between our city and Sydney are strengthened

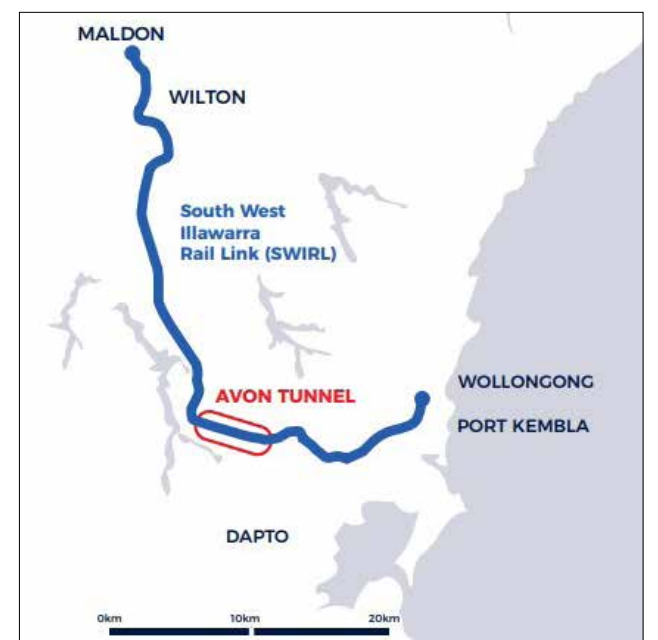
Maldon Dombarton train line

Throughout the term, Council made a submission to the Rebuild NSW Funding Program advocates for key transport infrastructure investment aligned with the Regional Transport Strategy, including consideration of the Maldon-Dombarton freight line.

Council also made a submission on the Draft Future Transport 2056 Strategy in March 2018 which highlighted the importance of the "South West Illawarra Rail link - SWIRL" as a regionally significant transport link that could support future freight and passenger rail between the Illawarra and South Western Sydney.

Council also participates in the Transport for NSW working group to investigate feasible route options for the Outer Sydney Orbital from the Macarthur area to the Illawarra have advocated for SWIRL to be considered as part of that project's outcomes.

Liaison with State Government Agencies, including Transport for NSW, continues as opportunities arise to advocate for key infrastructure strategies supporting the region.



Objective - 6.3
Provide connected and accessible places and spaces

Grand Pacific Walk

Council developed a Grand Pacific Walk Masterplan in July 2014 aimed to provide a unified design approach and include principles like pathway widths and separation from vehicles for pedestrians and cyclists on the pathway that followed the Grand Pacific Drive route. It included the following:

- Widen the existing share pathway where it is inadequate
- Provide 'missing links' between existing shareway segments
- Construct viewing and picnic areas in suitable locations
- Develop signage along the route
- Make clear connections with the Wollongong Bike Network
- Include place-making features such as heritage interpretation and art
- Formalise carparks near the shared pathway network.

Throughout the term, Stage one was officially completed in December 2018. The 3.5-kilometre link from Stanwell Park to Stoney Creek Bridge, Coalcliff includes a viewing platform with expansive views along the coast and out over the Pacific Ocean.

Stage One included:

Stoney Creek to Coalcliff Station

Work in this area included pedestrian safety

upgrades around the Station, removal of a sharp curve in the road for sight lines and a new bus bay and pedestrian refuge. A new pedestrian bridge was also built over Stoney Creek.

Coalcliff Station to Lower Coast Road

The creation of a new shared path, bridges over the crossing creeks, and a spectacular new boardwalk and ramp to make the most of ocean views.

Lower Coast Road and Murrawal Road to Lawrence Hargrave Drive, Stanwell Park

A new footpath was built along the full length of the road and added on-road cycle facilities.

Murrawal Road and Lawrence Hargrave Drive to Station Street, Stanwell Park

Replacement of the narrow footpath with a full width shared path and safety rails. Also added paving, a pedestrian crossing, more parking and directional and heritage signs at Stanwell Park.

Grand Pacific Walk Stage 2 investigations are continuing to identify missing links and possible treatments. Throughout 2019-2020, Council had programmed:

- The section south from Sea Cliff Bridge past the Heritage Hotel, Clifton.
- The section affronting Coledale Beach including car parking upgrade.
- Design of a section north from Austinmer.

In late 2020, Council was successful for two NSW Government Applications for Stage 2 of the Clifton footpath: \$800,000 from the Active Transport Program and \$400,000 from the Resources for Regions Program.

Stage 2 investigations are continuing to identify missing links and possible treatments.



Image: Kembla St cycleway

Footpaths and Cycleways

Council committed to ensuring continual improvements in Council's footpath and cycleway networks.

While details of specific locations are provided in the published Infrastructure Delivery Program each year, 2019-2020 saw the planning and delivery of Footpath and Cycle Way Improvement Programs with **highlights including:**

- Denison Street shared path from Throsby Drive to Crown Street, Wollongong.
- Footpaths in Thames Street and The Mall, Figtree provided missing links in the footpath network.
- Bong Bong Road, Dapto shared path.
- Church Street, Ellen Street to Swan Street Wollongong, duplicate footpath.
- Footpath on Kendall Street, Tarrawanna in front of Tarrawanna Public School.
- Footpath in Fisher Street, West Wollongong to complete a missing link.

Installation of bike hoops have commenced as part of the Strategy to create a cycle friendly city.

Following significant design and community consultation phases, several Pop-Up Cycling Routes have been installed in Wollongong, Thirroul and Towradgi with a route for Port Kembla planned for installation in 2021-2022. These projects are located on strategic routes identified in Council's Cycling Strategy 2030 and will be monitored and evaluated over a 12-month trial period.

Sustainable Transport

Additional staff were engaged in early 2019 to support sustainable transport projects. Research into Connected and Automated Vehicles (CAV) commenced in September 2019 as part of the City Centre Access and Movement Strategy 2023.

Contracts commenced during the financial year for the audit of all bus stops and car parks for accessibility. Audit data for bus stops was finalised and is being reviewed by the Walking, Cycling and

Mobility Reference Group, including preparation of a prioritised schedule of works to upgrade some bus stops. The audit for car parks commenced in late 2018-2019.

The Park and Ride initiative is identified in the adopted Wollongong City Centre Access and Movement Strategy 2023. The feasibility assessment of a southern city centre shuttle bus route and service to support park and ride has been completed and incorporated into the scope of the City Centre Access and Movement Strategy, which is currently underway.

Council is working with the NSW Government on Transport Access Program (TAP) upgrades for Unanderra and Towradgi railway stations. These upgrades will provide better access to, within and around public transport interchanges, railway stations and surrounding station precincts, along with improvements in station amenities and general customer facilities. These upgrades will ultimately contribute to an improved experience for public transport customers by delivering accessible, modern, secure and integrated transport infrastructure.

Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Transport Plan

On 22 February 2021, Council endorsed a submission on the draft Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Transport Plan. The draft Transport Plan outlines the strategic framework for how Transport for NSW (TfNSW) will respond to changes in land use, population and travel demand across the region over the next 20 years. The Draft Transport Plan identifies a number of initiatives to improve connectivity, safety, productivity and resilience of the transport network. This will improve the range of transport services and options available to the community.

Throughout the development of the Submission, Council representatives took part in workshops organised by TfNSW to seek input to the preparation of the plan (vision and narrative) and to discuss Wollongong initiatives.



Image: Grand Pacific Walk

A

Attachment

Resourcing Strategy Progress Report



Our Resourcing Strategy Overview

Our Resourcing Strategy outlines the way in which Council will allocate resources to achieve the vision and goals set out in Our Wollongong 2028. The Resourcing Strategy identifies how we best plan, develop and utilise our resources to enhance the performance of our business to deliver better outcomes for the community.

The Resourcing Strategy consists of four components: Long Term Financial Plan (10-Year plan), Strategic Asset Management Plan (10-year plan), Workforce Strategy (4-year plan) and the Information Management and Technology Strategy (2-year plan).

The Resourcing Strategy is a supporting document to Our Wollongong 2028 Community Strategic Plan and focuses on those matters that are the responsibility of Council. It focuses specifically on finances, assets and people with an additional focus on technology as an identified resource focus.

This document (Attachment A of the End of Term Report) will provide a status report of Council's progress in relation to the allocation of the resources throughout each strategy.





Long Term Financial Plan



The first section of the Resourcing Strategy is Council's Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP). The LTFP provides an outline of financial forecasts based on the information available and decisions made through the planning process. The Plans and corresponding financial forecasts are built within the parameters of Council's Financial Strategy. The Financial Strategy provides direction and context for decision making in the allocation, management and use of Council's limited financial resources. It sets the parameters within which

Council plans to operate to provide financial sustainability, affordability, focus and efficiency or value for money, over the short, medium and longer terms. The LTFP contains financial projections for the next ten years and outlines the assumptions that underlie these projections. The LTFP was used to inform decision making during the finalisation of the Community Strategic Plan and the development of the Delivery Program.



Strategic Asset Management Plan

Council is the custodian of community assets with a replacement value of \$4.5B. These assets include roads, drains, footpaths, community facilities, recreational facilities, parks and gardens. The Strategic Asset Management Plan (SAMP) is a component of the Resourcing Strategy and sets the strategic direction for Council's management of its assets to support service delivery needs of the community into the future, balanced with the

available financial resources and workforce to ensure long term sustainable service provision. Fundamentally, this Plan sets out our strategy and programs to provide assets to agreed levels of service, continually improve the way we deliver our services and the way we manage our assets.



Workforce Strategy



Also forming part of the Resourcing Strategy is the Workforce Strategy. This plan defines how Council intends to manage its workforce resources to achieve the services and goals identified through the Delivery Program. It is flexible and allows for management of the workforce to meet changing service delivery needs while focusing on the optimisation of Council's ability to deliver excellent customer and community services.

An effective workforce strategy aims to provide Council with the people best able to inform its strategic direction, develop innovative approaches to complex issues and deliver appropriate services effectively and efficiently. To deliver our key objectives we need our workforce to be enabled, responsive, capable, engaged, inclusive, safe and well.



Information Management and Technology

As a core enabling function, Council relies on effective information management and technology to support the delivery of services and infrastructure to our community. Council makes a significant investment in information management and technology, including infrastructure, corporate applications, websites, data and voice network and end point devices.

The IMT Strategy will assist Council in achieving the Delivery Program objectives and community outcomes expressed in Our Wollongong 2028. Successful deployment of the IMT Strategy will support Council in becoming a sustainable organisation ensuring our workforce, systems and processes support high performance and optimal service delivery for our community.

Long Term Financial Plan 2018 - 2028

Introduction

Wollongong City Council is committed to the principles of financial sustainability and good financial management. Council will use ratepayer’s money, together with other funding available, wisely to provide prioritised services and improve financial sustainability and asset management. Financial sustainability has been defined as where the planned, long term service and infrastructure levels and standards of Council can be met without unplanned increases in rates or disruptive cuts to services. Good financial management requires an understanding of the short and long term financial impacts of decisions now, in the past and the future. It requires consideration of the potential influences outside of Council’s control that may impact on the finances of Council.

The current term of Council marked the beginning of a new journey for financial sustainability. The financial objectives of the Securing Our Future program had been achieved and Council was well placed for long term financial stability. Improvements beyond planned results also meant that Council had some additional capacity to consider and support community aspirations. The current period has presented the unexpected challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Financial Strategy has been fundamental in guiding decisions through these times.

Financial Strategy

The Financial Strategy (Council Policy) provides clear direction and context for decision making that guides the allocation, management and use of Council’s limited financial resources. It sets the parameters that will allow Council to maintain financial stability and acts as a catalyst for improving efficiency and releasing resources to improve frontline services and continuity. The key performance indicators outlined in the Financial Strategy are supported by clear targets to support continuous measurement of financial sustainability. Council reviews the Financial Strategy and these indicators on an ongoing basis to ensure that these support the evolving financial maturity and direction of the organisation. The Policy was reviewed in April 2017, prior to the start of this term of Council, to reflect the achievement of the Securing Our Future program and the change from the planning and development stage for financial sustainability to a maintenance phase. The key parameters in the Financial Strategy at this point in time were as follows below:

Indicator	Target
Operational Result [pre capital]	Small Surplus (average over 3 years)
Funds Available from Operations	At least equal to depreciation
Available Funds (% of operational revenue)	3.5% - 5.5%
Total Funds Result	Nil
Debt Service Ratio	<4%

The Journey

While Council’s journey to financial sustainability began in 2008, it wasn’t until 2012-2013 that Council took an affirmative and holistic approach to building financial sustainability through the Securing Our Future program.

At the beginning of 2012-2013 Council’s short to medium term financial capacity was very sound; however, the long term path was not sustainable. Council was positioned financially to provide existing services in the short to medium term but could not guarantee long term replacement of assets. Council worked extensively with the community to develop the Securing Our Future program that created a strategy that would improve the underlying annual performance by around \$21M by the end of the 2017-2018 financial Year and provide capacity for long term financial sustainability.

Council was able to successfully progress the Securing Our Future Outcomes a year earlier and in addition, recognise further non recurrent improvements of \$22.9M of surplus funds that were transferred to the Strategic Projects internally restricted asset for future use. This was a defining period in moving this Council from being financially unsustainable to one that that would be fit and well placed for long term financial stability.

It is important to remember that the Securing Our Future targets were aimed at providing sustainability at the current service levels by allowing sufficient funding to carry out existing

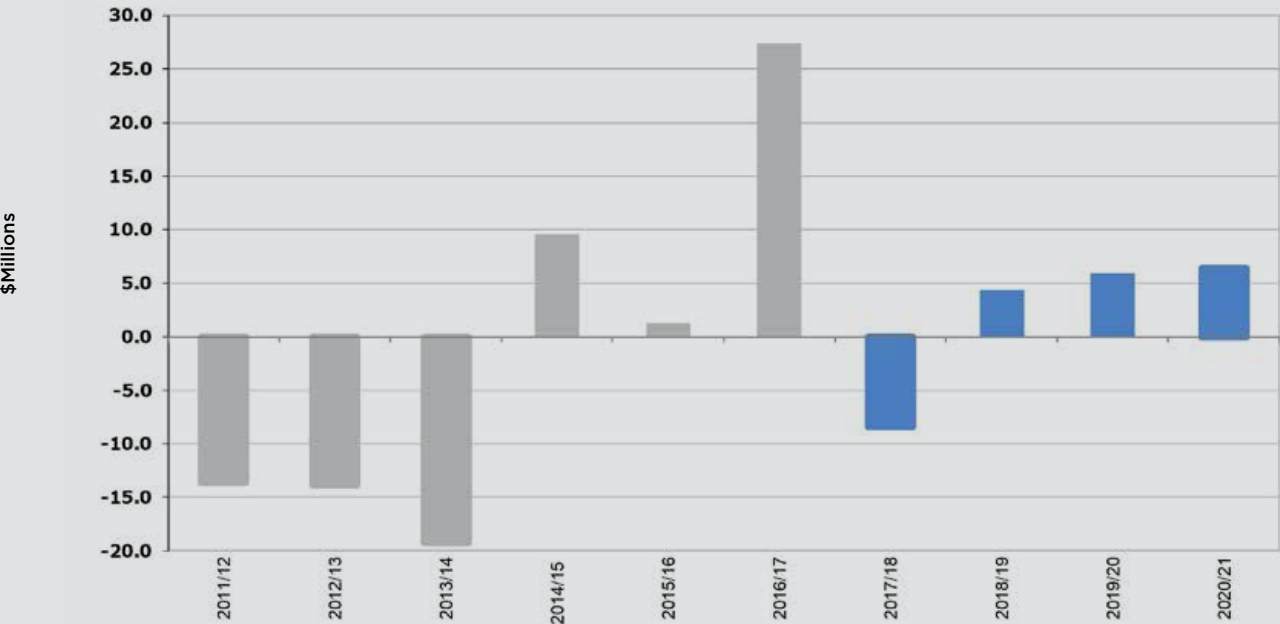
services at existing levels and replace assets with equivalents as required from time to time. The challenge for the incoming Council was to maintain the commitment for financial sustainability when the immediate imperative had been achieved and balance this with increasing community aspirations and needs.

The following charts provide a view of the financial forecasts and commitment to financial sustainability at the commencement of the 2017-2018 planning cycle along with past year actuals (shown in grey).

Operating Result (pre capital)

In broad terms a deficit from operations over a period of time indicates that Council is not earning sufficient revenue to fund its ongoing operations (services) and renewal of assets. The chart below shows Council’s journey during the Securing Our Future implementation (grey bars) and the longer-term plan to meet the target outlined in the Financial Strategy. This measure should be viewed over the long term as annual results may be impacted by timing or other external factors. For example, in the diagram below, 2017-2018 indicates a forecast deficit that was the result of the early payment of part of the 2017-2018 Financial Assistance Grant in 2016-2017. There is a corresponding improvement in 2016-2017 that along with the repeal of the carbon tax in that year that resulted in reversal of the accumulated provision for future payment of this liability, created an unusually favourable result for that year.

Operating Surplus / (deficit) [pre capital]

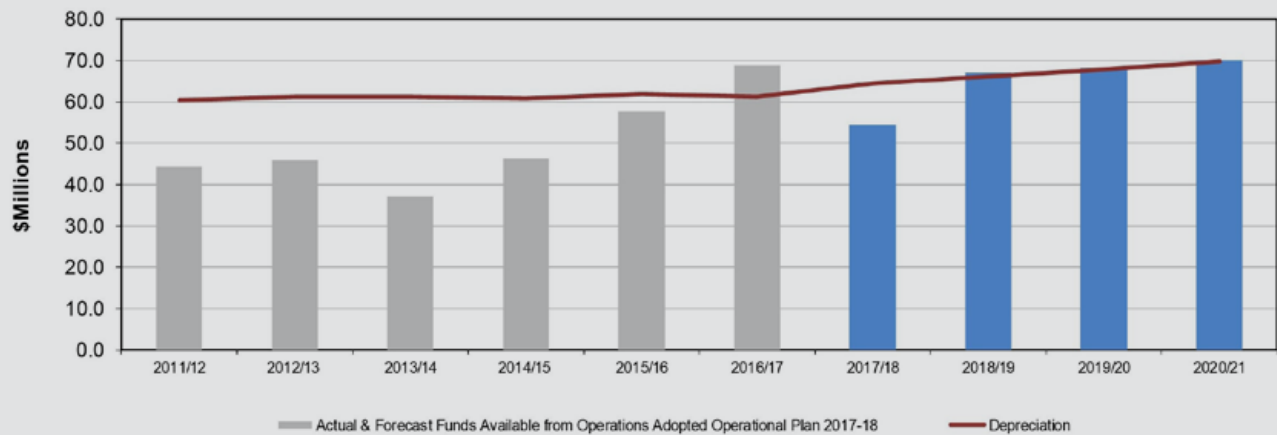


Actual & Forecast Operating Result [pre capital] Adopted Operational Plan 2017-2018

Funds Available from Operations

This indicator demonstrates the capacity to generate sufficient funds from operations to meet the required level of asset renewal. Depreciation target is effectively used as a proxy for the long-term annual funding required to replace Council’s assets. The chart below shows the evolution of financial sustainability and longer-term commitment.

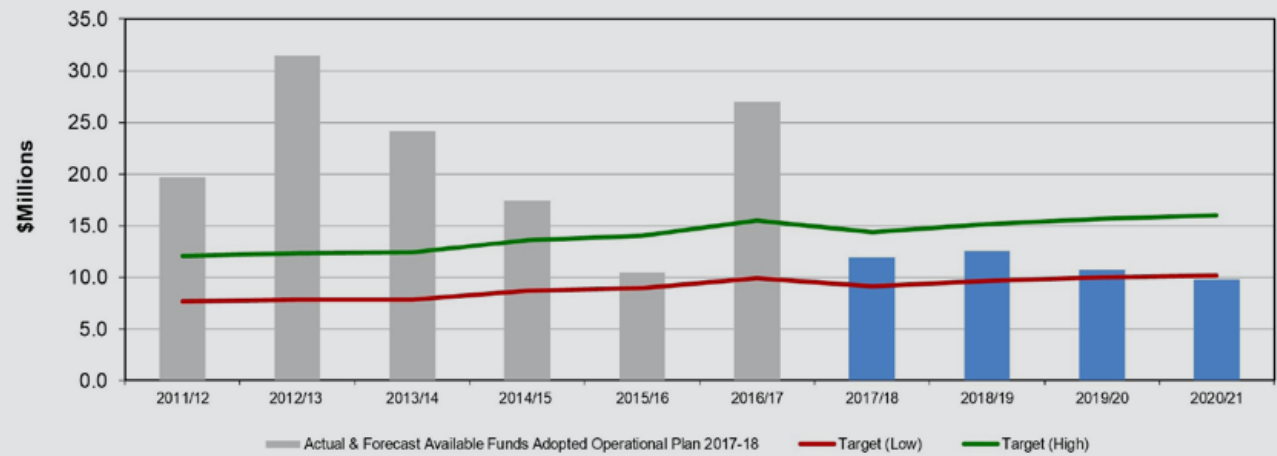
Funds Available from Operations



Available Funds

Available Funds are uncommitted funds of the organisation that assist in meeting short term cash requirements, provide contingency for unexpected costs or loss of revenue and provide flexibility to take advantage of opportunities that may arise from time to time. Council’s target for these are between 3.5% and 5.5% of operational revenue (pre capital).

Available Funds Balance



Debt

At the commencement of this term, Council had a number of loans that included an interest free loan from the Department of Planning to accelerate construction of the West Dapto Access Strategy and subsidised borrowings through the Local Infrastructure Renewal Scheme (LIRS) program that was offered by the NSW Government as incentive to councils to accelerate infrastructure renewal.

The interest free loan of \$26.1M was entered into in 2009-2010 with final repayment due in 2019 2020. As this loan was an interest free loan, it was accounted for at fair value with a notional interest expense recorded each year.

Council also entered into a number of loans under the LIRS program between 2012 and 2017 with a total value of \$40.5M These loans have been used to accelerate the City Wide Footpaths, Shared Path Renewal, Missing Links Construction Program, building refurbishment works for a number of Council facilities and to support the West Dapto Access Fowlers Road project. These loans were taken over a 10 year period and will be completed by June 2025. The loan repayments associated with the West Dapto Access Strategy are funded from a reduction in other capital works, developer contributions and additional rate revenue from the West Dapto subdivision. For 2017-2018 Council had a forecast Debt Service Ratio of approximately 3.3% which was below Council’s target of 4% outlined in the Financial Strategy KPI target.

Challenges & Achievements

While reaching financial sustainability had been Council’s aspirational target over a number of years, having reached that position, the focus became the ability to balance the demand for increased service, threats to the cost of providing services, and improvements and efficiency in the delivery of services. Through this term Council has continued to build on its financial strength and has been able to deliver improved levels of service in some key areas as well as support accelerated delivery of planned projects and additional projects During this time Council also faced several significant challenges that have included the West Dapto funding gap and impact of COVID-19.

West Dapto

There was significant risk associated with the West Dapto development and exposure created through the gap between the capped payments set for developers and the forecast funding required to build the vast majority of assets directly related to the new development. Council was able to successfully apply for funding under the Local Infrastructure Growth Scheme (LIGS) program to support this gap. The LIGS scheme ended on 30 June 2020. In total Council received \$12M of funding under this scheme. The West Dapto Developer Contribution plan was subject to a review by IPART during May 2020 and the recommendations from this review were incorporated in the revised plan that is no longer subject to State capped contributions.

The West Dapto development is the largest stand-alone growth area for Wollongong that over a 40 to 60 year period is expected to result in an estimated 19,000 additional dwellings and population increase of 57,400. It is expected that through the nature and size of this development that there will be ongoing challenges to be managed over time.

COVID-19

The advent of COVID-19 in early 2020 had direct impact both on our community and Council. Measures were taken during the last quarter of the 2019-2020 financial year and in the formulation of the 2020-2021 Operational Plan to alleviate the anticipated immediate impact of the pandemic and to plan for a recovery in financial terms for Council over the longer term. For our community, a comprehensive relief package to business, residents and other customers of Council was endorsed to assist in managing the impacts on individuals and business. This package included provision for rate payers to defer their rate and annual charges payments with an interest free period, implementation of the government directive on relief for commercial lessees, freezes on fees and charges increases including domestic waste, and the suspension of a range of public health inspection fees. For Council, the direct impacts have come from closure of services, reduction in gatherings in public places, implementation of social distancing requirements and the need to develop new ways to operate and deliver services while maintaining the health and wellbeing of our people. Together, these impacts were estimated to result in a loss of net revenue for Council in the order of \$16M to the end of financial year 2020-2021.

These impacts were recognised in Council's financial projections along with a strategy which endeavoured to manage this crisis without increased future costs through delayed asset maintenance or unreasonable transfer costs to future generations. The planned recovery in the first instance was to absorb immediate shortfalls through Council's reserves it has built up for unexpected loss (Available Funds \$5.1M) and funds it holds for Future Investment (Strategic Projects \$4M and Property Investment \$5M) and the commitment to an annual Improvement Program, or savings against budget of \$2M until 2025-2026 to support the repayment of funds drawn from the Property Investment Fund and to return Available Funds forecasts back within the Financial Strategy targets. Available Funds are a cornerstone of our financial sustainability and inline with our Financial Strategy the reinstatement of these ensure we are prepared for such events in the future. Likewise, the Property Investment Restriction, being used to fund the revenue loss due to COVID-19, is an integral part of our future to deliver opportunity for investment to create increased capacity to deliver service enhancement. The improvement in the 2020-2021 result compared to revised budget has allowed the early reinstatement of the funds drawn from the Property Investment Fund during 2020-2021.

Service enhancement and additional projects

The practise of holding financial improvements that exceeded planned target as internally restricted cash for Strategic Projects and accumulated funds have provided a level of additional capacity to support enhancement of some service deliveries, accelerate planned projects or introduce additional projects.

During this term Council has endorsed approximately \$46M of projects funded from Strategic Projects internally restricted cash for capital, supporting documents and one-off projects. These have included:

- New footpaths associated projects \$7.3M
- Sportsfields lighting \$1.6M
- Outdoor fitness equipment \$0.9M
- Beaton Park Tennis Courts upgrade & relocation of \$1.3M
- Other sporting facility improvements \$1.2M
- North Beach seawall renewal \$5.7M
- Cringila Hills Recreation Masterplan implementation \$1.5M
- Contribution to Helensburgh Library and Warrawong Library and Community Centre construction \$7.8M
- Conversion of streetlights to LED and solar options on council buildings \$2.3M
- Botanic Garden asset renewal/enhancement \$1.6M
- Migration to organisation wide software platform \$6.2M
- Studies & supporting documents \$3.5M

Council has also approved a range of recurrent operational costs that support increased service levels to our community. These have been afforded through efficiencies and economies of scale as Council grows. In addition to the increased operational costs associated with new or enhanced assets such as footpaths and community buildings shown above, these have included a commitment to:

- Urban greening and pest species management \$0.6M pa
- Economic development programs \$0.6M pa
- Enhanced public domain maintenance \$0.5Mpa
- Enhanced mobility technology \$0.5M
- Natural area support \$0.2M



End of Term Results

During this term, Council has been able to maintain the goal of continuing to be financially sustainable despite the challenges presented by the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic. While there continues to be a high degree of uncertainty in the evolution of COVID-19, Council's current long term financial plans that are based on current knowledge and assumptions, aim to maintain Available Funds within the Financial Strategy guidelines and to reinstate funds held for future investments that were drawn from the Property Investment Fund internally restricted cash. At the end of 2020-2021 Council was able to achieve an improvement in the Funds Result beyond the revised forecast for that period. The improvement of \$15.6M was party due to operational improvements, lower than anticipated impact of COVID-19 at that point in time and enhanced cost performance in delivery of capital program. Council endorsed the early repayment of \$5M of funds drawn from the Property Investment Fund and the transfer of \$10.6M to Strategic Projects internally restricted cash that in the first instance would be available to support any unforeseen longer term impacts of COVID-19 during 2021-2022 and then future actions determined through the cyclical planning process. Actual result to 2020-2021 and the forecasts that support the Adopted 2021 2022 Operational Plan, indicate that Council has met, and will continue to meet, the majority of the key performance indicators that are contained in the Financial Strategy that provide the baseline for continuing financial sustainability. During this period, Council has also been able to accelerate or deliver a range of additional projects as well as enhancing services to our community across a range of key areas.

During this term, Council was presented with a significant challenge from the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic both from a human and financial perspective. The strength and flexibility of the Financial Strategy, along with Council's commitment to this, has supported the navigation through this challenge from a financial perspective.

The following graphs provide a view of the annual key performance indicators for the term of Council along with the forecasts for the remaining 10 years as outlined in the Adopted Operational Plan 2021-2022.

Operating Result [pre capital]

As discussed earlier, this indicator can be impacted by unusual circumstances or events that may not necessarily impact the organisation's underlying financial capacity. These circumstances and events may include timing of income and expenditure, introduction of projects from restricted cash that was created or received in prior years, or changes in accounting treatment.

There has been a range of these impacts that have manifested as a significant variance to the financial projections formed at the commencement of the current term of Council. At the beginning of this term of Council, it was projected that over the four years, Council would achieve an accumulated surplus Operating Result [pre capital] of \$8.3M. Actual results for this period indicate a deficit result of \$10.8M or an unfavourable variance of \$19.1M. Council reviews it's long term projections annually to incorporate changing external factors and priorities, the following summary provides an overview of significant impacts compared to the initial projections for the four year period.

The most significant variances are summarised below with Favourable variations are identified as (F) and Unfavourable as (U).



Timing

\$9.5M (F)

Early payment of the Financial Assistance Grant for 2018-2019 in 2017-2018. The Federal Government does not announce the timing of the future year grant until late May as part of their budget process. Although in recent years there has been a continued practise of early payment, original budgets are premised on no early payment.

Depreciation and Loss on Disposal of assets

\$9.0M (F)

This variance is comprised of a loss on disposal of \$12.9M and lower depreciation expense of \$21.9M. Loss on disposal has generally resulted from replacement of assets that had remnant values or lives and deprecation forecasts are impacted by indices, asset valuations and timing of capitalisation. Both of these are of a non-cash nature and, as such, do not impact on the other key performance indicators. These variances don't impact on Council's underlying financial position in the short to medium term. It is expected that as asset management planning evolves and is refined, variances such as this will diminish.

Projects introduced from prior year funds

\$18.3M (U)

These have included:

Additional projects introduced from internally restricted cash for Strategic Projects \$10.9M

Stormwater and Sports Priority \$1.5M

Affordable Housing program \$1.4M

Domestic Waste initiatives and pricing supported from externally restricted cash \$3.7M

City Centre activation program to alleviate COVID-19 impacts in the City Centre \$0.8M

Reclassification of capital projects to operational

\$23.7 (U)

This does not impact on the Funds Result as it is a reclassification largely for accounting requirements.

COVID-19 Relief Measures and Impacts

\$10.2M (U)

This includes income impacts from restrictions of service deliveries imposed by various levels of government to control the spread of the virus. Council initiated relief packages provided suspension of indexation to fees and public health inspection charges, legislative requirements for fee relief for commercial rents and deferred payment arrangements.

Valuation adjustments

\$2.3M(F)

This has included unfavourable impacts of the revaluation of employee leave entitlements and workers' compensation outstanding claims \$5.7M that were largely the result of application of revised discount factors reflecting current interest rate trends and the downward revaluation of an investment property \$2.8M that was offset by improvement resulting from a reduction in provision required for waste facility remediation \$9.3M an increased value of Council's share of insurance pool joint venture \$1.3M and asset impairment valuation of \$0.2M. As these adjustments are of a non-cash nature, they do not impact on the Funds results.

Interest on investments

\$4.2M (U)

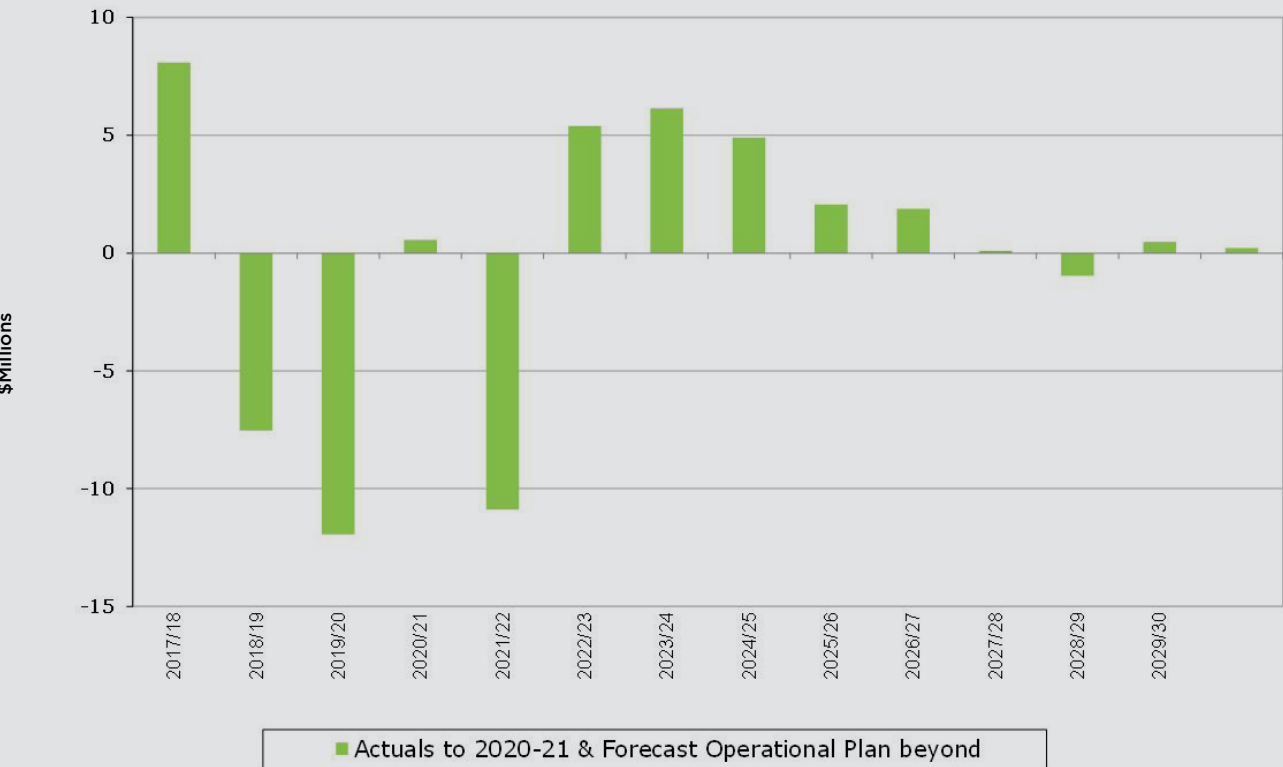
This reduction reflects the decline in investment market returns that have emerged in worldwide economies over the past two to three years. This only impacts partially on the Funds results as some of this relates to restricted cash holdings that were eligible for a share of interest income..

Operational Improvements

\$16.5M (F)

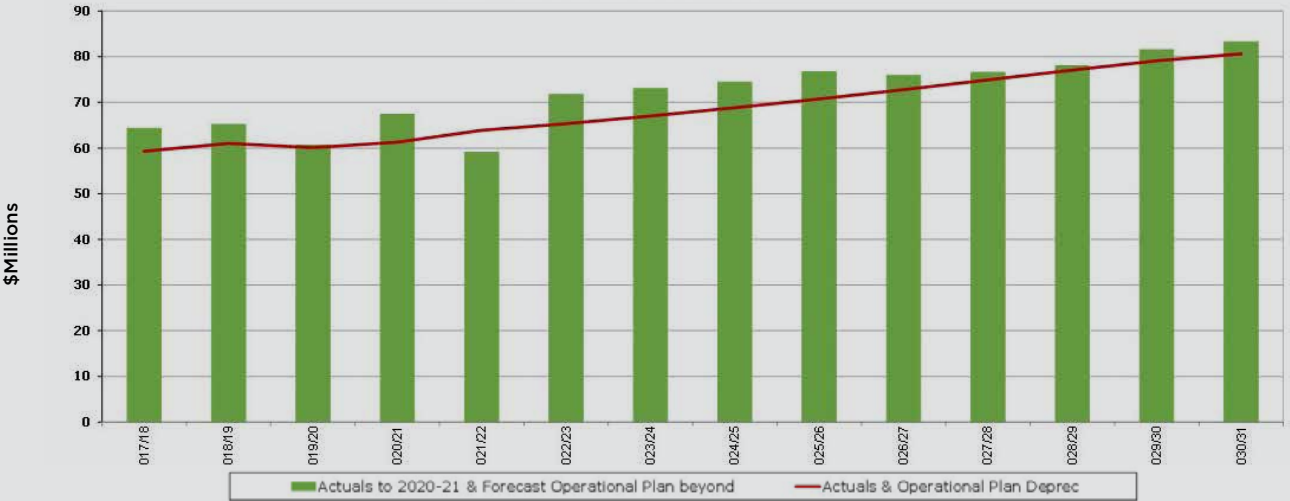
During the financial years 2017-2018 to 2019-2020 period Council also achieved \$7.6M of non-current improvements that exceeded planned targets, that in line with established practise, were transferred to Strategic Projects internally restricted asset for allocation to projects through the annual planning process. Improvements of \$2.1M in domestic waste operations during this time were also transferred to externally restricted cash as required by legislation. In addition, Council has been able to support enhanced service improvements with an annual operational cost increase of around \$2.5M during this time. The preliminary unaudited result for 2020-2021 indicates that a further \$6.1M of operational improvements were achieved against the revised budget for that year.

Operating Surplus / (deficit) pre capital



Funds Available from Operations
The variability in the Operating Result [pre capital] due to the range of factors discussed above constrains the use of this key performance indicator to some extent. For this reason, it is considered that the Funds Available from Operations (FAFO) provides a better and more consistent indicator of financial sustainability. The FAFO performance indicator measures one of the key tenets of financial sustainability: the capacity to replace assets in order to maintain the current level of service to the community. In this indicator, depreciation is used as a proxy for the long term funding required to replace Council's assets.
Council has met this target during this term and based on the Adopted Operational Plan 2021-2022 is expected to continue to do so into the future.

Funds Available from Operations



Available Funds
The Available Funds Result has remained within the target range of 3.5% and 5.5% of revenue [pre capital] both during the past term of Council and for long term projections. The preliminary unaudited result for 2020-2021 indicates an improvement

of \$15.6M in Available Funds against the revised budget for that year. This improvement is inclusive of operating and capital activities. As the treatment of this improvement will be considered by Council at its meeting on 2 August 2021, this has not been reflected as Available Funds in the graph below.

Forecast Available Funds Balance



Debt
Council's continued low borrowing level is a positive indicator that reflects the capacity and flexibility that Council has in future periods should the need arise, or further benefit become available to borrow at higher levels.

Key performance measures indicate that Council continues to meet its financial sustainability aspirations and has a solid base for the coming years.

Strategic Asset Management Plan 2018 - 2028

Council is committed to the effective, efficient and sustainable management of our infrastructure assets to support service delivery. An important part of this is understanding, planning and budgeting for the management of our assets over the whole of their life.



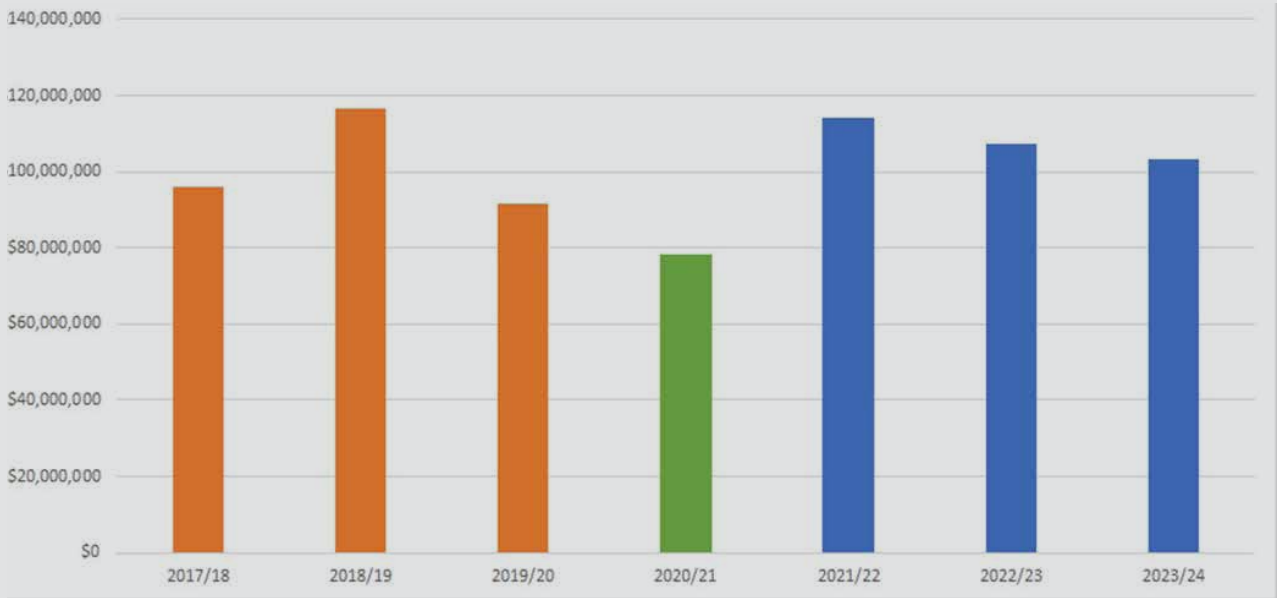
Whole of life infrastructure costs are identified, allocated and refined throughout the process to ensure financial sustainability and seamless service to our community. We are seeking to continuously improve Council's knowledge, systems, processes and strategies. This will ensure that Council is providing the level of asset management necessary to competently, responsibly and sustainably manage all community assets now and into the future.

Council is responsible for more than \$4.5B of community assets (Wollongong City Council Annual Report, 2019-2020). These assets include our library buildings, cycleways, stormwater pipes, roads, playgrounds and swimming pools. Each year, investment is made in:

- The operation, maintenance and renewal of its existing asset stock to ensure that these assets continue to safely and effectively deliver services to the community
- The construction of new assets to support enhanced service delivery and a growing population

The 2018-2021 Council Term was a period of significant investment in Council's infrastructure. The green and orange columns below represent Council's capital expenditure over the period of this term. Council has invested a total of \$382M of investment over this period.

Historical and Future Capital Expenditure and Budget



Capital expenditure over term of council reflected in orange and green columns.

Image: Crown st footpath upgrade (before and after)



A range of funding sources, including rates revenue, developer contributions and State and Commonwealth Government grants, has enabled Council to deliver significant investments in new infrastructure during the 2018-2021 term. During the period 2018-2021, Council invested over \$30M in new infrastructure. These include the construction of:

- The Karrara Bridge in West Dapto.
- A major stage of the Grand Pacific Walk between Stanwell Park and Clifton.
- New footpaths and cycleways at multiple locations across the LGA.
- New outdoor exercise equipment at multiple locations across the LGA.
- A new synthetic football field at Ian McLennan Park.

This investment in new infrastructure needs to be carefully considered to ensure Council is able to operate, maintain and replace these assets over the whole of their life. Council's core responsibility is to invest rates revenue in the renewal of its existing infrastructure to minimise risk to the community and support financial sustainability.

Council Asset Renewal

Infrastructure deteriorates over time. The rate at which this deterioration varies depending on:

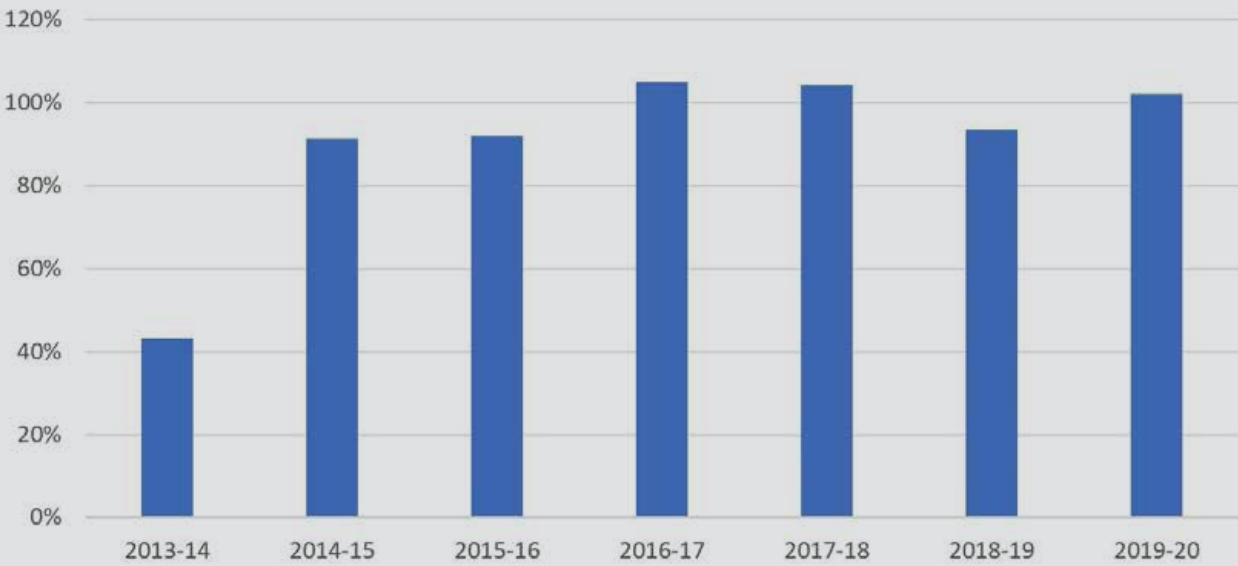
- The type of asset
- How it is used
- Location of the asset

Given consideration to these factors, the expected life of each asset type can be forecast and annual depreciation expenditure associated with individual assets can be calculated. The sum of annual expenditure depreciation for Council assets is generally reflective of the long-term annual average budgets that are required for asset renewal. At the end of 2019-2020, Council's total annual depreciation expenditure was \$61M (Wollongong City Council Annual Report, 2019-2020).

A key metric by which the NSW Government assesses Council's asset sustainability is the Asset Renewal Ratio (ARR). The ARR calculates Council's annual investment in buildings and infrastructure by the total annual depreciation for these same types of assets. In terms of monitoring Council's sustainability, the NSW State Government's expectation is that a ratio of 1 (100%) or better is achieved (i.e., Council is investing in the renewal of infrastructure assets at the rate of depreciation).

Council's Buildings and Assets Renewals Ratio has improved significantly following a Special Rate Variation approval (SRV) in 2014-2015. This is reflected in the graph below. Council's average infrastructure renewal ratio over the term of Council is 100% (noting that expenditure for 2020-2021 has not yet been finalised). The reduction in 2018-2019 was associated with the construction of the Karrara Bridge.

Asset Renewals Ratio (2013-14 / 2019-20)



Asset Management Improvements

Council is responsible for the management of over 150,000 individual assets. How Council manages these assets is documented in Council’s Asset Management Plans (AMPs). These AMPs inform the Strategic Assessment Management Plan (SAMP) which forms part of the Resourcing Strategy. The Resourcing Strategy is completed in the first year of each new Council term.

The AMPs are currently under review and will provide updated guidance to Council regarding the investment required to sustainably manage our infrastructure over the whole of its life. As an example, the AMPs forecast the required investment in maintenance and renewal of playgrounds to keep them safe and accessible for the community. The AMPs will also document an improvement program; a list of projects to further improve Council’s asset management capability and capacity. These include:

- Further asset condition/functionality assessments.
- Reviewing of asset useful lives.
- Improving information on asset unit rates.
- Consultation regarding asset service levels.
- Reviewing climate change impacts to asset stock.

During this term, investment in the implementation of the Assets module in Council’s One Council system has provided improved asset management capabilities. For example, asset condition data is now stored alongside financial data that is maintained for each asset.

Image: East Corrimal fitness equipment



Supporting Service Delivery

Council’s infrastructure assets support the delivery of a range of services that are valued by our community. During this term, Council has completed and adopted several strategic documents, including:

- Wollongong Cycling Strategy: 2030.
- Lake Illawarra Coastal Management Plan: 2020-2030.
- Pedestrian Plan: 2017-2021.
- Public Toilet Strategy: 2019-2029.
- Sustainable Wollongong 2030.
- Urban Greening Strategy: 2017-2037.

These strategic documents, along with Council AMPs provide input to support decision-making regarding:

- Priorities for investment in existing infrastructure assets.
- Priorities for investment in new infrastructure assets.
- Opportunities for disposal of surplus assets.
- Allocation of budgets to support whole of life costs.

Improving the integration of strategic documents and AMPs will continue to be a focus for Council in its next term.

Image: Mt St Thomas pedestrian refuge



Workforce Strategy 2018 - 2022

The Workforce Strategy 2018-2022 was developed to provide considered direction for the management of Council's workforce to deliver services and goals identified by the Delivery Program and Community Strategic Plan. It is a flexible approach that enables both management and employees to meet changing service delivery needs while focusing on optimising Council's ability to deliver outstanding customer and community services.

The development of the Workforce Strategy 2018-2022 was a collaborative undertaking where cross sections of the workforce from all levels came together in multiple workshops to identify Council's major challenges and key focus areas. These underpinned the development of the strategy including:

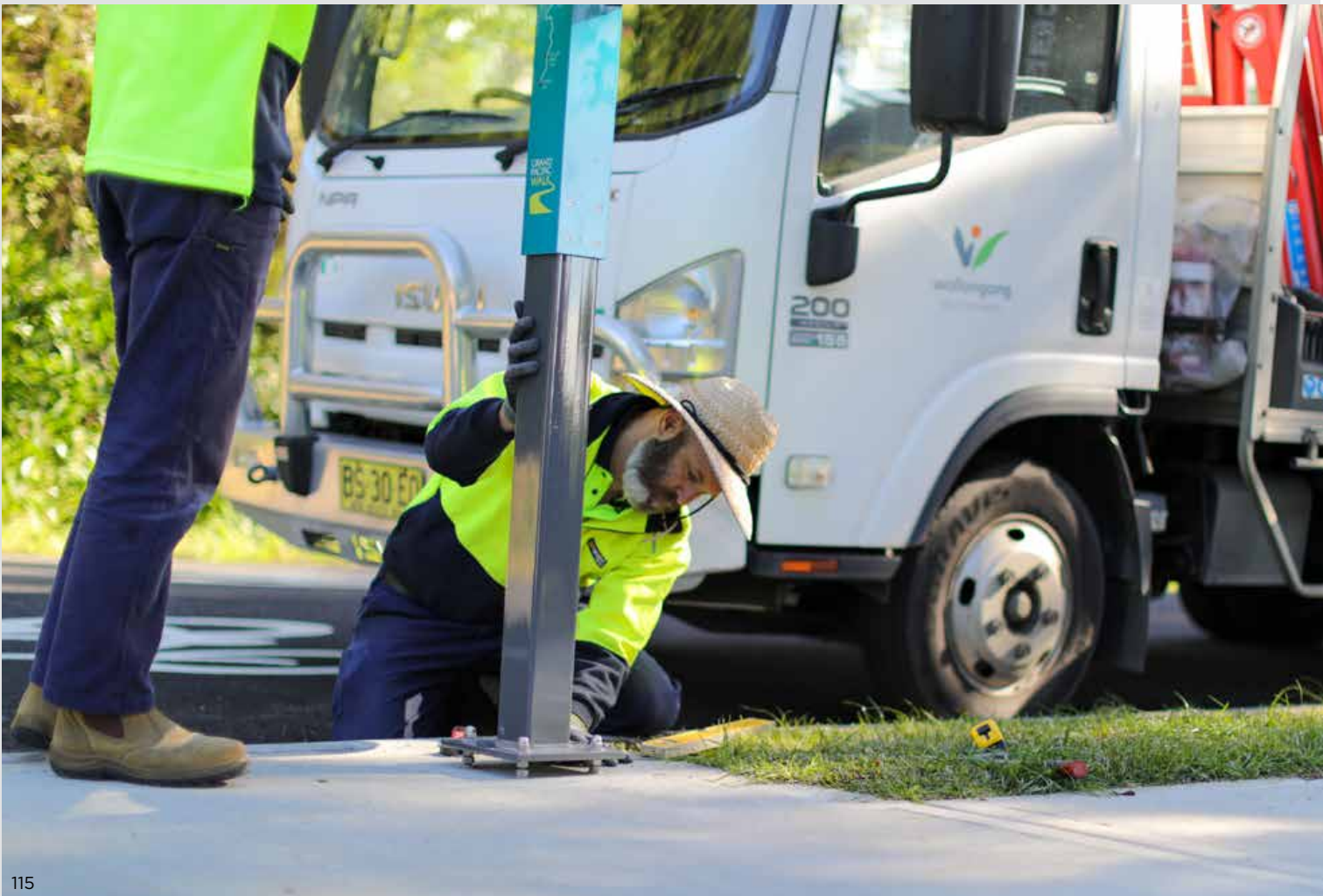
- Supporting our ageing workforce.
- Technology and automation.
- Diversity and inclusion.
- Flexibility and capability.
- Focus on safety.

The following progress report provides comparative analysis of workforce demographics along with an outline of the major achievement accomplished in the delivery of Council's Workforce Strategy.

Current Workforce Profile

Analysis of Council's workforce provides the ability to assess the composition and capacity of the workforce in line with Council's Purpose, Strategic Objectives and Values. Council continues to recognise the benefits of a workforce that is diverse, inclusive and feels a sense of belonging in addition to improved local representation, enhanced communication and greater understanding of the issues affecting local communities alongside a workforce that can address issues facing Council.

The Workforce Strategy 2018-2022 provides a comparative view of Council's progress against the focus areas outlined in this strategy.



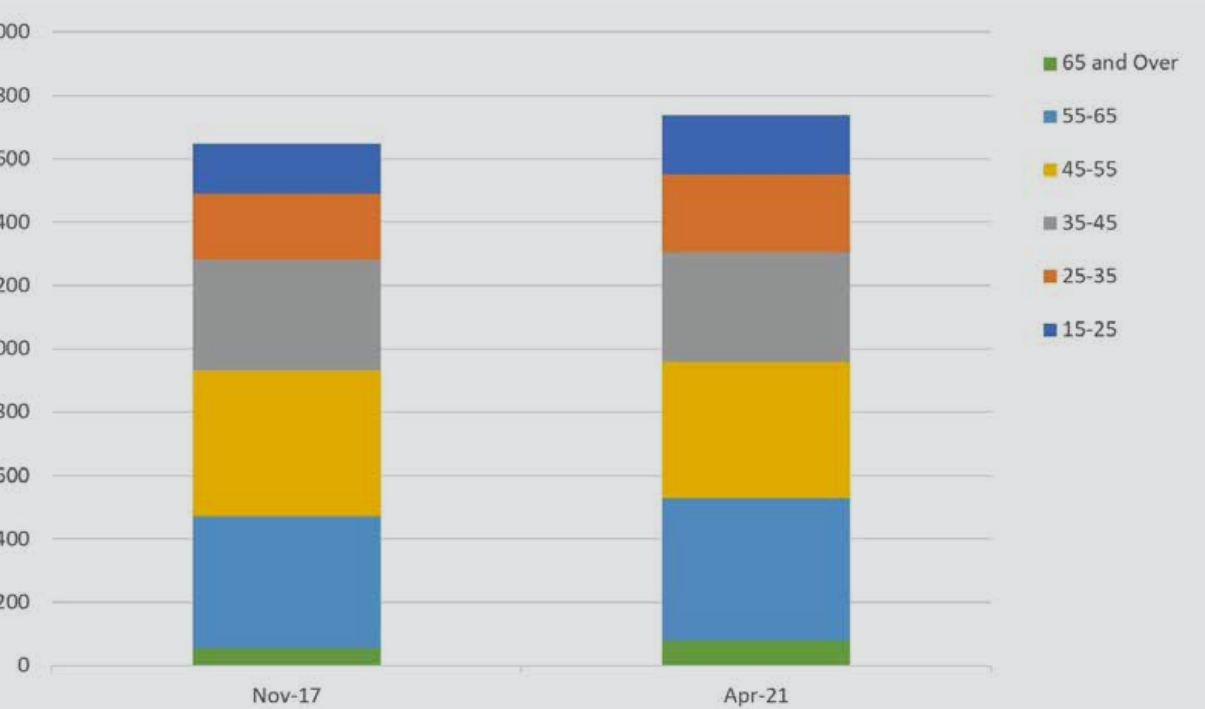
Headcount & FTE



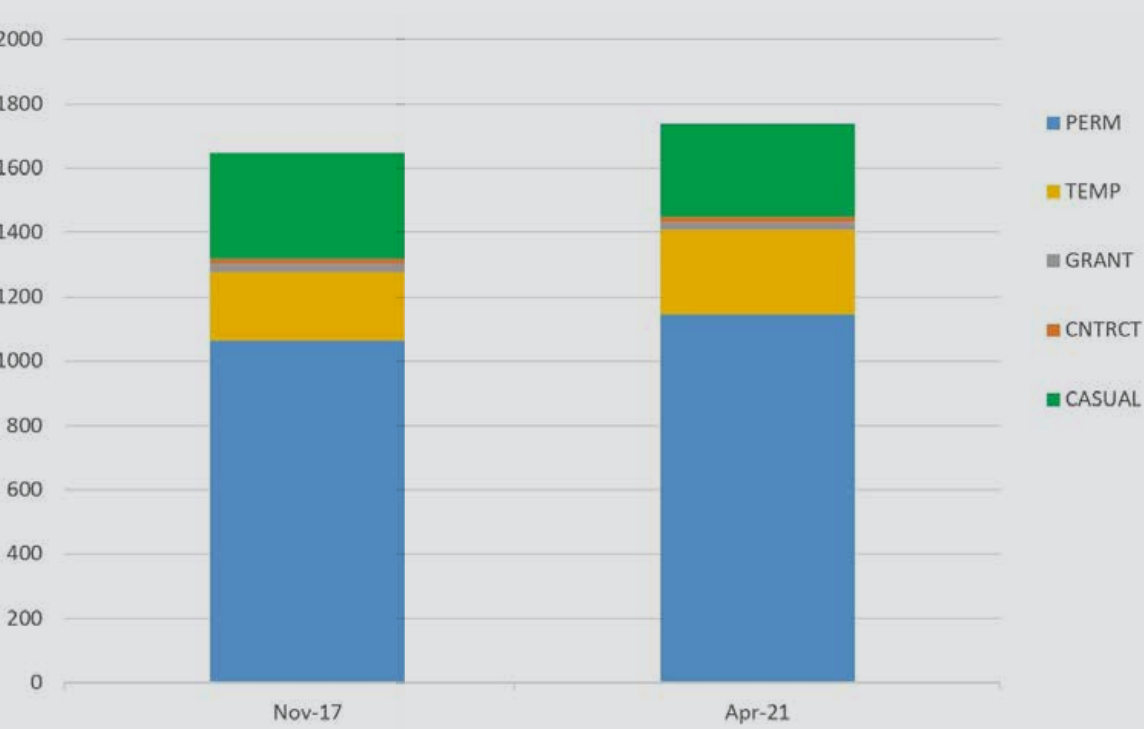
Gender



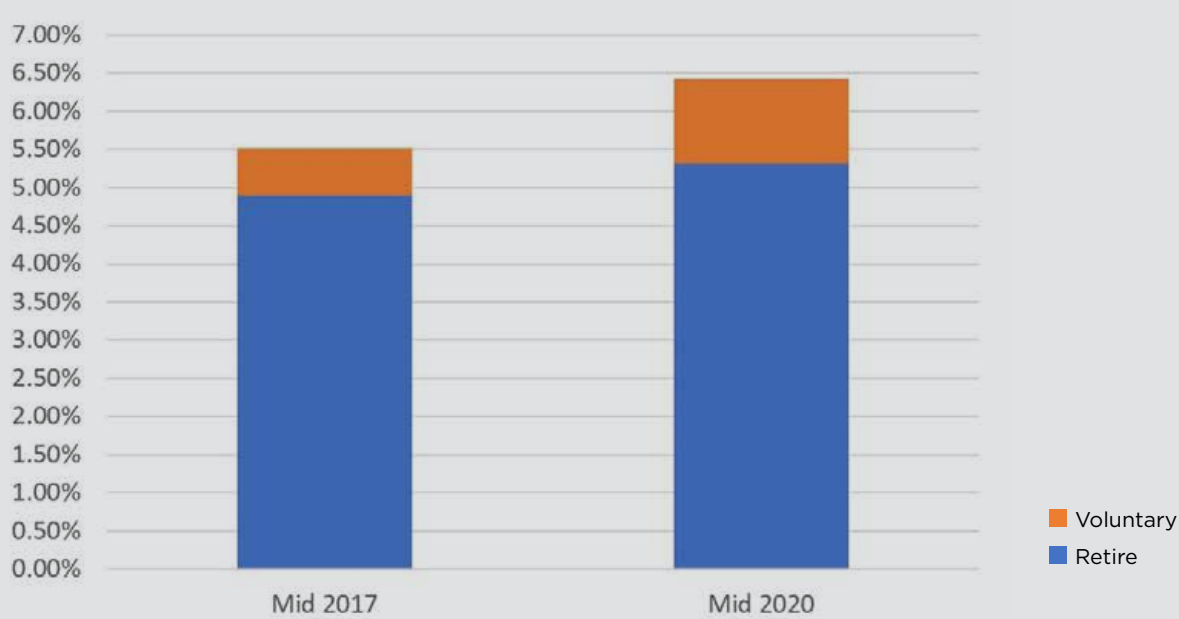
Age



Employment Status



Turnover



The Australian HR Institute’s most recent research report on Turnover and Retention in August 2018 identified a turnover rate of 18%. This is significantly higher when compared to Council’s turnover based on headcount.

Workforce Focus Areas

Focus Area 1: Our Workforce Is Inclusive & Engaged

Council's Community Strategic Plan, Delivery Program and Operational Plan are consistently referenced in Business Proposals, reports e.g. EMC reports; during planning days as part of project launches amongst other activities. Recently the Induction and Onboarding process was reviewed to spotlight how individual, team, unit, Divisional and Directorate outputs contribution to the Community Strategic Plan, Delivery Program and Operational Plan.

Council retired its Vision and Mission in 2018. In its place a new Purpose Statement or WHY was developed, a new organisational strategy called 'Leading the Way' or WHAT was established and the organisational Values or HOW were refreshed.

As part of the values refresh, 86% of the organisation participated in one or more of the 37 engagement opportunities including surveys, workshops, and feedback sessions. A working group also established a Behavioural Framework that outlines the personal behaviours and the organisational practices that reflect our values and the counterproductive behaviours that don't align with our organisational values. The whole of Council approach comprises a 3-phase deployment commencing with the introduction of the refreshed values in December 2018. Council continues to move through the phases as part of our embedding approach.

The values refresh enabled the development of a Behavioural Framework that outlines the personal behaviours and the organisational practices that reflect our values and the counterproductive behaviours that don't align with our organisational values. This framework has and will continue to shape the organisation's culture and embed expected behaviours across the organisation. As a result, there was a shift away from carrying out the OCI and/or other surveys as are means to develop a culture action plan with preferred behaviours across the organisation.

A number of surveys have been held during 2018-2022 including Organisational restructure (2018), Workforce Accommodation (2018), Values Refresh (2018), Learning and Capability (2018) and Staff Check-in (2020) that occurred during remote working through the COVID-19 period.

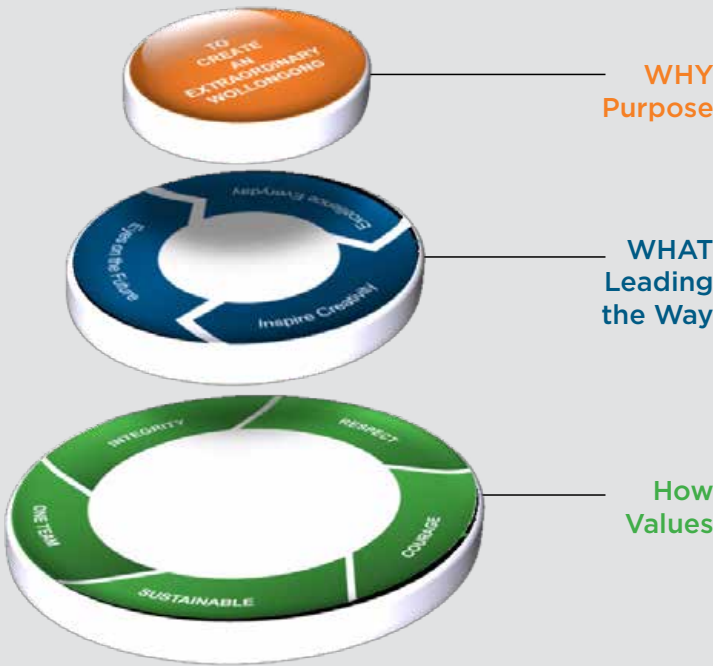
Process mapping of recruitment practices based on candidate and hiring panels, experience is taken on board with improvements trialled or implemented e.g. electronic first day induction. The introduction of an Enterprise Resource Planning solution called OneCouncil will streamline and improve the delivery recruitment services.

Organisational Development Business Partners consistently work with their Directorate, Divisional and Departmental leads to review and adjust workforce planning needs as part of their business as usual activities including recruitment and organisation or work design. A 4-year rolling workforce plan for our Cadets, Apprentices, Trainees and School Based Trainees (CATS) was developed in 2019 to support organisational wide entry level employment pathways. The below table outlines the entry level roles that have been created, recruited and placed during the term of the Workforce Strategy

	2018	2019	2020	2021	Total
Cadets	0	5	3	5	13
Apprentices	2	5	0	1	8
Trainees	12	13	11	8	44
SBATS	7	0	13	0	20

The organisational Tertiary Assistance Program (TAS) continues to be available across the organisation during the term of the strategy. During 2020, a second-round application process was introduced mid-year in addition to that at the start of the year.

Wollongong City Council's Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging (DIB) Policy was drafted, placed on public exhibition and endorsed by Council in August 2020. The DIB Policy is an over-arching approach that corrals other action plans including the DIAP, RAP, Ageing Plan, Working with Children. The policy and action plans interact in ways for the organisation to better reflect the diversity of our community through designated recruitment e.g. CATS process and positions.



Behavioural Framework

Courage - challenge the norm to be better

Organisational Practices	Personal Behaviours	Counterproductive Behaviours
Develop and support people to think innovatively about policy, services and people. Build systems that encourage innovation and accept occasional setbacks as a necessary part of progress. Minimise unnecessary red tape and be flexible in the approach to solving problems. Foster a culture that drives innovation to improve service and productivity. Support an environment of ideas generation. Create an environment that allows innovation to thrive while encouraging employees to feel comfortable taking calculated risks. Support that set-backs are a necessary part of progress. Create a safe environment to develop and trial new ideas. Invest time and resources into research, reflection and development. Demonstrate flexibility around timelines where possible. Value the professional options and ideas and from our employees. Empower employees to make decisions and take action. Involve employees in decision making. Design structures, systems and services to consume resources more efficiently over time. We work together to leave a lasting legacy for future generations. Take collective to improve productivity and maximise the impact on limited resources. Strive for continuous improvement to go beyond the minimum standard.	Suggest and support new ideas and better ways of doing things. Be open and implement new ideas and ways of working. Address challenges and improve processes with creative solutions. Utilise and acknowledge the breadth of ideas, experience and knowledge of colleagues. Learn from experience, including setbacks and build that learning into improved approaches. Challenge ineffectiveness and remove obstacles to enable yourself and others to succeed. Strive to create new and better ways of doing things. Embrace and support positive change. Keeping up to date with best practise/latest trends, changes and innovation in area of work. Remember that what I do plays a role in contributing to positive outcomes for the community. Actively seek out areas for professional development. Show resilience when encountering obstacles or setbacks. Speaking up and having a voice. Question and challenge inefficient ways of doing things.	Allowing structure to hinder success. Holding back from contributing for fear of being judged. Not being willing to try new or different ways of doing things. Resisting change when there is evidence of new or better ways of working. Letting 'rules and regulations' become an excuse for inaction. Accepting "this is how we've always done things". Shutting down colleagues' ideas without exploring them fully. Displaying an attitude of "it's not my job to be innovative or change things". Being complacent i.e. "we don't need to change, we already do a good job, I know how to build boats". Jumping straight to solutions without looking at the root cause of the problem. Disagreeing with or being resistant to change without understanding the full context/story. Relying on established solutions where more economical options may apply. Designing convenient short-term solutions to complex long-term problems. Being wasteful when using resources (e.g. time, money, physical resources). Being reckless and causing harm to the environment.

Behavioural Framework

OneTeam – together we deliver excellent service

Organisational Practices	Personal Behaviours	Counterproductive Behaviours
Build systems and processes that strengthen partnerships across the organisation and with the community. Create systems that enable open feedback and transparent decision making. Establish collaborative work practices. Promote, enable, inspire and encourage the celebration of our successes. Support a diverse range of opportunities available to staff, including a focus on career progression. Encourage and support training and development of staff. Provide opportunities for open and effective channels of communication. Continue to gather feedback from frontline employees in decision making processes. Listening and supporting our employees at all levels I the organisation. Create a culture that values all team members by recognising and encouraging individual strengths. Review and develop systems and processes that strengthen partnerships across the organisation and with the community. Be open to sharing resources including people during low periods of work. Promote and reward collaboration across the organisation.	Seek opportunities to work collaboratively with people from other teams to achieve the best possible outcomes. Ask questions to jointly define problems and identify solutions. Involve people in decisions that affect them. Obtain feedback in an aim to improve processes and systems. Work with colleagues to collaborate in pursuit of common goals and objectives. Give objective and clear feedback to others. Seek others' views to test own thinking. Help and support others in ways that value diversity and increase efficiency. Respond constructively and with diplomacy to differences in opinion with others. Involve customers and stakeholders in decision making as early as possible to obtain buy-in. Encourage team collaboration. Practice active listening. Value, recognise and encourage individual strengths and contributions. Commit to "Our Safety" program by looking out for our team members and caring for ourselves. Leverage and continue to build on networking opportunities. Celebrate our successes. Look for opportunities to develop yourself. Operate with empathy and understanding. Engage with others to achieve and enhance outcomes.	Allowing structure to hinder success. Working in isolation of others. Avoiding diversity of views and opinions. Working on assumptions. Using personal biases in decision making. Not sharing information ore resources with others. Not seeking the opinions or ideas of others. Making decisions affecting others without talking to them. Setting unrealistic timeframes or expectations. Allowing policies, procedures and past practice to hinder success. Talking about people behind their backs. Deliberately excluding people. The tendency to work in silos in the aim to protect or control one's own work. Refusal to work with others outside of one's own work group.

Behavioural Framework

Integrity - honest and reliable

Organisational Practices	Personal Behaviours	Counterproductive Behaviours
Support and promote a culture that encourages openness and transparency. Ensure that all decisions and actions can withstand scrutiny. Support a culture where we admit and learn from mistakes. Design quality and improvement systems which allow us to deliver on our objectives. Ensure that policy and procedures promote and allow for open and transparent partnerships. Promote an environment that values and respects speaking up when things aren't right or wrong. Invest in education and training around ethical behaviours and frameworks. Respond appropriately and consistently to behaviours that don't reflect value or integrity. Be clear and committed to the organisation's purpose of working for community not for ourselves/own interest.	Provide information and share available resources. Make decisions and take action based on the best available evidence and argument. Take responsibility, do what you say you will do. Having open and honest conversations. Provide clear expectations. Work towards the best outcome for the community and the organisation. Call out things that aren't right or when they go wrong. Follow through on your commitments. Take responsibility and be accountable for your decisions and actions. Ask for feedback and help. Do your best. Share knowledge to help others. Keep commitments and let others know when they cannot be met. Respond appropriately when the unexpected occurs. Use initiative to solve problems.	Inappropriately sharing or withholding information or resources. Ignoring or manipulating evidence to justify a pre-determined decision. Putting own interests above those of the organisation. Operating a blame culture. Working to a 'hidden agenda'. Favouring traditional methods over clear opportunities for improvement. Avoiding difficult conversations or tasks. Participating in real or perceived favouritism. Readily blames or surprises others. Not asking for feedback or help. Not reliably keeping commitments. Presenting others ideas/work as own. Doesn't trust others who are capable and trying to do the right thing. Undermining others. Claiming other people's work as your own.

Behavioural Framework

Respect – inclusive and considerate

Organisational Practices	Personal Behaviours	Counterproductive Behaviours
Design structures, systems and practices to bring out the best in employees. Encourage open dialogue to understand the diverse needs of our community. Educate employees about diversity's role in strengthening our workplace and the community. Promote respect for the impact of decisions on the lives of employees and the community. Promote a culture that is inclusive and values differences. Design processes and procedures that have a customer focus. Design systems and practices which recognise, acknowledge and reward good work. Design systems and practices to keep our customers informed. Create systems, processes, practices to increase workforce diversity that is representative of our community. Make it safe to call out unacceptable practices and behaviours. Provide education on Cultural understanding/awareness. Support a culture where it is safe to call out unacceptable and disrespectful practices and behaviours.	Identify what I need to perform at my best and communicate this with others. Appreciate openly that people have different backgrounds, beliefs, needs and capabilities. Listen considerately to understand the views of colleagues and members of the community. Have respect for the individuals around you and the different views they may have. Remain constructive and open when challenging and express a difference of opinion. Show care, kindness and consideration for others. Positively contribute to a fair and inclusive environment. Treat every person with respect and dignity. Actively seek feedback and action it. Be polite and considerate in all your communication. Keep interactions with others positive and professional. Smile, say hello to people. When interacting with others be in the moment/be present. Be tolerant of differences. Demonstrate positive workplace behaviours. Provide the best customer experience possible. Tailoring communication to suit the need of the audience. Manage your-self. Manage my health, wellbeing and rest so I can perform well all day, everyday. Thank others for their input, assistance and work. Showing up on time for meetings.	Not recognising or acknowledging the needs and contribution of others. Taking a "one size fits all" approach to working with others. Discrimination against others. Giving greater weighting to own opinions over others without clear justification. Not involving people because they may have a different viewpoint to you. Allowing disrespectful or discriminatory behaviour to take place. Making little or no effort to understand things from other people's point of view. Engaging in, spreading and encouraging gossip/innuendo. Using jargon and acronyms as a way to excluding or isolating others. Dismissing differing ideas before exploring them. Using email to communicate in situations where a one-on-one conversation is more suitable and/or CC inappropriately. Inattentiveness during interactions e.g. using your phone while others are presenting. Being late (chronically). Not letting your supervisor/others know when you are running late/not coming in. Not sharing or deliberately withholding information. Choosing to ignore or disrespecting feedback. Not managing health, wellbeing and rest to the point where it affects your performance.



Behavioural Framework

Sustainable – use our community’s resources responsibly

Organisational Practices	Personal Behaviours	Counterproductive Behaviours
<p>Prioritise the needs of the community in the design and delivery of services that provide value for money.</p> <p>Promote the use of business cases and cost-benefit analyses to ensure the most efficient use of resources.</p> <p>Consider the effects and impacts that decisions can have on cross divisional teams and the wider organisation to focus on the bigger picture.</p> <p>Promoting and encouraging inter and intra departmental sharing and collaboration to enable organisational cooperation and diversity of thought.</p> <p>Assessing our own internal resources and utilising what we have before proceeding to go external.</p> <p>Consider the total cost of projects against life cycle while assessing return on investment.</p> <p>Design systems and practices which allow for the utilisation of resources from different teams and departments to optimise results.</p> <p>Encourage the practice of benchmarking against external bodies and industry standards to remain competitive.</p> <p>Ensure that projects have standards and constraints to minimise waste and inefficient use of time.</p> <p>Continue to work on streamlining processes and systems to suit purpose.</p> <p>Taking advantage of resources that have capacity during quiet periods.</p> <p>Design structures, systems and services to consume resources more efficiently over time.</p> <p>We work together to leave a lasting legacy for future generations.</p>	<p>Make decisions about the use of resources in line with community's needs.</p> <p>Manage information, finances, people's time and assets responsibly.</p> <p>Leveraging existing networks and sharing resources to take advantage of new learning opportunities.</p> <p>Gather the necessary facts to ensure we are not duplicating work that has previously been created.</p> <p>Make sure that your work/projects are aligned to wider organisational goals.</p> <p>Being proactive and open-minded in decision making.</p> <p>Ensuring that alternatives are considered and compared before proceeding with a course of action.</p> <p>Seek out information to increase efficiency.</p> <p>Identify the long-term resource impacts of the programs and services you design.</p> <p>Focus on solutions which continue to produce outcomes for the community over the long term.</p> <p>Consider long term impacts of one's actions and decisions.</p> <p>Keeping all aspects on environment front of mind when making decisions.</p> <p>Develop and communicating ideas to support continuous improvement.</p> <p>Don't be afraid to innovate.</p> <p>Demonstrate individual responsibility towards the environment.</p> <p>Keep up to date with best practice and research.</p> <p>Follow sustainable procurement practices.</p> <p>Create and deliver value with the resources available.</p> <p>Think beyond the present to drive long-term value for the organisation and the community.</p>	<p>Investing time and money in work that is not producing value.</p> <p>Taking shortcuts not consistent with standards and processes in order to achieve a faster outcome or result.</p> <p>Engaging and participating in corrupt, deceitful and manipulative behaviour in the pursuit of personal/economic or organisational gain.</p> <p>Participating in behaviours that demonstrate a misuse of power through influence, intimidation, domination and or aggression.</p> <p>Being unaware of complacent behaviours and accepting one's own perceptions to be correct and viewing things around them as possibly non-changing.</p> <p>Relying on established solutions where more economical options may apply.</p> <p>Designing convenient short-term solutions to complex long-term problems.</p> <p>Being wasteful when using resources (e.g. time, money, physical resources).</p> <p>Being reckless and causing harm to the environment.</p>

Focus Area 2:
Our Workforce Is Enabled

A Learning and Development Strategy has been drafted and continues to be worked on.

The 2018–2020 IMT strategy was completed in 2020. The 2021–2024 is currently in draft for consideration by Council.

A working group has been established to define organisational skill needs and the appropriate development activities required to close those gaps. The introduction of an Enterprise Resource Planning solution or OneCouncil as well as the introduction of remote IT equipment – tablets and laptops has seen an uplift in Information Technology related skills. During 2020 at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic and working from home arrangements, a number of remote learning opportunities were made available to staff that also contributed to the uplift in IT skills. The virtual platform continues

to be utilised as a means for skill and knowledge development.

During the 2020-2021 financial year Council has continued to introduce and roll out technological equipment across various locations that deliver our 34 services to the community. These include the introduction of equipment including 1200 laptops and 238 tablets and the introduction of full mobility enabling staff to work remotely to support them in the deliver of services. Collectively, the roll out of this equipment facilitated remote access and workplace efficiencies and flexibility enabling all of our services to continue, even during the pandemic, in either a full or augmented capacity or because of NSW health orders to suspend and reactivate the services seamlessly while continuing to offer hybrid working approaches to work that continue to deliver on our operational plans.

Focus Area 3:
Our Workforce Is Responsive

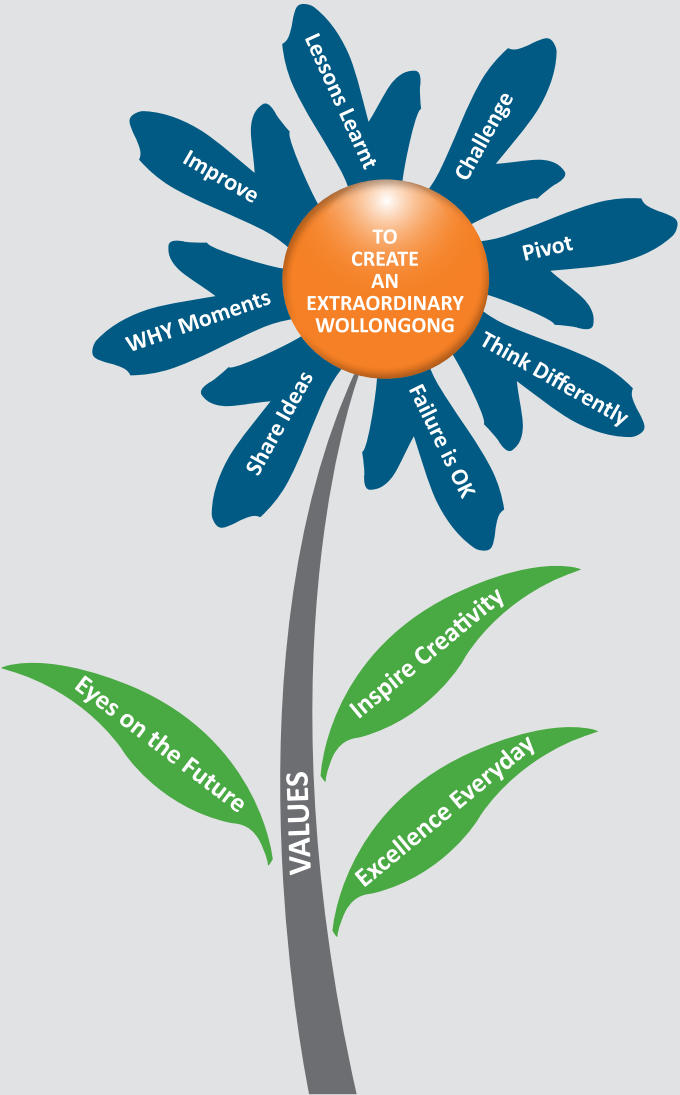
COVID-19 has accelerated Council’s progress in this area with remote platforms available. Approximately 170 tablets were rolled out to outdoor workers and over 500 additional laptops distributed to facilitate remote working arrangements. IMT function will continue to review and update as technology progresses to meet business needs.

Flexibility arrangements form part of the current Wollongong City Council Enterprise Agreement (EA) 2018-2021 which was negotiated and implemented during the term of this supporting document. Alongside the implementation of the EA, a number of employment policies were reviewed and updated. Negotiations for the next EA commenced in October 2020 where contemporary flexibility arrangements are discussed and included. As part of these renewal processes of the next EA, a number of employment policies will also be reviewed and updated.

A renewed approach to reward and recognition approach has been developed. Working groups continue to add detail that will finalise the approach which will commence from July 2021.

During 2019 and 2020, all employees 55 and over were invited to participate in Ageing Plan focus groups. A number of focus groups across each of the four Directorates were held to understand the challenges and opportunities and what matters to this group. Their feedback has been reviewed and thematised into categories that will be explored via a survey to capture the age group, especially those who chose not to join the focus groups. From here an action plan to work on the issues raised will be developed and incorporated into Divisional workforce plans and the organisation’s Diversity Inclusion and Belonging approach more broadly.

During this term, an Innovation Approach was introduced to Wollongong City Council. The approach was designed to be deliberately devoid of red tape and to facilitate networks of communication, adaptation and exploration, underpinned by our purpose, values and organisational strategy. Further, the approach consisted a detailed communication strategy and plan that ran for approximately six months, the development of an Innovation Hub on our intranet, the creation of a thinking model, numerous videos showcasing innovations from across Council and a dedicated resource to connect with.



**Focus Area 4:
Our Workforce Is Capable**

A Leadership Framework was developed and endorsed by Executive in June 2020. Work is currently underway on operationalising the framework in a meaningful way that is within the context of Wollongong City Council, Local Government and contemporary leadership thinking. Mentor Walks, a program for early female leaders, was launched in Wollongong in 2018. The walks are held each quarter and Wollongong City Council has supported the coaching program through the provision of coaches and participants as well as funding for its walk in September 2019. It is anticipated that Council will support another walk during 2021.

During the term of this strategy, a capability framework has been considered in a number of various contexts and approaches. This includes adopting the NSW Public Service Commission Capability Framework for the recruitment of Senior and Director level roles across the organisation. The introduction of an Enterprise Resource Planning solution called OneCouncil will result in a number of process improvements that may present the opportunity to consider a Capability Framework more generally at either the project, migration or improved business processes post go-live of OneCouncil.

In 2019 a workforce planning approach was developed and adopted. Since that time this approach has been utilised in the creation of the 4-year rolling workforce plan for our Cadets, Apprentices, Trainees and School Based Trainees (CATS) and across Divisions where Managers are working with relevant business partners to execute their plans in business as usual activities such as recruitment, organisational structure changes, capability building, retention approaches and improvements to business or service delivery. These workforce planning approaches have been made possible through the analysis of current positions and structures against current and future community and organisational needs to guide future workforce planning requirements overlaid by industry trends in roles and in-demand skills. While Council's workforce planning approach will go a long way to address these organisational and industry trends, other organisational initiatives such as the Reward and Recognition Strategy will also support and enable Council to attract and retain capabilities essential to meet the changing demands of our community.

**Focus Area 5:
Our Workforce Is Safe & Well**

The WHS Behaviour Program has achieved a number of significant safety objectives. This includes building safety behaviour capabilities within the organisation at all levels, establishing critical safety key performance indicators (KPIs) so as to ensure we are meeting organisational safety expectations and ensuring that risk management is at the core of our safety (behaviour) program. Council has developed its risk profile identifying 11 critical safety risks. The identification of these 11 critical safety risks will allow the organisation to realign its focus on identifying and implementing critical controls. As well as shifting our efforts to those high level risks and associated mitigating controls, Council has been undertaking a comprehensive review of its existing Work Health and Safety Management System (WHSMS) with the goal to simplify our safety systems, safety procedures, systems of work and related to operational safety tools. Our overall aim is create a work environment that is focused on caring for its employees, motivated by the employees and not solely driven by compliance.

Our Wellbeing program was launched in 2020 with a focus on three key aspects. Mental, Social and Physical wellbeing. A lot of emphasis went on COVID-19 during 2020; understanding and raising awareness about it, how to prevent infection and build internal health and immunity along with strategies on how to cope with raised fear and anxiety. The implementation of an Employee Care Plan tool has been successful in being able to assist many staff experiencing difficult situations in their lives to enable both employee and supervisor to work together to help our staff and keep disruption to work as minimal as possible.

On 18 December 2019, EMC endorsed a report regarding the review for the Workers Compensation and Injury Management functions to manage claims effectively, to develop a consolidated Claims and Injury Management Manual and establish education/training/induction for Claims and Injury Management staff. All actions recommended were completed by September 2019. Including, procedures updated, further templates created, workflow improved, a designated secure work area implemented, Injury Management Program updated and Return to Work Program updated.

The Council's performance is monitored by the State Insurance Regulatory Authority (SIRA) with regular data reporting and monthly meetings with Council's SIRA supervision manager. Council has been operating at top level of performance in delivery of services and compliance from 2017 to date. Annual external audit of Council's performance find Council operating at top tier level. A common measure of performance across the scheme and industry sector is costs as a percentage of wages. Council's is 1.8% which has been consistent since 2017 to date.

Information Management and Technology (IMT) Strategy 2018 - 2020

The IMT Strategy 2018-2020 was designed to clarify the purpose of information and technology in Wollongong City Council; stimulate activities in the short term that address issues hampering organisational performance and establish the core components of Information Management and Technology (IMT) required to deliver strategic objectives. The IMT Strategy 2018-2020 set the

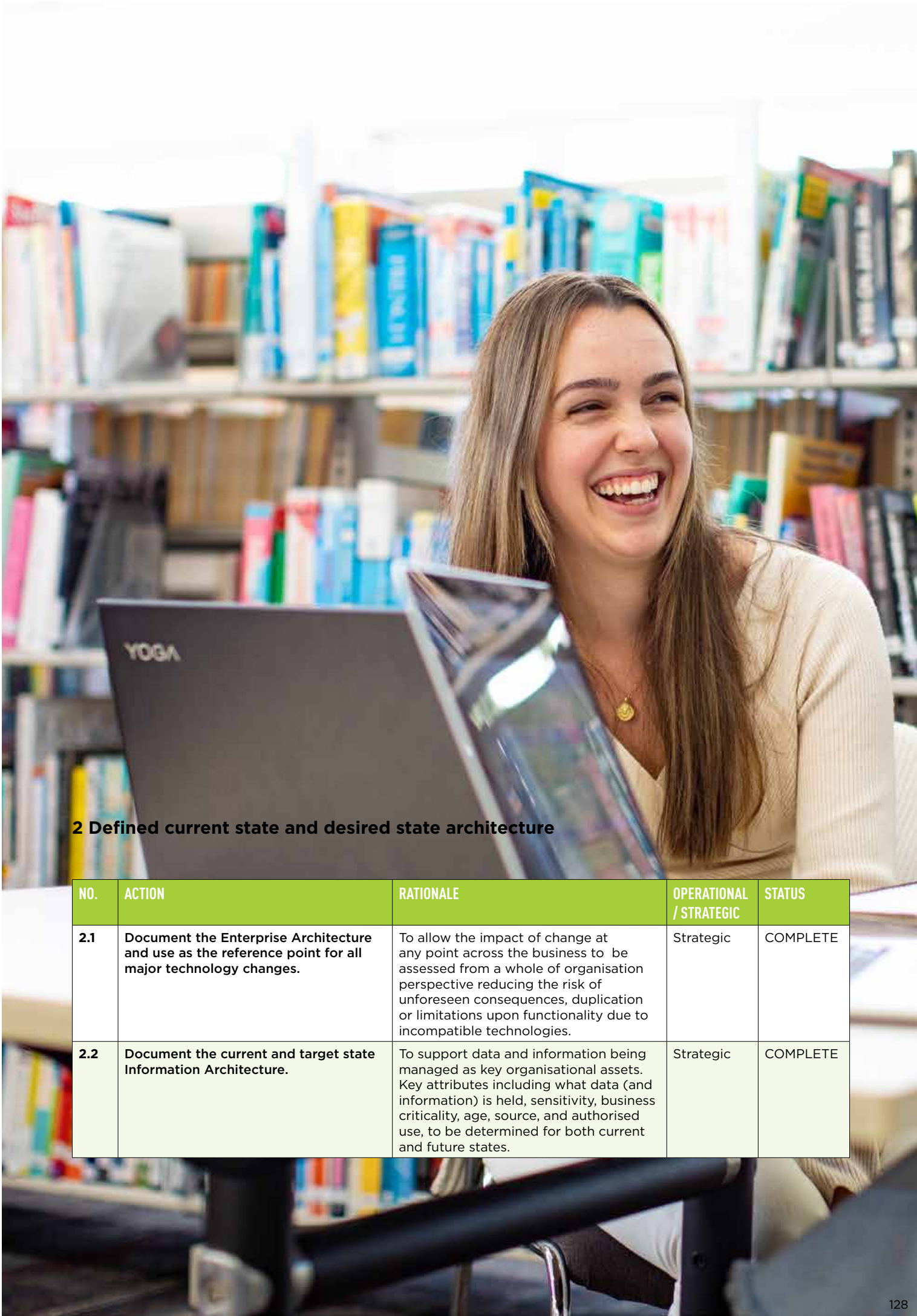
foundation for a contemporary IMT Division, with the capability to deliver against the organisational objectives as outlined in the Community Strategic Plan. The IMT Strategy 2018-2020 was completed at the end of June 2020. The completion of the actions identified saw a major uplift in the digital and information management capability of Council.

**Progress against the IMT Strategy
2018-2020**



1 Enhanced IMT Governance

NO.	ACTION	RATIONALE	OPERATIONAL / STRATEGIC	STATUS
1.1	Review the purpose, scope, membership, authority and responsibility of the Business Solutions Steering Committee (BSSC).	To ensure the BSSC has appropriate levels of authority and accountability for IMT related decision making; strategy development and deployment; and forward investment programming.	Strategic	COMPLETE
1.2	Establish a technology governance area to support the BSSC and ensure that approved IT-enabled programs of work and projects are appropriately governed.	To provide adequate support to the BSSC in fulfilling its Charter objectives.	Strategic	COMPLETE
1.3	Implement portfolio monitoring for the organisation's key systems and technology services by the BSSC with reporting to the EMC as required.	To ensure the technology environment is aligned to Council's future business direction. Priorities for investment to be planned based on emerging business need and/or relevant technology opportunities.	Strategic	COMPLETE
1.4	Review the key threats to achieving business technology objectives against the corporate risk register.	To ensure technology risk is assessed and managed in relation to business impact.	Strategic	COMPLETE
1.5	The EMC via the BSSC formally sets the risk appetite for technology enabled change that informs operational priorities, investment decisions, and implementation planning.	To ensure risk is actively managed, not avoided, with target risk states adjusted for particular business functions as appropriate.	Strategic	COMPLETE
1.6	Acknowledge and manage the strategic risk of customising systems in preference to changing existing business processes resulting in less effective IT systems, reduced productivity and increased cost for system implementation and ongoing support.	Where the costs of system customisation cannot be justified by the benefits of not changing existing business practices (including where legislative change may be required) consideration will be given to not proceeding with the investment.	Strategic	COMPLETE
1.7	Engage an external IT security and risk company to identify and propose controls for critical threats and risks.	To ensure the manner in which information and systems are acquired, stored, accessed and used is appropriate from	Strategic	COMPLETE



2 Defined current state and desired state architecture

NO.	ACTION	RATIONALE	OPERATIONAL / STRATEGIC	STATUS
2.1	Document the Enterprise Architecture and use as the reference point for all major technology changes.	To allow the impact of change at any point across the business to be assessed from a whole of organisation perspective reducing the risk of unforeseen consequences, duplication or limitations upon functionality due to incompatible technologies.	Strategic	COMPLETE
2.2	Document the current and target state Information Architecture.	To support data and information being managed as key organisational assets. Key attributes including what data (and information) is held, sensitivity, business criticality, age, source, and authorised use, to be determined for both current and future states.	Strategic	COMPLETE

3 Optimised IMT operating model

NO.	ACTION	RATIONALE	OPERATIONAL / STRATEGIC	STATUS
3.1	Endorse in principle adoption of a combined and more centralised/ generally federated operating model for information and technology.	To specify functions required to deliver the information management and technology strategic objectives, the recommended organisational structure, roles and responsibilities and sourcing options where appropriate.	Strategic	COMPLETE
3.2	Develop a revised operating model and organisational structure for the delivery of information management and technology services based on a more centralised management model.	To support development of an organisational change proposal relating to the operating model for IMT.	Strategic	COMPLETE
3.3	Implement a sourcing model that supplements internal resources with external services and resources to access specialised skills and develop internal capability.	To establish a sourcing model that articulates how and why resources will be engaged.	Strategic	COMPLETE
3.4	Define and plan to develop the core internal capabilities required to effectively plan and manage information and technology services into the future, including the ability to assess and commercially manage externally provided services.	To ensure our IMT staff have the capability to deliver solutions that meet the business requirements of the organisation.	Strategic	COMPLETE
3.5	Implement a targeted program to build core capabilities and common base management practices across all information and technology areas.	To support uplift of Council's technology environment and to maintain the effectiveness of ongoing services to business areas, core disciplines will be established across all people and teams supporting business technology.	Operational	COMPLETE
3.6	Implement regular information sessions across information and technology support teams.	To share updates on projects underway, operational issues and requests for change. To identify opportunities to implement improvements to individual systems and the service models to support them. To identify and assist resolution of information related issues and risks through application management, information management and user support actions.	Operational	COMPLETE
3.7	Implement customer engagement and operational governance arrangements for information and technology support areas.	These are essential elements of modern IT service delivery in the absence of which the current technology suite has evolved in a disparate fashion with significant gaps between business needs and the functionality provided.	Operational	COMPLETE

4 Effective systems and IT enabled business functions

NO.	ACTION	RATIONALE	OPERATIONAL / STRATEGIC	STATUS
4.1	Review the strategic requirements for existing platforms and regularly update them taking into account whole-of-organisation benefits and key stakeholder perspectives.	Specific investment should be made following confirmation of the business need through consultation with business owners and development of business cases where appropriate. Priorities to be set for resolving productivity or performance issues with key operational systems and options developed to do so comprising system changes and/or business process changes.	Strategic	COMPLETE
4.2	Establish business: IT engagement forums that refine business strategy, set technology priorities and identify new opportunities enabled by maturing technology market offerings.	The most effective use of technology arises when technology teams understand current and emerging business strategies, and business owners and subject matter experts are aware of relevant emerging technology opportunities and their feasibility for the organisation.	Strategic	COMPLETE
4.3	Prioritise immediate business issues and potential remedies.	To address immediate, high priority business issues and establish quick wins.	Operational	COMPLETE
4.4	Build organisational capacity for change, defined business change objectives for system changes, and hold sponsoring managers accountable for delivering them.	Internal systems are generally highly customised incurring higher development and ongoing upgrade costs than may be justifiable against the resultant benefits.	Operational	COMPLETE
4.5	Identify minor upgrade or enhancement possibilities.	To identify opportunities in the existing corporate application suite to organise productivity and employee satisfaction gains through minor enhancements and changes, potentially extending the time period before a major upgrade or replacement is required.	Operational	COMPLETE
4.6	Relaunch Yammer with a clear business purpose and EMC sponsorship to address prioritised organisational engagement issues.	Yammer is a highly effective engagement and change management tool, with the capacity to achieve organisation wide value by addressing some of the change management issues related to systems change.	Operational	COMPLETE
4.7	Review incident tickets to identify process or system problems that can be fixed quickly.	Implementing problem management will allow the IMT team to become more proactive in identifying and addressing emerging issues.	Operational	COMPLETE

The IMT Strategy 2021 - 2024

The COVID-19 pandemic provided Council, like many other organisations, the impetus to fast track the implementation of flexible work practices. Working from home became the norm for many staff. The Mobility Strategy, which was approved in 2019, supported the roll out of tools and solutions while ensuring our sensitive information was maintained securely.

In May 2020, with most of the strategic actions in the IMT Strategy 2018-2020 materially complete, work was initiated to develop an Enterprise Architecture. The purpose of the Enterprise Architecture was to ensure a strong alignment between the delivery of information management and technology to the future business imperatives of Council and the community. The architectural roadmap that was produced as part of the Enterprise Architecture prioritised investment relative to the entire organisation and formed the foundation of the IMT Strategy 2021-2024.

The draft IMT Strategy 2021-2024 is built around six strategic priorities:

Customer Value – this strategic priority focuses on providing clarity on our customer and rate payer aspirations. By delivering the enabling technology and information we will be able to support new and improved services, establishing new business capabilities whose sole focus is customer service, embedding customer centricity and user experience techniques. This priority also focuses on establishing a culture where IMT and users work together to plan better services building on our value of #One Team. Implementing minor upgrade and enhancement opportunities that address immediate needs and build organisational capability for change

Smart City Optimisation – this strategic priority is focused on the adoption of smart city technologies to optimise business outcomes. By adopting the Internet of Things, we will be putting technology and data to work to inform business decisions and deliver organisational strategy. We will be smart enhancing our navigation of uncertainty and delivering better business outcomes.

Improved Productivity – this strategic priority is focused on reducing inefficiencies and duplication, giving our people the right information and technology solutions to support their work. By using a decoupled rather than the current tight point to point applications’ integrations our future approach to integration, will reduce complexity and improving organisational flexibility and agility. The aim is to establish IMT solutions that are shared, integrated, flexible and scalable which are available anywhere, at any time on any device. Finally, this focus area looks to improve project management and project delivery.

Insightful Information – this strategic priority is focused on reviewing and developing the necessary capabilities to make the best use of our information and knowledge. Gaining insights into improvement opportunities and our customer and rate payer needs and visualising business intelligence to support informed decision making.

Secure Information – this strategic priority is focused on engendering confidence that the sensitive information stored by Council is secure against cyber threat and inappropriate use. It ensures that IMT solutions and services are resilient to threats and reliable and robust to support service delivery by designing, building and operating our solutions for information security in the first instance. We will also implement a program focused on behavioural change to facilitate and improve organisational cyber security awareness.

Proactive Planning and Governance – this strategic priority is focused on developing the guiding frameworks and knowledge to better understand, plan for and deliver on the business aspirations of Wollongong City Council. By understanding Council’s risk appetite, we will be able to ensure that IMT planning and implementation is appropriate. Moreover, by lifting Enterprise Architecture capability particularly in the Service Partner team we will be able to assess the impact of change at any point across the business from a whole of organisation perspective reducing the risk of unforeseen consequences, duplication, or limitations on functionality due to incompatible technologies. Implementing an application portfolio management strategy, will help foster alignment and collaboration between IMT and consuming parts of the business

The IMT Strategy 2021-2024 – builds on the previous strategy and is focused on reducing inefficiencies and duplication, giving our people the right information and technology solutions to support their work and optimise Council’s current processes.

