

# ANNUAL REPORT 2020–2021



WILLOUGHBY  
CITY COUNCIL

City of Diversity

# Acknowledgement of Country

We wish to acknowledge the traditional inhabitants of the land on which we stand, the Aboriginal People, their spirits and ancestors. We acknowledge the vital contribution that indigenous people and cultures have made and still make to the nation that we share, Australia.

Willoughby City Councillors voted to endorse the [Uluru Statement From the Heart](#).

# Contents

## INTRODUCTION

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Our Vision .....                                    | 2 |
| About this Report .....                             | 3 |
| How we plan and report .....                        | 3 |
| Our integrated planning and reporting framework ... | 4 |

## YEAR IN REVIEW

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Our Key Achievements .....             | 7  |
| Message from the Mayor .....           | 9  |
| Chief Executive Officer's Report ..... | 10 |
| Willoughby City in Profile .....       | 12 |
| Financial Report .....                 | 13 |
| Major Projects .....                   | 15 |

## OUR PERFORMANCE

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Delivering throughout the covid-19 pandemic .....              | 18 |
| Our Progress against the Operational Plan 2019/20 ...          | 19 |
| Outcome 1: <b>A City that is green</b> .....                   | 20 |
| Outcome 2: <b>A City that is connected and inclusive</b> ...   | 26 |
| Outcome 3: <b>A City that is liveable</b> .....                | 34 |
| Outcome 4: <b>A City that is prosperous and vibrant</b> ...    | 40 |
| Outcome 5: <b>A City that is effective and accountable</b> ... | 44 |

## CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

|                            |    |
|----------------------------|----|
| Our Councillors .....      | 51 |
| Decision making .....      | 52 |
| Our Staff .....            | 53 |
| Corporate Governance ..... | 57 |

## OTHER STATUTORY INFORMATION

## APPENDIX

1. Financial Statements
2. End of Term Report 2017-21



# INTRODUCTION

# Our vision

## **WILLOUGHBY IS A CITY OF DIVERSITY: DIVERSE LANDSCAPES, PEOPLE AND BUSINESSES.**

Our people are from across the world as reflected in the diversity of their languages and beliefs. They come together from all walks of life adding vibrancy to our community and creating rich social connections.

Food and music are signatures of our hubs. You can experience fine dining and cheap eats in our laneways at all hours and hear the music of our community and the languages of people who make our City home. You can have fun at street activities and events or enjoy a comedian or symphony concert at The Concourse. Visitors respond to our offering as Willoughby's reputation as a destination grows.

We recognise the past while creating new liveable places, strong communities and homes for the future. The sites and contributions of our traditional Indigenous inhabitants are recognised and preserved along with more recent heritage such as the Walter Burley Griffin cottages, The Castle and The Incinerator. Our skyline's silhouette dramatically outlines the transition from modern apartment towers to medium density apartments and houses that span a variety of eras and designs.

Our landscape is as diverse as our people and urban places. Significant native bushland, Middle Harbour estuary and the Lane Cove River invite you to explore and understand more. Our environment is important to us and we are leaders in creating an aware community focused on sustainable living that reduces our impact on the world.

It is easy to get around our City. Public transport options, connected walkways and cycle paths help minimise the impact of cars on our roads and provide us with healthier choices. The connections between the CBD and our villages are strong, creating liveable spaces which support our needs and serve as meeting places. Digital connections and infrastructure support a smart city that provides real-time information to people seeking to navigate our City and access its services.

Our vibrant economy continues to grow and diversify. The success of global corporations and significant retailers based in our CBD, and of the local businesses that support our villages and neighbourhoods, serves to attract new industries, employers and talent to our City. Many choose to live and work here, able to meet all their needs within a short walk.

Our community has far-sighted leaders. They anticipate and meet community and environmental needs. Our leaders work collaboratively to deliver better services and infrastructure, to improve amenities and a sense of place. They actively involve citizens in decisions that affect their lives.

They are recognised as ethical, fair and accountable. Our leaders ensure the City has a vibrant future and is a source of identity and pride.

### **Willoughby: City of Diversity**



# About this report

Our annual report summarises the performance of Willoughby City Council for 2020/21 against the outcomes in the [Our Future Willoughby 2028](#) community strategic plan and the activities in the [Operational Plan 2020/21](#).

It details the financial results for the past year and looks to the year ahead. The report provides open, accurate and transparent information for all our stakeholders.

# How we plan and report

## OUR COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

*Our Future Willoughby 2028* is our community strategic plan (The Plan). This long-term plan for Willoughby sets our direction for the next 10 years.

It guides our planning and helps us achieve the long-term outcomes our residents want for the local area. In areas and topics where we don't have control over outcomes, we work with other levels of government and key stakeholders to influence policy, planning, infrastructure and service delivery.

We prepared the plan in collaboration with and on behalf of our residents and other stakeholders in 2018/19. It was adopted by Council in June 2018. The Plan will be reviewed at the end of the current term of Council in 2021/22.

The plan forms the basis for our [Delivery Program 2017-2022](#) and [Operational Plan 2020/21](#).

## OUR DELIVERY PROGRAM 2017-2022 AND OPERATIONAL PLAN 2020-2021

The four-year *Delivery Program 2017-2022* outlines the services and projects we will provide in the current council term and how these will be funded.

Our *Delivery Program 2017-2022*'s focus is to:

- Deliver great urban design and landscaping
- Improve transport, traffic and parking
- Promote affordable housing
- Stimulate economic development
- Reduce our footprint
- Optimise our facilities

- Improve council business and governance
- Improve the Communities resilience to shocks and stresses

The annual *Operational Plan 2020/21* supports the *Delivery Program 2017-2022*. It details the activities we undertook from 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021. It is reported on every six months and reviewed each year.

This year (2020/21) was the fourth and final year of the *Delivery Program 2017-2022*. A new Plan will be developed with the next elected Council.

## OUR ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21

We set annual targets and monitor progress towards achieving these longer-term targets. Every six months, we report on the key activities that contribute to achieving our targets. Our performance is published in reports to Council and are available on the website for the community to view.

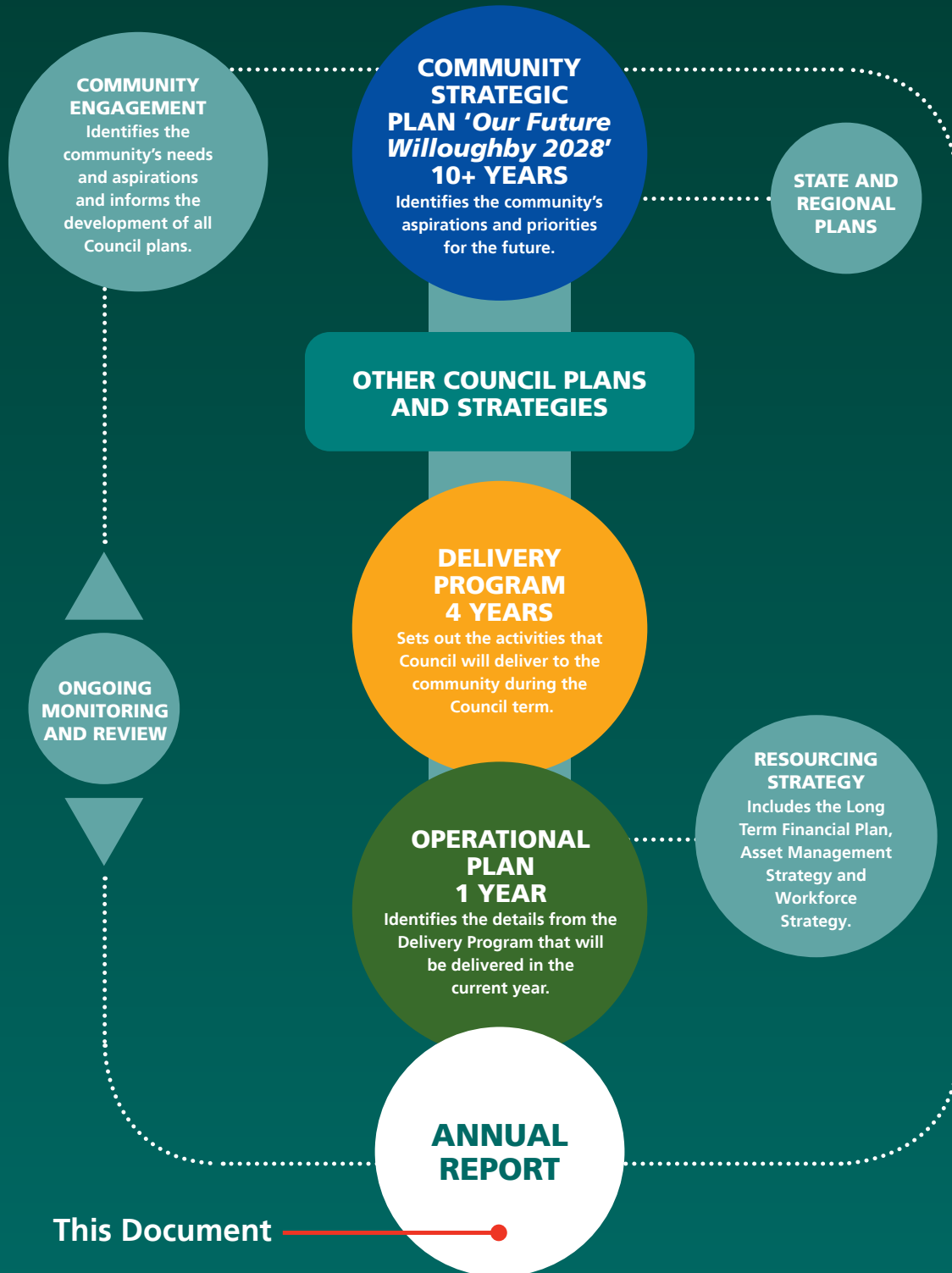
This annual report summarises the performance of Willoughby City Council for 2020/21 against the directions in *Our Future Willoughby 2028* and the services and projects in the *Operational Plan 2020/21*. It identifies our major projects and activities for the past year.

## WHERE TO FIND THE DOCUMENTS

You can find current and historical documents and reports on our website [www.willoughby.nsw.gov.au](http://www.willoughby.nsw.gov.au)



# INTEGRATED PLANNING AND REPORTING FRAMEWORK









YEAR IN REVIEW

# Our key achievements

## OUTCOME 1: A CITY THAT IS GREEN

- Upgraded Willoughby's walking track network, including widening tracks to support increased community use during the pandemic.
- Developed the *Urban Bushland Plan of Management* and updated the *Griffin Reserves Plan of Management*.
- Installed four new biofiltration gardens at The Willis Recreation and Sports Centre, Lanceley Place, Artarmon and Artarmon town centre, to reduce pollutants entering the waterways.
- Installed rainwater harvesting and water reuse systems at Bales Park, Warners Park and Artarmon Community Gardens.
- Implemented *Our Green City Plan 2028* to address climate change and the environment and reported progress in our State of the Environment report, in Outcome 1 of this Annual Report.
- Surveyed 600 residents about shocks and stresses and developed the *Draft Resilient Willoughby Strategy and Action Plan*.

## OUTCOME 2: A CITY THAT IS CONNECTED AND INCLUSIVE

- Trialled a new cultural program, Chatswood Culture Bites, supporting economic recovery, developing audiences and support emerging artists.
- Willoughby Symphony Orchestra was a finalist in the 2020 APRA AMCOS Art Award.
- Introduced temporary 'click and collect' service in response to the pandemic and increased community use of our digital library services.
- Maintained essential services during the pandemic to support the vulnerable in our community such as Meals on Wheels, linen services and resident check-in phone calls.
- Continued to implement the *Disability Inclusion Action Plan* to create an inclusive and accessible City, including upgrading 60 bus stops to meet Australian Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport.
- Developed the *Public Art Policy*, supporting temporary and permanent public art for the City.
- Streamlined our *Grants and Awards for the Community* program including the introduction of business grants and awards.
- Completed a shared pedestrian and bicycle path in Artarmon linking Broadcast Way with Herbert St in partnership with the NSW Government.
- Detailed designs produced for a 4km shared pedestrian and bicycle path on Pacific Highway between Mowbray Rd, Chatswood and Herbert St, St Leonards.
- Resurfaced 49,500m<sup>2</sup> roads under the NSW Government's Regional Roads REPAIR program.
- Partnered with University of NSW and iMove Australia to develop smarter parking options in the CBD.
- Constructed a wombat crossing in North Willoughby under a grant from the Australian Government.

## OUTCOME 3: A CITY THAT IS LIVEABLE

- Developed the *Local Environment Plan and Development Control Plan* to ensure a high standard of development in Willoughby.
- Finalised the *Industrial Lands Strategy* for economic vitality and needs of the community.
- Finalised the *Willoughby Integrated Transport Strategy 2036* providing a framework for transport planning.
- Maintained essential services during the pandemic including waste management, street cleansing and maintenance of parks, ovals and bush reserves.
- Reopened services and events in a COVID safe way as Public Health Orders eased restrictions on public gatherings.
- Prepared a Public Domain Technical Manual to support the *Chatswood CBD Planning and Urban Design Strategy to 2036*.

- Finalised the *Haven Amphitheatre Plan of Management and Landscape Plans*.
- Transformed the former Northbridge Bowling Club into the Warner's Park Community Centre.
- Progressed planning and design for stage two of the Gore Hill Indoor Sports Centre.
- Commenced cladding upgrade at The Concourse.
- Developed concept plans for the pool hall at Willoughby Leisure Centre.
- Finalised the *Northbridge Local Centre Public Domain Plan*.
- Finalised the *Affordable Housing Strategy*, prioritising affordable housing for key and essential workers.

## OUTCOME 4: A CITY THAT IS PROSPEROUS AND VIBRANT

- Developed designs for the Chatswood Laneways of Spring Place, Post Office Lane and Charlotte Lane and secured funding under the Australian Government's Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program Phase Two.
- Upgraded local centre streetscapes at Wilkes Avenue and Elizabeth Street in Artarmon and Woonona and Sailor's Bay Roads in Northbridge. Developed designs for Hampden Rd Streetscape.
- Developed and implemented two Business Support Packages and an Economic Recovery Plan to support local businesses to recover from the initial impacts of COVID-19.
- Introduced Council led Business Forum to link Council to the business community.
- Created the Economic Data Dashboard to provide continually updated data from a variety of sources providing the basis for informed decision making.
- Developed the Online Business Toolkit to assist business development, formation and growth.
- Expanded the Grants for the Community to include Grants for Business providing small grants to stimulate business innovation and project development.
- Initiated the Support Local campaign, Council showed leadership and now pays local business invoices within 7 days.
- Approved the creation of the Willoughby Business Awards to highlight excellence in the local business community.

## OUTCOME 5: A CITY THAT IS EFFECTIVE AND ACCOUNTABLE

- Provided \$3.6 million in COVID relief to businesses, community and sporting groups.
- Developed and implemented a *Community Recovery Plan* to support our community to recover from the impacts of COVID-19.
- Informed and engaged our community throughout the pandemic with health advice from government. Implemented COVID-Safe summer plans for open spaces and re-adapted our services, events and facilities to meet rapidly changing public health orders.
- Engaged with tens of thousands of people through online community consultations, webinars, our website, social media, events, workshops, presentations and Council meetings.
- Implemented of stage 2 of corporate IT systems upgrade including Finance, HR, procurement and a single asset register (TechOne) incorporating fleet and plant, infrastructure, office and other assets.
- Completed Community Perception Survey and developed an action plan in response to community feedback.
- Continued rollout of new websites for Willoughby Leisure Centre and Zenith Theatre.
- Achieved a \$1.2 million surplus for the financial year and met nine out of ten benchmarks for financial performance and infrastructure management.

# Message from the Mayor

This year I am humbled by the resilience of our community in dealing with the ongoing impacts of COVID-19. While it has been a difficult and challenging year for all, it has been a privilege to serve you through these times.

As a council we focused on supporting the community and continuing to deliver services and projects. Remaining connected became more important than ever. Council meetings, community information seminars, community engagement and many events and activities took place digitally. We maintained our face-to-face services for our vulnerable citizens through services including Meals on Wheels and Out and About with Willoughby.

We provided relief to the struggling business community through two business support packages injecting \$3.6 million into the local economy followed by a third package in the 2021/22 financial year adding an additional \$168,000 per month. Our *Economic Recovery Plan* guided recovery, I hosted a business forum and we instigated a call to arms to 'support local'.

One of the things that people value most about living in Willoughby is its open spaces. We continued to upgrade parks and playgrounds including Denawen Park, Castle Cove Park, Bales Park, Chatswood Park, Willoughby Park, Don Wilson playground, Naremburn and Artarmon parklands.

We upgraded our community centres and delivered the new Warner's Park Community Centre. We progressed the Artarmon Parklands Community Pavilion project and we look forward to construction of this new multi-purpose facility.

A key component of our Community Recovery Plan was to combat social isolation by presenting COVID safe events. Our Emerge Festival called on people to discover the hidden gems in their own neighbourhoods and support local. For the Year of the Ox festival, celebrating our rich diversity, we partnered with Lifeline to raise awareness of mental health issues. Combined with providing online events, the Community Recovery Plan provided essential connections with services to assist across a range of issues.

I'm proud that we have continued to support and deliver arts and culture on the north shore. After several months' hiatus, the Willoughby Symphony Orchestra returned to the stage to present a series of COVID safe concerts which were also shared online.

We piloted Culture Bites, a changing program of innovative cultural activities in Chatswood CBD. The program engaged new audiences and stimulated economic recovery. We look forward to its return in 2022.

Despite the pandemic, we've progressed major projects including a new shared bicycle and walking path connecting the Pacific Highway with Artarmon and traffic calming in Artarmon. We commenced a program to activate Chatswood's laneways, commenced designs for housing for essential workers in Northbridge and concept plans for the new pool hall at Willoughby Leisure Centre. We continued to make headway with Stage 2 of the Gore Hill Indoor Sports Centre.

Following extensive community consultation, we reviewed Willoughby City's Local Environment and Development Control Plans to shape future development and what our City will look like in years to come. These will go on public exhibition later this year.

Our Community Strategic Plan outlines the community's priorities for Willoughby and I look forward to being part of its review to determine priorities for the next 10 years.

Despite the impact of COVID-19, I'm proud that we have adapted to a rapidly changing environment to present a well-balanced budget and remain in a strong position.

It has been an honour to lead this term of Council. I present to you the annual report on behalf of my fellow Councillors.

**Gail Giles-Gidney**  
**Mayor, Willoughby City Council**

# Chief Executive Officer's report

COVID-19 became a major part of our lives in early 2020 with on-going long term effects. Our staff have been flexible and risen to the challenges. This enabled Council to continue to serve its civic leadership role, supporting the community, driving economic recovery and equipping our residents to be more prepared and resilient.

Based upon available research, mental health, social isolation, health and wellbeing, and impacts on people under 35 were identified as the key priority areas for Council's Community Recovery Plan. In response, we continued services to the vulnerable, created COVID safe opportunities for people to connect, presented digital events and provided mentoring for young people.

Our Economic Recovery Plan addressed immediate issues to ensure the longer-term vibrancy and viability of businesses in the area. We set up a business forum, subsidised fees and provided guidance and resources including our new economic dashboard.

The impacts of the pandemic on Council were substantial, resulting in a \$9 million impact on revenue. Despite starting the year with a \$3.1 million budget deficit, which had grown to a \$6.5 million deficit by the end of quarter one, we worked hard to find a balance between costs, income and delivering for the community to present a well-balanced budget, setting us up in a strong position for the year ahead. Our Long Term Financial Plan demonstrates a sound financial position and clear road map for the next 10 years.

Our biennial Community Perception Survey demonstrated a very high level of satisfaction with 96% saying they were 'very satisfied', 'satisfied' or 'somewhat satisfied'. It is encouraging to learn that even in the midst of a pandemic, our community overwhelmingly rates its quality of life as 'good' or 'excellent'.

For the first time, our Community Perception Survey asked questions about resilience, which told us that people look to Council for leadership and communication in times of crisis. We responded to this by taking a leadership position and providing frequent and timely communication throughout the COVID-19 crisis. Our Resilient Willoughby Strategy outlines the actions we will take to help minimise impacts from acute events such as chronic smoke pollution, storm events, heatwaves, drought and pandemic.

We made technological advancements to improve the way we communicate with our customers, launching three new websites and developing a further three. We completed the first phase of a three year project to consolidate our corporate systems into a single, integrated system, improving the efficiency of our processes and allowing us to better serve our customers. Our customer service request dashboard improves customer experience. We worked hard to better equip our staff with updated hardware and software so they can be more nimble and versatile, responding to the needs of the community from a range of working locations.

Despite the disruption of the pandemic, we continued to deliver projects and capital works including environmental, sports, pavement, stormwater and drainage projects. We look forward to delivering \$38.8 million in projects in the coming year.

As we come to the end of a term of Council, support will be provided to run the election process in December 2021 together with the post-election induction of the new Council.

We'll look to the future by reviewing our Community Strategic Plan, taking into account the state of our economy and community and the shocks and stresses that are part of our lives, to set strategic goals for the next ten years.

Thank you to my dedicated staff and our leadership team who continue to live our aspirations of lead, learn, care, share and deliver on a daily basis. It is their commitment that has made our many achievements possible.

**Debra Just**  
Chief Executive Officer, Willoughby City Council

# WILLOUGHBY CITY AT A GLANCE

Population

**81,196**

with growth to 91,848 by 2036



Population Density

**36.19** persons per ha

Median age: 37 years



The largest age group is:

**35-39**  
year olds

The three largest  
ancestries are:

English  18,118

Chinese  17,932

Australian  14,998



**20 million**  
shopper visits



**\$11.86B**  
Gross Regional Product

Land area

**23km<sup>2</sup>**



Prior to the North West rail line opening Chatswood was the

**5<sup>th</sup>** largest CBD  
for employment

**5<sup>th</sup>** busiest rail station

**18,000**  
jobs in CBD

**6<sup>th</sup>** highest  
for office space



Source: Australia Bureau of Statistics (ABS) compiled and prepared by profile.id

# Willoughby city in profile



Willoughby City Council occupies 23 square kilometres on the lower north shore of Sydney, with its own CBD of Chatswood and a large part of St Leonards. It is 8.5 kilometres north of the Sydney CBD.

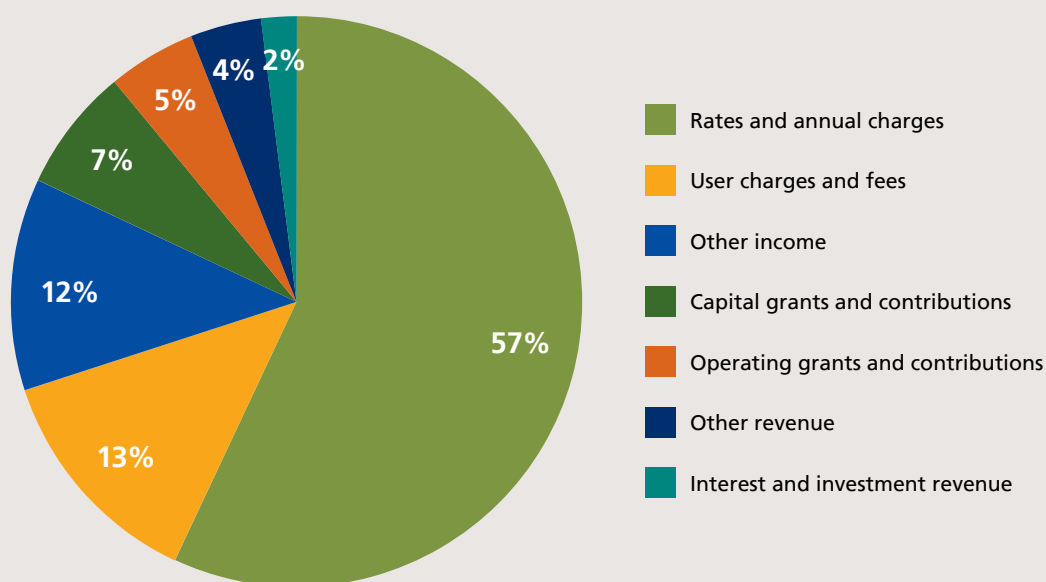
Our city incorporates the suburbs of Artarmon, Castle Cove, Castlecrag, Chatswood, Middle Cove, Naremburn, Northbridge and Willoughby, as well as parts of Gore Hill, Lane Cove North, St Leonards and Roseville.

We are a mix of residential areas, industrial and commercial zones. The Lane Cove River and the foreshore of Middle Harbour feature plentiful bushland.

# Financial report

The net result for 2020/21 as reported in the financial statements, is a surplus of \$1.2M, excluding Capital Revenues (\$10.2M when Capital Revenue is accounted for).

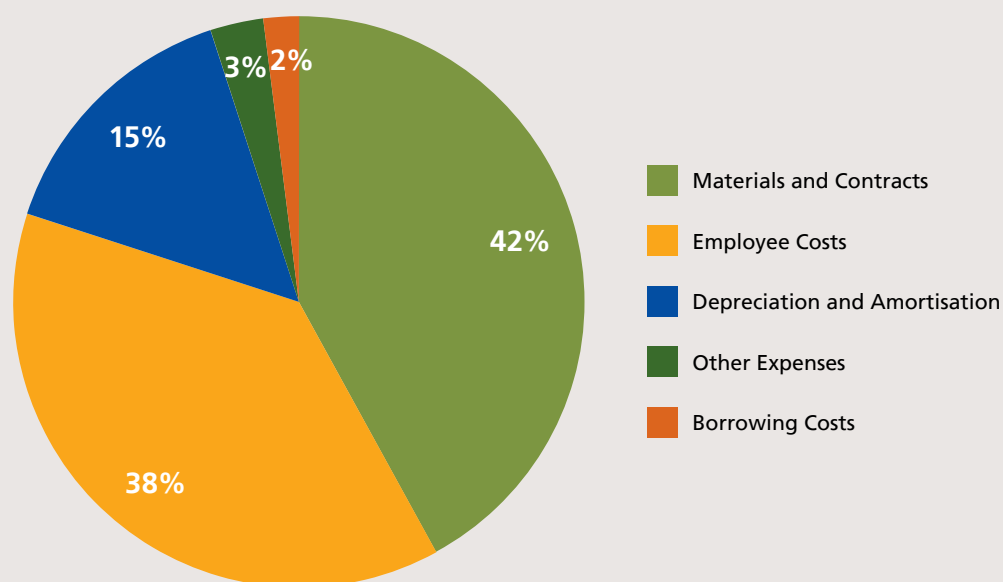
## INCOME: WHERE OUR MONEY CAME FROM



| TOTAL INCOME                       | 2020/21<br>\$K |
|------------------------------------|----------------|
| Rates and annual charges           | 69,306         |
| User charges and fees              | 15,273         |
| Other income                       | 14,111         |
| Capital grants and contributions   | 9,055          |
| Operating grants and contributions | 6,146          |
| Other revenue                      | 4,856          |
| Interest and investment revenue    | 2,226          |
| Gains on asset disposal            | 169            |
| <b>Total</b>                       | <b>121,142</b> |



## EXPENSES: WHERE OUR MONEY WAS SPENT



| TOTAL EXPENSES                | 2020/21<br>\$K |
|-------------------------------|----------------|
| Materials and Contracts       | 47,028         |
| Employee Costs                | 41,621         |
| Depreciation and Amortisation | 17,111         |
| Other Expenses                | 2,953          |
| Borrowing Costs               | 2,196          |
| <b>Total</b>                  | <b>110,909</b> |

# Major projects

2020/21 major projects included:

- Willoughby Leisure Centre pool hall preliminary design and development application approved
- Completed Gore Hill Indoor Sports Centre business case
- Completion of the Warners Park Community Centre – conversion of former Northbridge Bowling Club
- Completed 35% of The Concourse compliance upgrade to replace cladding on the building facade
- Opened a new shared path within the Artarmon Industrial Area on Frederick Street, Reserve Road and Campbell Street linking Herbert Street, Artarmon with Broadcast Way, Artarmon
- Commenced detailed design plans of two bicycle routes linking Mowbray Road Chatswood and St Leonards
- Road Pavements REPAIR Program
- Completion of the Thomson Park amenities building
- Streetscapes – commenced construction Wilkes Avenue/ Elizabeth Street, Artarmon. Completed Stage 2 design for Hampden Road, Artarmon.
- Completed traffic calming measures within the Artarmon Local Centre
- Upgraded and extended SES facility at Naremburn with co-funding from Lane Cove Council
- Natural area management for Lane Cove River catchment and Middle Harbour
- Development of the *Resilient Willoughby Strategy and Action Plan*
- Gross pollutant trap renewal at Butt Park and McCabe Place
- Artarmon reserve upgrades to sporting infrastructure
- Sports oval upgrades including drainage and irrigation at Bales Park, Bicentennial Reserve and Beauchamp Oval
- Naremburn Park playground upgrade
- Denawen Park playground upgrade
- Don Wilson playground upgrade
- Drainage upgrades to Willoughby oval
- Adoption of *The Haven Amphitheatre Landscape Plan* and implemented repairs to stone seating and creation of a rammed earth stage
- Reserve Action Plans completed for Coolaroo Reserve, Willis Park and Castle Cove Park

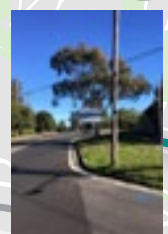
Beauchamp Oval Upgrades



The Concourse cladding compliance upgrade



Road Pavements REPAIR Program



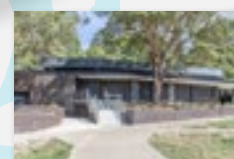
Road Pavements REPAIR Program



Traffic calming measures



Wilkes Ave Streetscapes



Thomson Park Amenities



New shared path



Bales Park Oval Upgrades



Gross pollutant trap renewal



Denawen Park playground upgrade



Willoughby Oval Upgrades



Natural area management Middle Harbour



Gross pollutant trap renewal



The Haven Amphitheatre Landscape Plan



Warners Park Community Centre



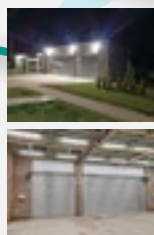
Pool Hall preliminary application lodged



Naremburn Park Playground



Don Wilson Playground



SES Building



Bicentennial Reserve Oval Upgrades



## BEAUCHAMP PARK

Named after William Lygon, the 7th Earl Beauchamp, who was Governor of NSW from 1899-1901. The park was originally part of a 600 acre land grant to Richard Archbold in 1825. By 1882 the land was used as a farm and slaughterhouse by Joseph Hammond who was the first butcher on the North Shore. Eleven acres of the land was acquired for public recreation by the NSW Government in 1899, with Council as Trustee and manager.

Willoughby City Council acknowledges the traditional inhabitants of the land on which we stand, the Aboriginal people, their spirits and ancestors.

**Stay COVID-Safe in this space**

Open in open spaces and parks, keep your distance, be part of the solution.



Keep 1.5m between yourself and others.   
 Wear a mask at all times.

Thank you for your continued cooperation in helping us stay safe.



**Public Health Orders**

Public Health Orders have been issued by the state government to protect the community and reduce the spread of COVID-19.

We include social distancing and to group gathering. Please do not attend any large events. Please do not attend any.

If you are eligible, attending health orders contact Communities on 988 22 222.

Willoughby City Council supports the state government in their efforts to reduce the spread of COVID-19. Please do not attend any large events.

Work together in our community and protect our neighbours and ourselves. Please do the right thing. Thank you!



OUR PERFORMANCE

# Delivering throughout the COVID-19 pandemic

Our response, delivery of services and achievements throughout a turbulent year are reflected in this report. From the long tail effects of the initial COVID-19 pandemic, to several cluster outbreaks and Delta variant lockdowns, the impacts were felt widely throughout Willoughby City Council and the community.

The health and safety of our employees and the wider community has been a top priority. We strived to provide safe environments across the Council area, from parks and open spaces and public places to business and workplaces. We responded to rapidly changing public health orders and addressed concerns around wellbeing and health with care and compassion. We also led the creation of a Human Services Interagency Network.

The effects of the initial COVID-19 pandemic are evident in this report. We started the period with a substantial operating deficit, which, combined with on-going revenue losses and lower patronage levels, has impacted Willoughby City Council's financial situation. We continued to take a disciplined approach to our finances and worked hard to ensure we are financially sound.

Disruption to supplies, trades and contractors from the COVID-19 pandemic period remains a concern. Although this presented a challenge, we were able to secure the external resources needed to complete our numerous projects.

We continued to build on progress we made in the initial COVID-19 pandemic. We focussed on developing our flexibility and leadership, two key areas that allowed us to be responsive, to continue to deliver and to innovate throughout this period. We transitioned to virtual communication, increased our capacity and adeptness at working remotely, implemented cashless payments, issued rates notices remotely and kept key services operating and delivering throughout stay at home orders, including the Customer Service Centre.

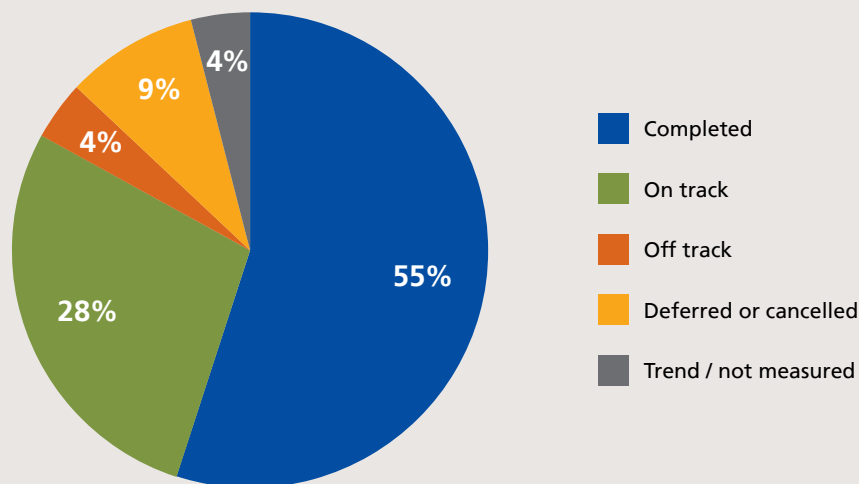
This period also brought on new challenges. Managing morale has been a focus with extended stay at home orders, changing public health orders and loss of social contact creating ongoing changes. We worked hard to provide employees and vulnerable community members with support, resources and connection.

The COVID-19 pandemic has defined the past year. The long and short term effects have had a profound impact across every part of Willoughby City Council, and we would not be able to tell our story without acknowledging how it has shaped us.

# Our progress against the Operational Plan 2020/21

The Operational Plan 2020/21 details the activities we need to undertake and how we will resource these. It detailed 401 deliverables. We completed or were on track with 96% of these planned activities.

## PROGRESS OF DELIVERABLES AS AT 30 JUNE 2021



| STATUS                | Number of deliverables | Percent |
|-----------------------|------------------------|---------|
| Completed             | 221                    | 55      |
| On track              | 111                    | 28      |
| Off track             | 16                     | 4       |
| Deferred or cancelled | 36                     | 9       |
| Trend / not measured  | 17                     | 4       |

The rest of this section summarises our achievements for 2020/21. Further details on projects and performance measures are in the six-monthly *Delivery Program 2017-22*

progress report and the *End of Council Term Report 2021* at [www.willoughby.nsw.gov.au](http://www.willoughby.nsw.gov.au)

# OUTCOME 1: A City that is green

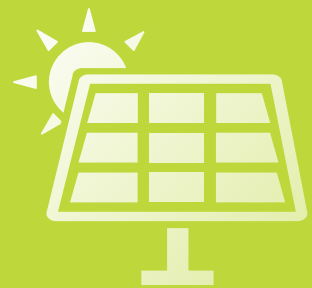


Council manages over  
**330ha**  
of bushland and nearly  
**20km**  
of harbour foreshore

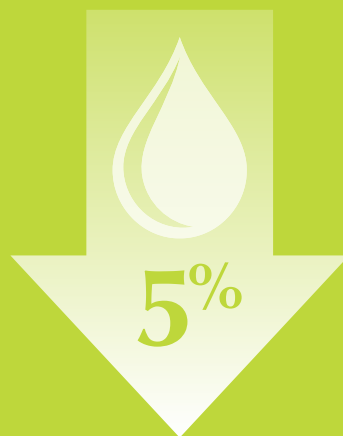
## Towards 2028:

Produced more than  
**500,000 kWh**  
of energy from our rooftop  
solar systems

**28%**  
renewable electricity used



Overall **32%** reduction in  
greenhouse gas emissions since 2008/09



reduction in water usage  
by Council

**51%**  
of residential  
waste diverted  
from landfill



## OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

### OUR GREEN CITY PLAN 2028

We implemented *Our Green City Plan 2028* to address climate change and the environment. The plan aims to enhance bushland, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, support sustainable lifestyles and better manage waste.



### STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT REPORT

Under s428A of the Local Government Act, councils must provide an end of council term report on the state of the environment that follows the guidelines for integrated planning and reporting. Information in this section presents our *State of the Environment Report* and is consistent with our Community Strategic Plan *Our Future Willoughby 2028*.

### BIODIVERSITY

Willoughby is home to abundant bushland, diverse native flora and fauna, archaeological sites and walking tracks. We care for more than 300 hectares of bushland. We use a variety of techniques to manage invasive flora and fauna, focusing on feral animals and weed species.

We developed the *Urban Bushland Plan of Management*, currently under review by the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment. We updated the *Griffin Reserves Plan of Management* to include site inventories. Our Reserve Action Plans are updated every five years.

We upgraded Willoughby's walking track network, including widening tracks to allow for greater community use during COVID-19 restrictions. Flat Rock Gully, Harold Reid Reserve, Ferndale Park and Mowbray Park were key work sites. In lockdown periods usage in those areas increased by between 50% and 100%.

### PUBLIC LAND

We continue to manage public land under site-specific plans of management. Around 480 street trees were planted during 2020/21. As part of the Metro Funded replacement tree planting scheme, 367 street trees will be planted over the next 12 months.

### WATER MANAGEMENT

#### Water consumption by Willoughby City Council

A total of 113,907 kilolitres of water was consumed by Willoughby City Council in 2020/21. Our water consumption decreased by 5% compared to the previous year. This reduction was supported by anti-vandal and timed-release taps installed throughout many of Willoughby's parks and reserves.

Rainwater harvesting and water reuse systems were extended to include Bales Park, Warners Park and Artarmon Community Gardens. We improved stormwater harvesting in Artarmon to supply irrigation water to a new irrigation tank at Artarmon Reserve.

The *Water Quality Report Card 2021* will be published later in 2021 as data becomes available. We added new biofiltration gardens at The Willis Recreation and Sports Centre, Lanceley Place, Artarmon and Artarmon town centre, contributing to a reduction in pollutants entering the waterways.

#### Water consumption outside the organisation

The amount of water consumed per person in the community is trending down from 110 kL per person in 2017/18 to 109.5 kL per person in 2020/21.



## Council Operational Energy, Emissions and Water Targets

|   | 2017/18                              | 2018/19                              | 2019/20                               | 2020/21   |
|---|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| By 2028 Council operations will utilise renewable electricity for 50% of total consumption  | 5.5%<br>(359 MWh)                    | 6.0%<br>(413 MWh)                    | 28.0%<br>(1,895 MWh)                  | <b>28.0%</b><br><b>(1760 MWh)</b>                 |
| By 2028 we will emit at least 50 per cent less greenhouse gas emissions from our operations compared with the 2008/09 level of 7500 t CO <sub>2</sub> e | +3.9%<br>(7,792 t CO <sub>2</sub> e) | -9.7%<br>(6,771 t CO <sub>2</sub> e) | -24.1%<br>(5,693 t CO <sub>2</sub> e) | <b>-32.2%</b><br><b>(5,085 t CO<sub>2</sub>e)</b> |
| By 2028 we will ensure Council water use does not exceed 120,000 kL per year  | 117,746 kL                           | 133,898 kL                           | 119,966 kL                            | <b>113,907 kL</b>                                 |

## Community Energy, Emissions and Water Targets

|  | 2017/18                      | 2018/19                      | 2019/20                      | 2020/21                           |
|--|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| By 2028 we will ensure a doubling of electric vehicle charge points in the LGA from a 2015 baseline of 5 charge points                                       | 5 Charge points              | 7 Charge points              | 7 Charge points              | <b>8 Charge points</b>            |
| By 2023 our community will achieve a 100 per cent increase in solar PV capacity compared with the 2017/18 capacity   | 5,883 kW                     | 7,230 kW                     | 8,861 kW                     | <b>15,034 kW</b>                  |
| By 2028 our community will emit at least 30 per cent less (231,460 t) GHG emissions compared with the 2008/09 level of 771,530 t CO <sub>2</sub> e           | 618,703 t CO <sub>2</sub> e* | 598,164 t CO <sub>2</sub> e* | 570,764 t CO <sub>2</sub> e* | <b>543,979 t CO<sub>2</sub>e*</b> |
| By 2028 we will ensure no reduction in water quality of sites assessed through the Water Quality Monitoring (WQM) program                                    | Not measured                 | Benchmark year               | No reduction                 | <b>No reduction</b>               |
| By 2028 we will encourage and assist our community to have no net increase in community water consumption per head of population (110kL per person per year) | 112 kL per person*           | 114.4 kL per person*         | 109.5 kL per person*         | <b>109.5 kL per person*</b>       |

\* Reporting data corresponds to the financial year prior to the reporting year as the data is not publicly available at the time of the annual report

## ENERGY USE

Willoughby City Council continued to source renewable electricity from the Moree Solar Farm in working towards a 50% renewable energy supply by 2028. Council also generates a significant quantity of electricity from approximately 400 kW of onsite rooftop solar systems. This produced more than 500,000 kWh over 2020/21.

Energy saving projects such as energy efficient lighting upgrades were undertaken at Willoughby City Council buildings, including street lighting. Four additional electric vehicles were commissioned bringing the Council's electric vehicle fleet up to six electric vehicles.

We secured a partnership with a leading North Shore Solar power company to encourage local residents to convert homes to solar power. An objective of Council's *Our Green City Plan 2028* aims to help increase the uptake of solar power in the local government area, to double rooftop capacity by 2023. This target was surpassed during 2020/21.

## REDUCING GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Willoughby City Council's emissions increased to 5,085 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e from 4,919 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>e in 2020/21. The increase is due to the reopening of facilities after the pandemic lockdown. Overall, this represents a reduction of 32.2% against the 2008/09 baseline and puts us on track to meet the 2028 target of a 50% reduction in emissions.

We commissioned one new public electric vehicle parking station, increasing the number of public electric vehicle charging locations to eight. Two new EV bays were installed in Railway St, Chatswood.

## WASTE REDUCTION

The total weight of waste generated by the community has remained relatively stable over the last four years despite increased population. The diversion rate, or the amount of waste generated that is not landfilled, has fluctuated between 43% and 55%. This fluctuation has been caused by external factors such as Government Policy changes (such as China Sword and export bans) and the introduction of the container deposit scheme (Return and Earn) which has reduced the quantity of recyclables in the yellow bin. Whilst waste generation rates have remained relatively stable, there needs to be more effort in waste reduction and diversion to reach the 80% diversion target by 2030, as set in June 2021 by the EPA's *Waste and Sustainable Materials Strategy 2041*. We will work with the EPA to develop realistic implementation plans to achieve the goals in the strategy and increase materials being re-used as part of the circular economy.

The number of illegal dumping incidents reported to Willoughby City Council fell from 719 in 2016/17 to 367 in 2020/21 with the assistance of increased awareness and compliance programs.

**Table 3 – Waste generation and diversion**

|                      | 2016/17 | 2017/18 | 2018/19 | 2019/20 | 2020/21       |
|----------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------------|
| Total (tonnes)       | 31,085  | 30,040  | 29,661  | 30,443  | <b>30,796</b> |
| Waste diversion rate | 55%     | 46%     | 43%     | 45%     | <b>51%</b>    |

**Table 4 – Illegal dumping incidences**

|                            | 2016/17 | 2017/18 | 2018/19 | 2019/20 | 2020/21    |
|----------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|------------|
| Total (dumping incidences) | 719     | 599     | 456     | 431     | <b>367</b> |

## BUILDING COMMUNITY RESILIENCE TO SHOCKS AND STRESSES

Our *Summer Preparedness* program ran from November to February. The program educated and encouraged our community to stay safe over summer and protect homes from the impacts of bushfires and storms. We continued our *Beat the Heat* campaign raising awareness about the health impacts of extreme heat.

In November 2020 we surveyed 600 residents about the resilience challenges of greatest concern to them. Shocks are sudden short term events that threaten a city and its people, while stresses weaken the fabric of society and our ability to cope with life's challenges. Shocks of most concern were the Black Summer bushfires followed by COVID-19 and the current state of Australia's economy. Stresses of most concern were climate change followed by the cost of housing and work/life balance.

The survey results informed the development of our first *Draft Resilient Willoughby Strategy and Action Plan* endorsed by Council in 2021. The actions in the plan aim to enhance the resilience of our people, buildings, places and governance. We currently engage in many activities that build resilience, including volunteering and caring for our elderly through community services. We also develop innovative planning controls to facilitate 'smart', sustainable buildings and community infrastructure. Important new initiatives include outreach services to build youth resilience, the 'Cooler Homes' pilot project and establishment of multi-purpose greenways to encourage walking and cycling and provide better connections between green spaces.

## COMMUNITY EDUCATION AND ENGAGEMENT

### Live Well in Willoughby Program

Around 12,000 community members took part in more than 510 events and workshops in the last four financial years as part of the *Live Well in Willoughby* program. The program engages the local community and involves them in environmental activities to encourage living more sustainably. It focuses on the themes of home and lifestyle, energy efficiency, transport, nature, food and gardens. Participant satisfaction with the program was 94%. During the pandemic when restrictions were placed on public gatherings, events and workshops moved online for continued engagement and greater accessibility. The online options were so popular in early 2020, they continued in 2020/21, with more than 1800 people participating in *Live Well in Willoughby* programs online.

We designed and implemented 94 environmental education activities for schools, day care and after school facilities, including bushwalking excursions and interactive talks. Around 5,570 school children and teachers participated in discussions about our local environment.

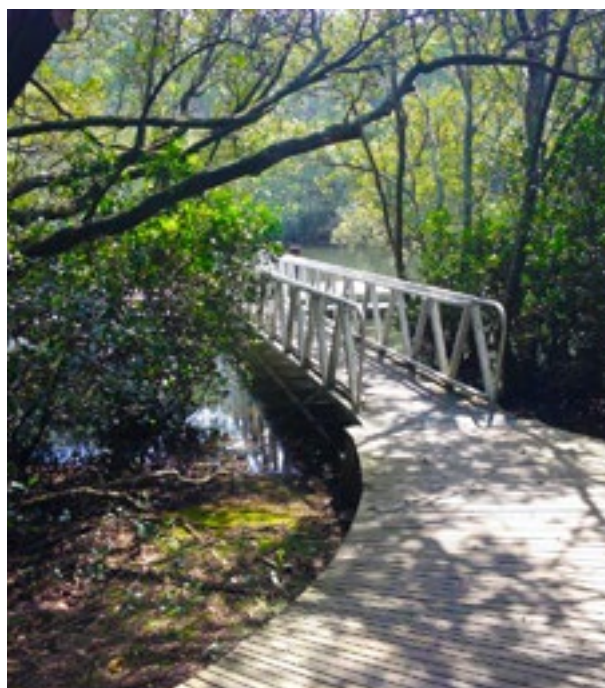
### New Initiatives

We launched a podcast series where passionate sustainability champions share their experiences. The series of five podcasts provide practical tips on fashion, food, e-transport, bushcare and sustainable living. They are designed to inspire local residents to take action and live sustainable lives.

Our new *Love Your Trees* campaign is a 12-month program aimed at highlighting the benefits of trees in our local area. Launched in 2021, the program also educates the community about the safety of trees and how to care for and maintain trees.

## NATURAL AREA MANAGEMENT

Three Reserve Action Plans for the protection and improvement of Willoughby's bushland reserves were completed for Coolaroo Reserve, Willis Park and Castle Cove Park. Reserve Action Plans were implemented for all reserves in the Middle Harbour and Lane Cove River catchment including rehabilitation, revegetation, stormwater management and pest, plant and animal management. Gross pollutant traps were maintained to improve water quality.





## GREEN FLEET

We opt for vehicles with low fuel consumption and, whenever possible, exchange ordinary vehicles for hybrid and electric vehicles. Council now has four vehicles which are electric and two hybrid Rav 4 vehicles used by our works team. These actions reduced the greenhouse gas emissions from our fleet by 2% in 2020/21.

## GET THE SITE RIGHT

We commit to protecting our natural and built environment for future generations in *Our Green City Plan 2028*. Willoughby City Council joined the Sydney Coastal Council Group in the annual *Get the Site Right* campaign. During the campaign our Safe City Unit combined education and enforcement to encourage compliance on building sites within the City of Willoughby local government area. Over May and June 2021, Council's Rangers inspected 24 building sites.

## CHALLENGES

- Due to restrictions on public gatherings from the pandemic we had to move face to face community education to online workshops.
- Ensuring the safety of Bushcare volunteers during COVID-19 was paramount. We implemented COVID safe plans that enabled volunteers to care for our bushland as restrictions on public gathering were eased.
- The impact of storms in early 2020 on our bushland was significant and required ongoing clean up and pruning work on damaged trees that extended well into the 2020-21 year. In total there was over \$300,000 in damages and in excess of 3,000 customer service requests addressed.
- The drought conditions of the previous year which caused widespread concern in NSW for bushland areas eased. As a result, efforts to implement the Bushfire Risk Management Plan combines both manual fuel reduction with hazard reduction burnings.

## OUR PLANS FOR THE YEAR AHEAD

- Complete the roll out of energy efficient lighting on residential streets with Ausgrid.
- Natural area management for all reserves in the Middle Harbour and Lane Cove River catchments consistent with Reserve Action Plans.
- Maintain and extend bushland walking tracks across the entire network but with emphasis on heavily used area such as Ferndale Park, Mowbray Park and Flat Rock Gully Tracks.
- Implement the *Resilient Willoughby Strategy and Action Plan*.
- Install solar PV on The Concourse and install a back-up battery at Council's Depot which will provide emergency services to the community during power failure.
- Inspect and create a database of all street trees for better management and to enhance public safety.
- Install a double electric vehicle charging station in Chandos Street, St Leonards.
- In 2022 Council plans to procure 100% renewable energy for its operations and work towards net zero certification by 2025.

# OUTCOME 2: A City that is connected and inclusive



**5,000m<sup>2</sup>+**

of books, resources and  
reference material at  
Chatswood Library

**11,412** 

people visited  
the MOSAIC  
multicultural centre  

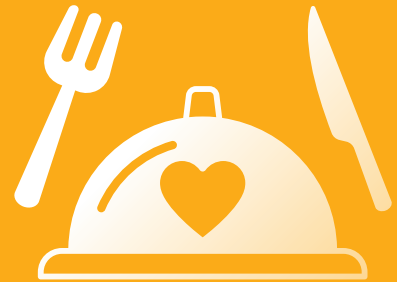


**19,505**

volunteer hours

**17,500**

meals for seniors  
through the  
Dougherty Centre



**25**

groups received community grants



## OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

### WILLOUGHBY SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Our Willoughby Symphony Orchestra was a finalist for the APRA AMCOS Art Award in the Work of the Year – Large Ensemble category.

We grew our followers on our new Facebook page by presenting virtual performances. The orchestra was one of the first Australian orchestras since the start of the pandemic to return to the stage to perform live to a COVID safe audience.

Led by Chief Conductor and Artistic Director Dr Nicholas Milton, *A Mozart Celebration* was also shared on Facebook and viewed over 35,000 times. Dr Milton was appointed as Chief Conductor and Music Director of the State Opera House in Klagenfurt, Austria. The Seniors Gala Concert at the Zenith Theatre was a sell-out.

To celebrate Valentine's Day, the spectacular Gala concert featured the world premiere of composer-in-residence Alice Chance's composition. Willoughby City Council continues to support new talent through the Young Composer Award, the only award of its kind in Australia. The Next Chapters concert with Legs on the Wall featured an exhilarating night of music, dance and aerial acrobatics in a new genre for Willoughby Symphony Orchestra. Another innovative concept was the Marriage of Figaro pocket-size opera which introduced the concept of opera to new audiences.

### COMMUNITY EVENTS

Despite a range of changing restrictions due to the pandemic, we successfully delivered a lively program of events for the community including the Emerge Festival 2020, Australia Day, Chatswood Family Festival on The Concourse and our Lunar New Year Festival. We responded to public health orders to deliver COVID safe events. Some of our usual events like StreetFair and Carols at Willoughby Park could not take place last year, however we took the opportunity to try new initiatives.

We successfully piloted a new cultural program, Culture Bites, a changing program of innovative cultural activities at The Concourse and Chatswood CBD. Introduced as an alternative to Vivid Sydney at Chatswood, which could not take place this year due to a change in Vivid Sydney's usual May schedule, Culture Bites featured Asian comedy, aerial acrobatics, K-Pop, projections and light art. The new

program attracted visitors of all ages and backgrounds from Greater Sydney, and contributed to the recovery of the local economy. It will return in 2022.

The Emerge Festival 2020 featured smaller COVID safe community events – both in person and online. Its focus was to encourage people to support local businesses and event organisers. The Archipaws Pet Portrait Competition was presented online.

Approximately 2,565 people attended the Chatswood Year of the Ox festival, an important event on our events calendar reflecting our rich cultural diversity. We supported local businesses and artists by presenting a range of quality cultural activities including art exhibitions, performances, Asian comedy and food.

### LIBRARY SERVICES

As the Willoughby Libraries reopened following the initial lockdown period, services were adapted across the network to meet public health orders and ensure staff and the community were safe.

Chatswood Library introduced a temporary 'click and collect' service and followed strict book quarantining processes, while branch libraries operated at a reduced capacity. Our digital library gave 24-hour access for members to download eBooks, eAudiobooks, children's activities, daily newspapers, eMagazines and offered free video streaming.

The popular Talks@Willoughby program continued to be delivered online. A key event in the series featured General Sir Peter Cosgrove. It attracted an audience of 182 people who attended the live event and watched online.

Chatswood Library hosted the inaugural Picture Willoughby Photo Editing Competition, which received 65 entries. Digital images created by the ten finalists appeared in an outdoor exhibition throughout the Willoughby area during the Emerge Festival.





Installation view of *Shaping Wit* at Art Space on The Concourse (2021) with works by Chris Dolman, Claire Healey and Sean Cordeiro, Emily Galicec and Gillian Kayrooz.

## OLDER ADULTS AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY

We hosted over 30 events during the NSW Seniors Festival including free Tech Savvy classes to 1200 seniors, a Selling Safely webinar, Art and Life talks and the popular variety concert.

The *Disability Inclusion Action Plan 2017–2021* continues to be implemented across Willoughby and aims to create an inclusive and accessible city. Key achievements were:

- Upgrade to Council websites including a text-to-speech plugin that enables on-screen text and documents to be read out loud.
- All websites meet Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1 AA compliance.
- All marketing material print and digital met accessibility standards.
- Dance to the Nines Disability Online Dance.
- Meals on Wheels, Linen Service, Out & About transport and Social Support group services provided in a COVID safe manner.
- A disability accessible bus operating on the Council's LOOP bus service.

## VISUAL ARTS

Public art in urban design, place-making and spatial activation can enliven spaces, contribute to a positive sense of place and reinforce social, cultural, economic and heritage values of our City. We developed a Public Art Policy endorsed by Council in 2020. The policy enables Council to deliver an ongoing program of temporary and permanent public art for the city. 7,265 people attended one of 15 exhibitions at the Incinerator Art Space and 6,781 people attended one of 17 exhibitions at Artspace on The Concourse. This included 2,900 attendees to five Council curated or presented visual art exhibitions across Willoughby during 2020/21.





## CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

We provide the community with multiple vacation care and after-school care centres and a long day care centre. Our Youth Services team supported young people to deal with the impacts of the pandemic. Programs included:

- Waves of Wellness - 10 students learnt how to surf while addressing mental health issues.
- Wellbeing Workshops were held for Year 12 students.
- Youth Employment Working Group addresses gaps in youth employment across Northern Sydney.
- *Shoreshocked* Music Festival was a free event attended by 500 young people.
- Chatswood Youth Centre Drop-in had about 40-50 people attending each day.
- Youth Services staff connected young people with specialised, professional support.

## MULTICULTURAL SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

Willoughby is home to many people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds where English is a second language. Chatswood Library provided free English classes, with 563 people attending 119 online sessions. It maintains collections in Chinese, Japanese, Korean and Armenian.

Our MOSAIC Multicultural Centre was attended by 11,412 people for arts and crafts, exercise, games and educational events. During the pandemic, 13 English and nine language classes moved online. Willoughby Leisure Centre provided free swimming lessons to 50 members of our CALD community.

We have partnerships and sponsorships with Chinese News and Media Group, Vision China Times, SBS and TVB Australia who help communicate our Emerge and Lunar New Year festivals with CALD communities.

We continue to support the Aboriginal Heritage Office, which monitors Aboriginal sites, ensures their preservation and provides educational tours and talks.



## COMMUNITY GRANTS AND BUSINESS AWARDS POLICY REVIEW

Our new streamlined Grants and Awards for the Community program makes applying for a grant easier and increases eligibility to apply.

The *Grants and Awards for the Community Policy* is intended to support projects that align directly with the outcomes of the Community Strategic Plan *Our Future Willoughby 2028*.

## BIKE PLAN

A new 850 metre shared pedestrian and bicycle path linking Broadcast Way with Herbert St, Artarmon opened in June 2021. We completed the design and construction of the shared path in partnership with the NSW Government who have provided \$3.5 million in funding for the delivery of three new bicycle projects.

Projects include a 4km shared pedestrian and bicycle path on Pacific Highway between Mowbray Rd, Chatswood and Herbert St, St Leonards. Stakeholder and community engagement was completed and draft detailed designs were produced.

Another project is the design of a 2.5km cycleway from Mowbray Rd Chatswood CBD to St Leonards CBD via the Artarmon local centre.

## ROADS AND FOOTPATHS

During 2020-2021, we resurfaced and repaired 49,500m<sup>2</sup> of roads while 6,170m<sup>2</sup> of footpaths were constructed, renewed or repaired.



The NSW Government Regional Roads REPAIR program assists councils to carry out large rehabilitation and development works on regional roads. Councils can apply for a 50 percent contribution on a dollar-for-dollar basis.

Under the REPAIR program, we resurfaced Mowbray Road between Pacific Highway and Hampden Road and Mowbray Road West between Epping Road to Hinkler Crescent. Using good asset management practices to intervene and minimise additional expenses, works were carried out to improve road safety for all road users and repair the existing damaged roads. This project was funded by the NSW Government in association with Willoughby City Council.

Major kerb and gutter projects totalling \$455,000 were carried out at Chatswood, Castle Cove, Castlecrag, Willoughby and North Willoughby.

We inspected footpaths, kerbs and gutters across Willoughby as well as 82 bridges, 161 retaining walls and various pipelines. We upgraded 60 bus stops to comply with Australian Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport (DSAPT).

## PROVIDING PARKING

Long-period vehicle parking is at a premium in the Willoughby local area, especially near or around shopping districts. We enforce parking regulations seven days a week and provide after-hours patrols. This helps ensure public safety, turnover for businesses and tradespeople, access for more people, and better use of our streets. However, during the pandemic lockdowns, our Safe City Unit reduced the number of fines issued giving flexibility to residents, particularly in time limited parking zones where safety was not an issue.

We upgraded the car parks at Artarmon Reserve on Burra Road and at Castle Cove Park on Holly Street.

A 'Smart City Pilot' concept for parking solutions was investigated and a grant application successful. We worked with iMove Australia and the University of NSW to develop smarter parking options to enhance the vibrancy of the CBD and reduce traffic congestion.

Our Safe City team delivered the 'Think Before You Park' program, which supports Council's *Disability Inclusion Action Plan*. The program increases public awareness of issues associated with stopping or parking a motor vehicle on a public footpath, nature strip or driveway crossing and the impact of illegal parking on people with disability.



## LOCAL AREA TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

We received a \$1.95 million grant from the Australian Government to upgrade 11 pedestrian crossings and install two new wombat crossings at High St and Bedford St, North Willoughby.

Improving traffic safety and congestion for all, we:

- Created two disabled parking spaces and modified two disabled parking spaces at Spring St, Chatswood, all completed in April 2021.
- Made improvements to traffic signals at Anderson St and Victoria Ave, Chatswood, completed in June 2021.

We completed construction of traffic calming devices including kerb build-outs, raised thresholds, pedestrian crossing points and traffic blisters at Artarmon Local Centre in June 2021, two slow points in Alleyne Street, Willoughby in June 2021 and a pedestrian refuge in Devonshire Street, Chatswood in June 2021.

The [Willoughby Integrated Transport Strategy 2036](#) came into effect from August 2020, providing an overarching

framework for transport planning and initiatives across the area to enable a more liveable city that can cater for the changes in population.

## COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

During the pandemic we continued operation of the free accessible Artarmon loop bus services, from 6am to 7pm Monday to Friday.

The Out and About ride share service also continued, helping seniors attend health appointments, shop for groceries or connect with a friend.

## LOCAL PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

Recognising the frustrations pedestrians face when trying to safely cross Victoria Avenue near Chatswood Chase shopping centre, we extended the footpath and reduced the crossing distance.

We continued the 'Look Out Before You Step Out' campaign to improve pedestrian safety, especially on higher risk roads.

The campaign featured an animated YouTube video and a four-page Pedestrian Safety document.

We partnered with driving instructors to deliver free workshops for parents and supervisors of learner drivers and older adults.

We worked with NSW Health to deliver a pedestrian safety program for seniors, with 80 people attending online sessions.

## TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT OPERATIONS

We collaborated and facilitated work on the Sydney Metro City and Southwest project. Supporting Australia's biggest public transport project, we ensured daily work was conducted in a safe environment and provided permits and support for major works conducted on Brand Street, Artarmon.

## LOCAL ROADS AND COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE GRANTS

We received \$2 million from the NSW and Australian Governments to improve and upgrade local roads and community infrastructure. The project and funding amounts are listed below.

| Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Grant Purpose | Grant Amount (\$K) | 2020/21 expenditure (\$K) | Amount to be spent in 2020/21 (\$K) |
|--|--------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Thomson Park New Sports Amenities                      | 515                | 515                       | -                                   |
| Dougherty Centre - Furniture and Fittings              | 500                | 103                       | 397                                 |
| CBD Laneways Activation - Spring Place Chatswood       | 692                | 36                        | 656                                 |
| Chatswood Oval - Renewal of Carpark                    | 45                 | 45                        | -                                   |
| Mowbray Rd Pedestrian Fencing                          | 27                 | 27                        | -                                   |
| Rosebridge Ave Kerbside Rehabilitation                 | 140                | 140                       | -                                   |
| Chatswood Mall CCTV                                    | 48                 | -                         | 48                                  |
| Northbridge Baths CCTV                                 | 33                 | -                         | 33                                  |



## CHALLENGES

Due to the pandemic our services and facilities faced many challenges including:

- Adapted services and facility operation to meet rapidly changing Public Health Orders.
- Several Willoughby Symphony Orchestra concerts were cancelled and we experienced refund delays from our ticketing provider.
- Some community events were cancelled including Chatswood StreetFair, Carols at Willoughby Park and Vivid Sydney at Chatswood.
- Some ticketed performances were rescheduled including Live at Lunch.

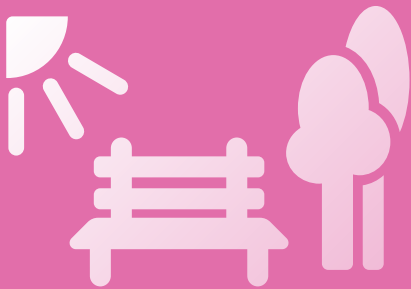
## OUR PLANS FOR THE YEAR AHEAD

- Launch the Visit Chatswood, The Concourse and Emerge Festival websites.
- Progress streetscape upgrade designs for the Naremburn local centre public domain including a new pedestrian crossing in Rohan Street.
- Upgrade parking equipment at The Concourse.
- Implement Council-wide responsibility for a child-safe learning environment.
- Commence the detailed design phase and construction tender for the major upgrade of the Willoughby Leisure Centre pool hall.
- Appoint designers and progress planning and design for the Gore Hill Indoor Sports Centre development.
- Progress the design stage for affordable housing at Abbott Rd, Artarmon where approximately 26 new essential worker housing units will be built.
- Progress construction of stage two of the Artarmon local centre streetscape enhancements on the western side of the railway line in Artarmon Local Centre.
- Install 11 raised pedestrian crossings at North Willoughby, Artarmon, Naremburn (2), Lane Cove North, Chatswood, Willoughby (2), Castle Cove (2), Castlecrag and St Leonards (2).

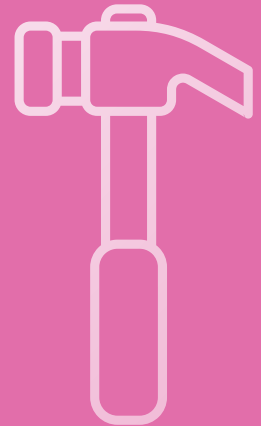
- Complete detailed design of a shared pedestrian and bicycle paths on Pacific Highway between Mowbray Road, Chatswood and Herbert Street, St Leonards and between Mowbray Road, Chatswood and St Leonards via the Artarmon local centre.
- Develop an Indigenous Strategy.
- Review and update our *Disability Access and Inclusion Plan*.
- Commence construction of the Artarmon Parklands Pavilion.



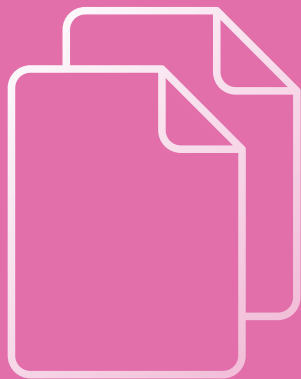
# OUTCOME 3: A City that is liveable



**425ha**  
of open space



**\$27.4M**  
projects and capital works expenditure



**583**  
applications were processed

**493**



inspections of registered food businesses



## OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

### MANAGING GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

The *Local Environment Plan* sets rules about what we can build and where. It is supported by a *Development Control Plan* that provides guidelines to ensure a high standard of development in the Willoughby local government area. The plans seek to implement priorities of Willoughby's Local Strategic Planning Statement. We completed reviews of the plans and residents will be given the opportunity to give their feedback later in 2021.

Council endorsed the *Industrial Lands Strategy 2036* in October 2020. The strategy advocates for retention of the industrial areas for the vitality of the economy and the needs of the local population into the future.

Council endorsed the *Willoughby Integrated Transport Strategy 2036*. The strategy is the overarching strategic framework for transport planning and initiatives across the

Willoughby local government area to 2036. We finalised the strategy after receiving feedback in 2020 from 60 community members and several key stakeholders such as Transport for NSW.

Our *Chatswood CBD Strategy* outlines changes relating to planning controls and the design of buildings and the public domain. It was fully endorsed by the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) on 9 July 2020 with some qualifications.

### WILLOUGHBY DEVELOPMENT CONTROL PLAN

Council endorsed the draft *Willoughby Development Control Plan (WDCP)* for public exhibition in June. The plan is designed to provide a more succinct, user-friendly document for people undertaking development in Willoughby.

## COMMUNITY RECOVERY PLAN

Supporting recovery from the impacts of COVID-19 we developed and implemented the *Community Recovery Plan*, endorsed by Council in November 2020.

Mental health, social isolation, health and wellbeing, and impacts on people under 35 years were the key priority areas of the *Community Recovery Plan*. To address the mental health effects of social isolation, we created a number of opportunities for people to connect in COVID safe environments, including a mentoring program for young people and engaging with our community online and by phone.

## OPEN SPACE

Council manages over 400 hectares of open space including 22 sportsgrounds, over 100 parks and reserves and 47 playgrounds. Programs to upgrade parks and playgrounds continued, with works completed at Denawen Park, Castle Cove Park, Bales Park, Chatswood Park, Willoughby Park, Don Wilson playground, Naremburn and Artarmon parklands.

Council endorsed the Warners Park Draft Landscape Masterplan for public exhibition. It will guide the development of the park over the next five to ten years.

The Haven Amphitheatre Plan of Management and Landscape Plans were adopted by Council. The plans cover environmental and cultural heritage uses and outline improvements to the unique performance space in Castlecrag.

## GORE HILL INDOOR SPORTS CENTRE

In March 2021 Council endorsed its preferred option for stage two of the Gore Hill Indoor Sports Centre which will feature six indoor courts, sports hall, gym, multi-purpose area for meetings and clubs, café, retail space and 182 car parks. During this year we commenced the planning and design phase with further input from sporting clubs and associations. Construction is expected to commence from 2024.

## NORTHBRIDGE BOWLING CLUB REFURBISHMENT

We transformed the former Northbridge Bowling Club into an important community venue, now called Warner's Park Community Centre. We upgraded the ground floor of the building into a multipurpose community space including a large auditorium plus a smaller meeting room and commercial kitchen.



## ARTARMON PARKLANDS PAVILION

The site of former Artarmon Bowling Club will be transformed into the 'Artarmon Parklands Pavilion' a multi-purpose facility for the community to gather for picnics, children's birthday parties and gatherings of family and friends.

We lodged the Development Application (DA) in January 2021 and it was approved by the Willoughby Local Planning Panel in May. We removed hazardous substances on the old bowling club and construction of the new facility is expected to commence early in 2022.

## THOMSON PARK AMENITIES BUILDING

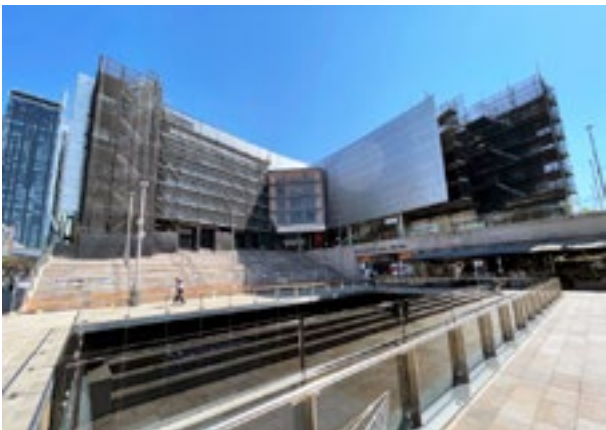
A new pavilion at Thomson Oval, Artarmon features public toilets, change rooms, canteen, storage, rainwater tank and new landscaping. The Australian Government provided \$515,000 in funding to deliver the upgraded amenities for our sporting community.

## DEVONSHIRE STREET CHILDREN'S CENTRE

The new \$165,000 play space at Devonshire Street Children's Centre features an in-ground trampoline, mud kitchen and new herb garden.

## THE CONCOURSE

A project to upgrade the cladding at The Concourse commenced in March 2021 and was 35% complete at the end of June. The existing composite cladding is being replaced with solid aluminium cladding to retain the same finish and appearance.



## WILLOUGHBY LEISURE CENTRE

We developed concept plans for the new pool hall at Willoughby Leisure Centre, based on community aquatic needs and stakeholder feedback. The Development Application was submitted in December 2020 and the second round of exhibition ended in March 2021. The Development Application was approved by the Sydney North Planning Panel in August, taking us one step closer to delivering this important facility.



A total of 266,153 visits were made to the centre in 2020/21. The centre delivered a free swimming program for 50 adults with culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds.

When Willoughby Leisure Centre reopened in June 2020 after the COVID shutdown, only 34% of memberships were reactivated. By June 2021, membership levels had recovered to 87% of pre-COVID levels.

Our swim school initially experienced difficulties recruiting staff after the first COVID shutdown. Willoughby Leisure Centre partnered with Royal Life Saving to conduct a swim teacher training course for the community. Seven instructors were recruited as a result.

## NORTHBRIDGE LOCAL CENTRE PUBLIC DOMAIN PLAN

The *Northbridge Local Centre Public Domain Plan* provides a long-term vision for the public domain areas of Northbridge Local Centre and the shopping precinct. It aims to develop a strong sense of place for Northbridge that is attractive, safe, connected and vibrant.

The project brief was guided by the Northbridge Progress Associations' initiative for Council to lead a series of co-design workshops. The interactive process engaged and informed active participants, initiated ideas and design outcomes that guided the consultant's masterplan.

Council adopted the plan and endorsed commencement of detailed design and documentation of Stage 1. Key benefits include footpath widening, traffic calming, improved pedestrian access and a new crossing, street furniture and new planting along Sailors Bay Road.

## FLOODPLAIN RISK MANAGEMENT

The *Flat Rock Creek Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan* were developed for Willoughby City Council for the future management of flood liable lands in the Flat Rock Creek Catchment and to find strategic and capital measures to reduce the cost and risk of flooding. Council adopted the study and plan, with the objective of creating a safer community which is more resilient.



## STORMWATER RENEWAL

Protecting our community against flooding, we upgraded four, renewed 12 and installed 10 new stormwater assets.



## PROCESSING OF DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS

We operate a comprehensive building and development approval service that assesses all applications to build, demolish or develop properties. The service also ensures that all development within the local government area is allowable within the context of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act, 1979*.

An electronic tracking tool allows users to monitor the development application from lodgement to assessment. Interested parties can login to see how an application is progressing.

A total of 583 Development Applications (including modification applications) for Willoughby LGA were determined in the 2020/21 financial year with the determining authority being:

- Staff under delegation – 520
- Willoughby Local Planning Panel – 53
- Sydney North Planning Panel – 6
- Court – 4

Council participated in a State Government DA Acceleration program achieving all targets set which included a median nett turnaround for DA determination of 65 days (57 days achieved).

We conducted an end-to-end review of the development application fee processes and a review of planning notification procedures as part of Council's business improvements initiatives.

## AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Council adopted the *Affordable Housing Strategy* in August 2020. The strategy's key priorities include prioritising affordable housing for key and essential

workers, the development of affordable housing on identified Council sites and increasing the affordable housing provided within new residential developments.

The conversion of the rear of 258 Sailors Bay Road, Northbridge will provide two affordable housing units for key workers. Work will commence in early 2022. A site in Abbot Road, Artarmon will deliver up to 26 new affordable housing units. Feasibility studies and preliminary concept design are underway.

## WILLOUGHBY'S BUILT HERITAGE

We protect and manage environmental heritage in the city. We do this by identifying and listing heritage items and heritage conservation areas, and using planning controls to protect individual items and heritage conservation areas. This ensures the design of new development is consistent with the significance and character of the individual item or heritage conservation area.

Seven new properties were listed in 2020 – six houses in Castlecrag and one in Willoughby East.

The Willoughby Incinerator is listed as a heritage item. As part of a program of adaptation, repair and reconstruction, we've put plans in place for works on the south side of the building.

## CAPITAL WORKS PROJECTS

In 2020/21, we invested \$24 million on capital works. Among the most significant works were:

- Building refurbishment and acquisition \$5.1m
- Road replacement and construction \$4.5m
- Open Space and recreational assets \$3.6m
- Stormwater drainage replacement and construction \$2m
- Footpath replacement and construction \$1.6m
- Plant and equipment replacement \$0.8m
- Replacement and construction of other assets \$0.4m
- Land acquisition and improvements \$0.2m
- Capital Works in progress at year end \$5.8m

## PUBLIC DOMAIN TECHNICAL MANUAL DEVELOPMENT 2020/21

We are preparing a Public Domain technical manual to guide a sustainable public realm for Chatswood CBD. The manual supports Council's *Chatswood CBD Planning and Urban Design Strategy to 2036*.

## PUBLIC SAFETY

Staff in Council's Safe City Unit are our front-line workers in ensuring public safety. Last year the team conducted 493 inspections of registered food businesses to ensure that the Food Standards Code was being met. There were 120 inspections of registered health and beauty premises to ensure compliance with the Public Health Act. Officers use a combination of education and enforcement to achieve compliance.

Safe City Unit staff also conducted 918 inspections of registered food, health and beauty premises to support the roll out and implementation of COVID Safe Plans.

The Safe City Unit continued to deliver the Safety Over Convenience program in school zones. This road safety education program aims to improve the safety of children around schools by increasing knowledge and awareness of parents and carers of the importance of driving and parking safely around schools. Council uses a combination of signage, educational material, infringements and face to face communication between Rangers and members of the public.

## CHALLENGES

Designs for affordable housing at Barton Rd, Artarmon were delayed due to the site being requested for use by the Department of Transport during the Northern Beaches Tunnel construction.

Further designs for affordable housing at Abbot Rd, Artarmon were also delayed due to delays in the feasibility and business case stage.

While Council continued with community engagement throughout the pandemic, we had to find alternative ways to conduct community consultation. This took place primarily online with webinars and presentations. We kept our community informed about the progress of projects through social media and other digital platforms.

## OUR PLANS FOR THE YEAR AHEAD

- Renew furnishings and fittings at the Dougherty Community Centre.
- Commence construction of the Artarmon Parklands Pavilion.
- Complete The Concourse cladding replacement project.
- Commence construction of affordable housing at 258 Sailor's Bay Rd, Northbridge.
- Progress stage four of the Chatswood Park masterplan including upgrades to park furniture, pedestrian entry and general park lighting.
- Activate the revitalised Chatswood Laneways.
- Install new lighting, planting and seating at Naremburn Park.
- Develop new picnic areas at Muston and Thomson Parks.
- Undertake a review of the *Disability Access and Inclusion Plan*.
- Commence the construction phase of the *Northbridge Local Centre Public Domain Plan Stage 1*.
- Commence implementation of the *Scott's Creek Floodplain Risk Management Study and Plan*.
- Exhibit Draft LEP and Draft DCP following issue of Gateway determination by DPIE.
- Participate in State Government Faster Regionally Significant Development Applications Pilot Program.

# OUTCOME 4: A City that is prosperous and vibrant

**\$11.86B**

Gross Regional Product



**37** businesses took part in the Better Business Partnership

**562** commercial tenants, community groups, small businesses and sporting groups supported by business support plan



**72,612** jobs in the local government area

**13,210** businesses in local government area



Two Business Support Plans resulting in

**\$3.6M** of benefit

Chatswood is one of the biggest retail centres in Australia with

**700+**

retailers



Chatswood Mall has a pedestrian flow of over 50 million people a year



## OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

### PUBLIC DOMAIN IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

The Chatswood CBD Changing Lanes program will transform the former service lanes of Spring Place, Post Office Lane, Charlotte Lane and Mills Lane into shared zones that are more flexible urban spaces. The \$1.6m program will encourage a wider range of uses and provide opportunities for businesses to expand their operations such as outdoor dining, artistic activities, and space for community events.

During the year we developed new designs which encourage a higher level of pedestrian usage. We secured funding for the construction of Spring Place under the Federal Government's Local Roads and Community Infrastructure Program Phase Two. Construction will commence late in 2021.

Council will fund upgrades to Post Office Lane, Charlotte Lane and Mills Lane, which will be upgraded during 2021/22.



### HAMPDEN RD ARTARMON

Designs for Stage 2 are progressing well with construction works to commence in February 2022. Streetscape enhancements will improve pedestrian safety and the visual quality of the shopping precinct.

### WILKES / ELIZABETH STREET ARTARMON

The Wilkes Avenue upgrade will feature new street furniture, lighting and plants. Elizabeth Street includes new rain gardens and pedestrian crossing. Construction for this project will be completed in November 2021.



## WOONONA/SAILOR'S BAY ROAD

In January 2021, we completed works to the Woonona Road Local Centre streetscape and the Woonona and Sailor's Bay Road Neighbourhood Centre. The streetscape works focus on improved pedestrian experience and safety.

## BUSINESS SUPPORT

An extension of our Business Support Package in October 2020 fuelled economic recovery and gave local businesses a boost to recover from the impacts of the pandemic. In October we announced an additional \$1.3 million as part of our business support plan. This was in addition to the \$2.3 million in fee and rental relief provided to businesses, community and sporting groups since March 2020. The extended Business Support Plan waived all footway dining and street advertising fees, saving businesses \$114,000. It extended the 50% fee reduction for the Chatswood Mall Market stall holders, saving stallholders \$76,000. We provided \$1.1 million to our tenants in additional rent relief and paid our suppliers earlier to help small businesses with cash flow.

We improved internal processes and paid local suppliers earlier to help small businesses with cash flow, moving our payment terms from 30 days to 7 days or less.

Recognising the far-reaching impacts of the pandemic on local businesses, we developed and implemented the *Economic Recovery Plan*, endorsed alongside the *Community Recovery Plan* by Council in November 2020. *The Economic Recovery Plan* addressed some of the immediate issues to ensure the longer-term vibrancy and viability of businesses. The Plan included a business forum, a business toolkit to help businesses access resources, creating a 'buy local' program and increased activity in the Chatswood CBD. We supported local businesses to take part in the NSW Government's Dine & Discover voucher campaign.

## BETTER BUSINESS PARTNERSHIP

We provided the Better Business Partnership in a joint initiative with North Sydney and Ku-Ring-Gai Councils – a free sustainable business program supported by NSW Environment Protection Authority. The partnership works with businesses to improve their environmental performance and save money through reduced energy, water and waste bills. It recognises their actions through Better Business Awards. 37 businesses took part in the program in 2020/21.

## CHATSWOOD AS A DESTINATION

Marketing of Chatswood as a destination is supported by the Chatswood CBD marketing plan and The Concourse business plan. The Visit Chatswood website is a channel for tourism in Chatswood and will be renewed along with the roll out of our other websites.

We reviewed the existing operation of The Concourse precinct to provide a base for further developing the precinct building on the success of the first ten years of The Concourse. The first phase in developing the precinct will be the employment of The Concourse Precinct Place Co-ordinator who will lead the implementation of a new precinct and visitation strategy.

## CHALLENGES

- Continued restrictions of movement impacted overall economic activity in Chatswood CBD.
- Recovery from the pandemic will vary by sector and location resulting in plans and projects being revised with extended implementation dates.
- The Chatswood Mall Market stall holder rate did not reach target as social distancing restrictions during the pandemic led to a reduction in the number of stall holders.

## OUR PLANS FOR THE YEAR AHEAD

- Approve and implement the Economic Development Strategy.
- Develop The Concourse Precinct Strategy and Action Plan.
- Examine the introduction of a Local Purchasing Preference Policy.
- Implement an activation program for the revitalised Chatswood Laneways.
- Commence stage one of the Northbridge Local Centre upgrades.
- Continue the upgrade at Hampden Road, Artarmon.



# OUTCOME 5: A City that is effective and accountable

**407**  
Staff (FTE) 

**29%**  
increase in social  
media followers



**53,400**  
visits to Have  
Your Say website

**188**   
projects and capital works delivered



**66,668**  
Help & Service  
calls received

**2,748**  
Customer enquiries  
due to COVID-19

**2,800**   
People engaged and consulted

## OUR ACHIEVEMENTS

### RESPONDING TO THE PANDEMIC

Our response to the impacts of the pandemic and planning for recovery continued to be a major part of our work. The impacts on our budget were substantial. The loss of key revenue streams resulted in a \$9 million impact on revenue. Despite starting the year with a \$3.1 million budget deficit, which had grown to a \$6.5 million deficit by the end of quarter one, we found a balance between costs, income and delivering for the community. We presented a balanced budget, putting us in a strong position for the year ahead. Our *Long Term Financial Plan* demonstrates a sound financial position and clear road map for the next 10 years.

In October we announced an additional \$1.3 million as part of our business support plan. This was in addition to the \$2.3 million in fee and rental relief provided to businesses, community and sporting groups since March 2020. The extended Business Support Plan waived all footway dining and street advertising fees, saving businesses \$114,000. It extended the 50% fee reduction for the Chatswood Mall Market stall holders, saving stallholders \$76,000. We provided \$1.1 million to our tenants in additional rent relief and paid our suppliers earlier to help small businesses with cash flow.

#### **From March 2020 - March 2021 Business Support Packages 1 and 2**

- Tenants of Council owned premises received \$583,000 in rent relief under the Business Support Plan and other tenants received \$1.8 million in council rent relief as required under the state government COVID regulations.
- Sporting club and community groups had \$501,000 of their fees for sports grounds and facilities refunded or not charged.
- Environmental health inspection fees waived, saving businesses \$114,000.
- Footway dining and advertising fees were waived, benefiting food and beverage outlets, valued at \$228,000.
- Chatswood Mall Market stallholders received a 50% discount on stall fees, valued at \$272,000.
- Discretionary enforcement - compliance officers used their discretion by issuing warnings rather than fines for offences that did not impact on health and safety (e.g. parking in excess of signposted time limits).

In August 2021 Council endorsed a third assistance package in response to the restrictions as a result of the Delta strain of the virus.

We devised and delivered an *Economic Recovery Plan* to build confidence in the local economy through a business forum, business toolkit to help businesses access resources, a 'buy local' program and increased activity in the Chatswood CBD.

We supported the NSW Government in its recovery initiatives by promoting the Dine and Discover voucher scheme, encouraging local businesses to register with the scheme and residents to use their vouchers in the Willoughby LGA. We also delivered a Community Recovery Plan to support our community through the pandemic, partnering with organisations to respond to the emerging needs of community members with mental health support needs, young people and people from diverse backgrounds.

We supported the most vulnerable in our community, with Meals on Wheels, online shopping support, and resident calls. Essential cleaning and waste services continued and we maintained and upgraded our parks, walking tracks and ovals to cater for increased demand and usage.

Maintaining the health and safety of staff and the community remained of utmost importance. As we reopened Council venues and services, we put COVID safety plans in place to ensure all government requirements were met. We continued to present a range of events and workshops digitally including Council and committee meetings and community information seminars. We looked after our community by undertaking 918 inspections of registered businesses for COVID-19 safety compliance. When further restrictions came into force in December 2020 and late June 2021, we again responded to public health orders across all facilities and services.

During the initial lockdown in 2020, we moved quickly to enable many staff to work from home. As things opened up again, we took a staged approach to staff returning to the office to adhere to social distancing rules. We implemented new work from home guidelines to provide staff with more regular work from home arrangements, allowing more flexibility. To support this, we procured hardware and software to better equip staff to work in a range of locations. We responded quickly to public health orders in late June following the spread of the Delta strain by again ensuring as many staff as possible worked from home.

In response to public health orders during the first wave of COVID-19 it was necessary to close Council venues and



facilities. We redeployed many staff, including those from the libraries and Willoughby Leisure Centre, to other parts of Council or other duties. Many staff felt enriched by this experience and considered it a development opportunity. We further enhanced development opportunities by preparing the Learning and Development handbook and implementing a new performance review process. Our new employee brand will strengthen our workforce by attracting and retaining high quality staff.

## COMMUNITY INFORMATION SEMINARS

Our Community Information Seminars recommenced online in 2021 to maintain connection with our community. The seminars feature presentations by experts from Willoughby City Council, the State Government and other agencies. They are a forum for people to hear about significant initiatives and projects and to ask questions. Topics covered this year included:

- E-safety for all ages – the rise of cyber-crime post pandemic.
- Willoughby's economic growth and development.
- Council's Community Perception Survey.

Videos of the presentations are available at [www.willoughby.nsw.gov.au](http://www.willoughby.nsw.gov.au)

## STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND CONSULTATIONS

We are committed to engaging with our stakeholders in the development of policies, plans and the provision of services for the community.

All our community engagement is guided by our community engagement strategy. The strategy outlines how we inform, consult, involve, collaborate and empower the community. This ranges from simple information sharing to formal public consultation periods and public meetings, surveys, and online forums and discussions. During the pandemic we increased online engagement opportunities for greater accessibility to involvement in Council decision-making.

During the year we engaged with the community on 41 projects. There were 2,400 Have Your Say website visits and 160 responses since concept-planning engagement began on these projects. Other consultation projects include:

- Beaches Link and Gore Hill Freeway Connection, 269 people participated in a poll to help Council understand community sentiment on the proposal and inform the Council's submission.
- Proposed new park at the Castlecrag Village shops.
- Haven Amphitheatre draft Plan of Management.
- Northbridge streetscape upgrade.
- Artarmon Local Centre Public Domain Master Plan and Hampden Rd Upgrade.
- Willoughby Industrial Lands Strategy to 2036.
- Willoughby Leisure Centre Pool Area Upgrades. There were 2,200k visits to see the final schematic design and interactive fly-through.
- Detailed design plans for two cycle ways, the Pacific Highway Shared Path between Mowbray Road, Chatswood and Herbert Street, St Leonards; and the Chatswood CBD to St Leonards CBD Bicycle Route.

We held seven webinars for the community to have their say for projects including Artarmon Local Centre Masterplan, Willoughby Leisure Centre Pool Area Upgrades and the Pacific Highway Shared Path Design.

The Our Have Your Say website received 53,400 visits from people seeking information about a range of projects with more than 2,800 people giving their feedback. Council has a database of over 7,288 registered participants and received 621 new registrations this year. If you would like to get involved in Council's decision making go to [www.haveyoursaywilloughby.com](http://www.haveyoursaywilloughby.com) to register.



## CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTRE

Our Help and Services Centre continued to provide customers with information on our services. In 2020/21, 66,668 calls were processed by the centre. 80% of customer phone enquiries were answered at the first point of call. During the lockdowns our customer service centre

was closed to the public, and we increased the capacity of our online services and our call centre.

The Willoughby Council website is an important source of information and a gateway for community and businesses to interact with Council online. Over 423,600 people used our website with 709,371 website visits and 1,833,365 page views.

## CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

Surveys show our customer experience continues to improve in line with our customer experience strategy. We engaged Micromex to conduct our Community Perception Survey in 2021 with very positive results including:

- **Quality of Life:** 40% are very satisfied, 28% are satisfied and 11% are somewhat satisfied. This is significantly above the benchmark set by the researchers for other comparable councils.
- **Overall Satisfaction:** 22% very satisfied, 53% satisfied and 11% somewhat satisfied with the performance of Council over the last 12 months – again significantly above the benchmark set by the researchers for other comparable councils.
- **Satisfaction with Level of Communication:** 88% are at least somewhat satisfied with the level of communication Council currently has with the community.
- **Benchmarks 100%:** All 38 comparable service/facilities generated satisfaction scores equal to or above the benchmark set by the researchers for other comparable councils.
- The mystery calling program customer satisfaction score was 79%. This is above the KPI target of 75%.

We commenced the concept design phase for a new Customer Service Centre on the ground floor of Council's Victor Street offices in Chatswood. The new Service Centre will improve accessibility and overall customer experience and increase our on-street presence in Chatswood.

## GRANTS PROGRAM

Our annual small grants program supports community groups and not-for-profit organisations to deliver services, programs, special events and other activities.

This year we streamlined the Grants and Awards for the Community program and introduced an annual

Business Award. The consolidation of grants and awards makes it easier for the Willoughby community to apply. Priority is given to projects that celebrate diversity, provide access to quality community services and facilities, achieve healthy lifestyles and lifelong learning and support economic growth.

In 2020/21, the grants program allocated \$79,883 to 25 community groups.



## ACHIEVING GREATER EFFICIENCIES

Identifying and making improvements to our processes enables us to improve efficiency and customer service. In response to a review of our Customer Service Request (CSR) process we developed the CSR dashboard which showed we received 23,786 service requests in 2020/21. The most popular request was for the free general clean up in March, showing a 70% increase in CSR's with 2,231 requests lodged.

An economic dashboard is available on our website for new and existing businesses to access up-to-date and accurate data about the economy of Willoughby. It shows nearly \$12 billion in Gross Regional Product (GRP), 13,307 registered businesses and 72,612 jobs in the Willoughby area.

Further business improvements included an end-to-end review of the development application fee processes and a review of planning notification procedures.

## ENHANCING TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE

During the year we continued implementing Stage 2 of our Corporate IT Systems upgrade including systems to improve community interaction with council and improve business processes across Finance, HR and procurement.

We continued roll out of Council's new websites to improve how we provide services and information. This year we launched the Willoughby Leisure Centre and The Zenith Theatre & Convention Centre websites. In 2021/22, Council will roll out new websites for The Concourse, Visit Chatswood and Emerge Festival.



## ASSET MANAGEMENT, RENEWAL AND MAINTENANCE

We manage and maintain infrastructure assets in the local government area. This includes roads, footpaths, kerbs, stormwater drainage systems, bridges, buildings and fences.

One of the most significant challenges we continue to face is the coordination of our infrastructure assets and how they are effectively managed for their full lifespan. The timely renewal of assets minimises the ongoing cost of maintaining significant levels of infrastructure.

This year we developed a single asset register (TechOne) incorporating fleet and plant, infrastructure and other/office and assets. The register integrates several functions including human resources, finance, works, strategic asset management, procurement, contract management, customer services, property and rates when fully implemented.

Despite the impacts of the pandemic, we continued to operate, maintain and renew assets for the community,

as part of our *Asset Management Strategy 2020-2029* and *Asset Improvement Plan 2020/21*. We developed asset risk registers for open space (parks, playgrounds and sports fields) and building assets to complement existing risk registers for civil assets (roads, bridges, kerb and gutter, footpaths and stormwater).

## ADVOCACY

We wrote to the NSW Premier to express our interest for local government to be included in the National Cabinet.

We made a submission to the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) on the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Beaches Link and Gore Hill Freeway Connection project in March 2021. Since then, Council staff have had meetings with the project team from Transport for NSW to discuss the many issues for our community as raised in our submission. Furthermore, the project team recently gave a briefing to the CEO, Mayor and Councillors. They described the status of their Response to Submissions and Preferred Infrastructure

reports, which are due to be released before the end of this year. These reports were required by the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) following the exhibition of the EIS and will be a response to matters raised by all submissions.

We made a submission to the DPIE on the *Environmental Impact Statement* for the Beaches Link and Gore Hill Freeway Connection project.

We also made submissions to the NSW Government in response to its Infrastructure Contributions Reform Package and to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) in response to its issues paper *Review of the Rate Peg* to include population growth.

## CHALLENGES

- When the NSW Government enforced lockdowns during the pandemic we experienced a rapid shift to remote working, online services and online payments.
- Maintaining assets in good condition when funding from the existing infrastructure levy expires on 30 June 2022.
- A robotics program automation project was deferred until phase three rollout of our new corporate IT systems.
- COVID-19 resulted in financial challenges including a \$3.1 million deficit at the start of the year and despite this, recorded a small surplus.
- The Infrastructure Contributions Reforms proposed by the NSW Government will significantly impact Council's ability to generate revenue that supports local infrastructure and economy.

## OUR PLANS FOR THE YEAR AHEAD

- Conduct the election and induct Councillors.
- Conduct service review of the planning approval process.
- Conduct Customer Experience Review.
- Continue roll out of Corporate IT systems to enhance remote working.
- Upgrade The Concourse carpark system and equipment.
- Continue to update asset management plans.
- Implement the *Asset Management Improvement Plan 2020*.
- Design and construct the ground floor Customer Service Centre at Victor St.



**C O R P O R A T E   G O V E R N A N C E**

# Our Councillors



**BACK ROW L-R:** Cllr Stuart Coppock (Naremburn Ward), Deputy Mayor Craig Campbell (West Ward), Cllr Angelo Rozos (Middle Harbour Ward), Cllr Nic Wright (Naremburn Ward), Cllr Denis Fernandez (Sailors Bay Ward)  
**FRONT ROW L-R:** Cllr Hugh Eriksson (Sailors Bay Ward), Cllr Christine Tuon (Naremburn Ward), Cllr Wendy Norton (Middle Harbour Ward), Cllr Brendon Zhu (Sailors Bay Ward), Mayor Gail Giles-Gidney, Cllr Tony Mustaca (West Ward), Cllr Lynne Saville (West Ward), Cllr Judith Rutherford (Middle Harbour Ward)

## Mayor Gail Giles-Gidney

9777 1001  
[gail.giles-gidney@willoughby.nsw.gov.au](mailto:gail.giles-gidney@willoughby.nsw.gov.au)

## Middle Harbour Ward

**Wendy Norton**  
9417 1984  
0409 835 403  
[wendy.norton@willoughby.nsw.gov.au](mailto:wendy.norton@willoughby.nsw.gov.au)

**Angelo Rozos**  
0481 033 441  
[angelo.rozos@willoughby.nsw.gov.au](mailto:angelo.rozos@willoughby.nsw.gov.au)

**Judith Rutherford AM**  
9417 2585  
0419 293 302  
[judith.rutherford@willoughby.nsw.gov.au](mailto:judith.rutherford@willoughby.nsw.gov.au)

## Naremburn Ward

**Stuart Coppock**  
0428 440 629  
[stuart.coppock@willoughby.nsw.gov.au](mailto:stuart.coppock@willoughby.nsw.gov.au)

**Christine Tuon**  
0490 849 062  
[christine.tuon@willoughby.nsw.gov.au](mailto:christine.tuon@willoughby.nsw.gov.au)

**Nic Wright**  
0481 033 442  
[nic.wright@willoughby.nsw.gov.au](mailto:nic.wright@willoughby.nsw.gov.au)

## Sailors Bay Ward

**Hugh Eriksson**  
0409 361 268  
[hugh.eriksson@willoughby.nsw.gov.au](mailto:hugh.eriksson@willoughby.nsw.gov.au)

**Denis Fernandez**  
0409 225 381  
[denis.fernandez@willoughby.nsw.gov.au](mailto:denis.fernandez@willoughby.nsw.gov.au)

**Brendon Zhu**  
0490 875 844  
[brendon.zhu@willoughby.nsw.gov.au](mailto:brendon.zhu@willoughby.nsw.gov.au)

## West Ward

**Craig Campbell**  
0413 363 648  
[craig.campbell@willoughby.nsw.gov.au](mailto:craig.campbell@willoughby.nsw.gov.au)

**Tony Mustaca OAM**  
9412 2692  
[tony.mustaca@willoughby.nsw.gov.au](mailto:tony.mustaca@willoughby.nsw.gov.au)

**Lynne Saville**  
9412 1846  
0402 395 165  
[lynne.saville@willoughby.nsw.gov.au](mailto:lynne.saville@willoughby.nsw.gov.au)

## The role of our elected council

We operate under the *Local Government Act 1993*. Our elected council is responsible for providing leadership, monitoring the organisation's performance, overseeing the allocation of resources and determining policies.

Councillor Stuart Coppock, who represented Willoughby City Council's Naremburn Ward, resigned on 30 June 2021 after over 20 years of service.

# Decision making

## COUNCIL MEETINGS

Our formal decision-making processes are conducted through council meetings. A large number of business matters covering a wide range of issues are discussed. Meetings are held in line with our 2020 code of meeting practice. In response to government-imposed restrictions on public gatherings our Council meetings continued online with live casting available for our community to view the meetings via Council's website.

## COUNCIL MEETING ATTENDANCE

The elected Council met a total of 11 times during the year. Attendance at Council meetings from 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021 is below.

| COUNCILLOR        | Number of Council Meetings Attended |
|-------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Gail Giles-Gidney | 11                                  |
| Craig Campbell    | 11                                  |
| Stuart Coppock    | 8                                   |
| Hugh Eriksson     | 11                                  |
| Denis Fernandez   | 10                                  |
| Tony Mustaca      | 11                                  |
| Wendy Norton      | 11                                  |
| Angelo Rozos      | 9                                   |
| Judith Rutherford | 8                                   |
| Lynne Saville     | 10                                  |
| Christine Tuon    | 9                                   |
| Nic Wright        | 10                                  |
| Brendon Zhu       | 11                                  |

## COUNCILLOR BRIEFINGS

Councillor briefings are held regularly – normally twice a month. These are not decision-making meetings. Councillors receive information on strategic policy development, new and ongoing projects and other complex matters.

## OUR CODE OF CONDUCT

A code of conduct applies to our councillors and staff. The code provides an overview of the councillors' responsibilities and includes guidelines for rules of conduct, decision making and the use of resources.

## ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Council operates several advisory committees that provide guidance and advice to Council in a number of areas including cycling, access and sustainability. The current term of Council is extended to December 2021 due to the June to October pandemic lockdowns. Restrictions on public gatherings prevented in-person voting for local government elections, which were due to be held in September 2021.



# Our Staff

## EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM



Office of  
Chief Executive  
Debra Just



Community Culture  
and Leisure  
Melanie Smith



Customer  
and Corporate  
Laura Kendall



Planning and  
Infrastructure  
Hugh Phemister

*Greg McDonald completed his tenure at Council in January 2021, as Director of Customer and Corporate.  
Chris Binns was acting Director of Planning and Infrastructure from July 2020 to March 2021*



## STAFF AND RECRUITMENT

### RETAINING AND ATTRACTING HIGH QUALITY EMPLOYEES

Offering opportunities for personal and career development allows us to continuously attract and retain high-quality staff.

During and following the first lockdown, there were significant changes in the way our staff operated. Many staff worked from home and continued to do so for several months on rotation to manage social distancing. In January we introduced work from home guidelines and processes to provide staff with the opportunity to put more regular work from home arrangements in place. This enhanced workplace flexibility is a key driver for attracting quality and diverse employees. We have upgraded our hardware and software so staff are well equipped to work in a variety of locations.

We provide flexible employment arrangements. The distribution between these employment types is shown below.

### Employment type

|           | 2020/21 |
|-----------|---------|
| Full time | 334     |
| Part time | 73      |
| Casual    | 130     |
| Total     | 407     |

### Number of staff

|  | 2016/17 | 2017/18 | 2018/19 | 2019/20 | 2020/21 |
|--|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Total staff full-time equivalent (FTE) | 353     | 369     | 361     | 370     | 375.74  |
| Total staff headcount                  | 387     | 401     | 400     | 411     | 407     |

### EMPLOYER BRAND

We developed a new employer brand to best position Council to attract and retain high quality staff. The 'Where You Can' brand conveys that Willoughby City Council is a place 'where you can' grow, find meaningful work, make a real impact on your community and experience variety. We developed the brand through engagement with staff in focus groups and interviews and will use it to communicate what potential and existing employees can expect from their career at Council and what we expect our employees to contribute to our desired culture and vision.



### CREATING DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

We provide access to ongoing learning and development opportunities to build the capacity of our employees. Opportunities include on-the-job training, internal and external workshops, conferences and programs.

### LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT HANDBOOK

We developed the Learning and Development handbook to provide greater career and development opportunities for staff. It is designed to empower staff and gives them greater ability to steer their goals, development and achievements for current and future work. The new handbook will be rolled out in 2021/22.



## WORKFORCE PLANNING

Planning for the needs of our current and future workforce is a major focus for our People and Culture team. Our workforce plan, a component of the resourcing strategy, ensures we have the right workforce to sustain a high level of service for years to come. We on-boarded two new directors with a breadth of experience and skills to continue to lead staff and the organisation.

## ENSURING EQUITY AND DIVERSITY IN EMPLOYMENT

We are an Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) employer committed to providing a workplace that is free from discrimination and harassment. We provide equal employment opportunities for current and prospective employees. Human resources policies and procedures are consistent with these principles. These principles are the cornerstone of our recruitment, selection and development processes. They are also incorporated into all relevant internal training programs.

## SUPPORTING STAFF

We are committed to health and wellbeing practices that boost morale and job satisfaction among staff and lower the rate of absenteeism. Our employee assistance program includes an independent, confidential counselling service for staff and their immediate families.

A Wellness at Work program helps our staff make better lifestyle choices. This program includes mindful leadership and corporate gym membership rates at Willoughby Leisure Centre. We offer flexible work options including flexible working hours, working from home and leave arrangements and have equipped staff with hardware and software to support flexibility.

Following the lockdown period, we took a staged approach to returning to work as restrictions eased. We implemented a splinter award with paid leave so staff could receive their COVID-19 vaccinations and quickly supported work from home when public health orders were imposed late in June 2021.

## WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY

Our organisation is responsible for providing the best possible standard of workplace health and safety for all employees, contractors, volunteers and visitors to our premises. We actively promote safe and healthy work practices to reduce accidents, create a safety conscious culture and ensure continuing compliance. We strive for early intervention and support when employees are injured to ensure they can remain at work or are given every opportunity for a quick recovery and return to the workplace. Key achievements in 2020/21 were:

- Meeting WHS duties and supporting staff during the COVID-19 pandemic including implementing COVID safe plans for services, activities and events.
- A focus on mental health including participating in R U OK? Day.

## TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Total expenditure on training and development per employee was \$544. It focused on Leadership and High Performing teams as well as wellbeing, WHS and individual skill development.

## EMPLOYEE SURVEY

Council conducts an anonymous employee survey every two years. This assists us to understand employee satisfaction and perceptions of performance, as well as identify opportunities for improvement. We improved on the results of the 2017 survey and our strengths included values, recognition, cross-unit cooperation and involvement. We developed a number of initiatives in response to the results of the 2019 survey including the employer brand, increased flexibility in work arrangements, improved technology and launched the Learning and Development Handbook.

## EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

There were no industrial disputes in 2020/21. Our workplace agreement sees staff redeployed or paid a job retention allowance for three months if they are stood down during the coronavirus pandemic. As part of the NSW Local Government (COVID-19) Splinter Award staff were able to work from home, be redeployed, receive paid special leave or receive paid job retention allowance during the coronavirus pandemic.



# Corporate Governance

## SETTING STRATEGIC DIRECTION

The community strategic plan outlines the desired outcomes for the Willoughby City community. We track progress towards the overall goals in the plan twice a year. For more information, you can view the six-monthly *Delivery Program 2017-2022* progress report at [willoughby.nsw.gov.au](http://willoughby.nsw.gov.au). We will review the *Community Strategic Plan in 2021/22* in line with the end of Council term in December 2021.

## CORPORATE DIRECTION

Our new Corporate Direction (Lead, Learn, Care, Share and Deliver) was embedded in the organisation. Our staff performance is assessed annually against behaviour and aspirations under the corporate direction. We apply the aspiration of Lead, Learn, Care, Share and Deliver to all our operations and projects.

## POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW

Council policies are public statements formally adopted by Council, which clearly state our requirements in relation to particular matters or issues. The following policies were reviewed or developed in 2020/21:

- Revoked the *Willoughby City Council Public Art Policy (2009)* and adopted the *Public Art Policy*
- Adopted the *Willoughby Affordable Housing Strategy 2026* and *Affordable Housing Policy*
- Adopted the *Grants and Awards for the Community Policy*
- *Revenue Policy 2021/22*
- Reviewed and adopted the *Investment Policy 2020-21* including changes to credit rating, counterparty and maturity limits.

## PLANS AND STRATEGIES

New and amended plans and strategies adopted in 2020/21 include:

- *Willoughby City Council Operational Plan 2020-21*
- *Coolaroo Reserve Action Plan 2020*
- *Landscape Improvement Plan – Cleland Park*
- *Playground Improvement Plan – Don Wilson*
- Adopted changes to *Willoughby Development Control Plan (WDCP)* and endorsed amendments to the site-specific controls in Section D.2.16.17
- *Business Support Plan*
- *North Arm Reserve Action Plan 2020*
- *Willis Park Reserve Action Plan 2020*
- *Operational Plan and Budget for 2021/22*
- *Castle Cove Park Reserve Action Plan 2021*

Council also:

- Referred the draft *Urban Bushland Plan of Management 2020* to the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
- Endorsed the Master Plan for the Chatswood Rotary War Memorial Athletics Field
- Endorsed the Willoughby Community and Economic Recovery Plans

## ETHICAL AND RESPONSIBLE DECISION MAKING

### HIGH STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

We foster a culture that strongly values ethical behaviour, integrity, honesty and professionalism throughout the organisation.

Our code of conduct governs staff and the elected council in their day-to-day activities, decisions and dealings with customers, colleagues and stakeholders. Staff must follow the code of conduct policy and procedures. The code of conduct guides how to manage actual and perceived conflicts of interest.

We are committed to preventing corrupt conduct by implementing and regularly reviewing a range of strategies to avoid, detect and investigate corrupt conduct. This includes training on the code of conduct during the induction for new employees.

### PROTECTING PRIVACY

We are committed to protecting an individual's privacy when we collect, store, use and disclose personal information. When dealing with private and personal information, we apply the principles and obligations within the *Privacy and Personal Information Act 1998*.

Our privacy management plan outlines how we observe and adhere to privacy legislation and manage personal information held throughout the organisation.

### COMPLIANCE MANAGEMENT

The most urgent and potentially the most significant policy matters related to the Public Health Orders associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. Since the start of the pandemic we responded to 10 orders and directives while continuing to adapt, learn and update our processes and plans in the face of disrupted supply chains.

We met the requirements of the PHOs very quickly. Our Crisis Management Team and our Executive Leadership Team met regularly to monitor our response, make informed decisions and record lessons learned. The Crisis Management Team was disbanded in August 2020 as the crisis eased however we closely monitored and reported on service and financial impacts while restrictions remained in place. As restrictions on public gatherings eased, we opened services, venues, activities and events in line with public health orders using approved COVID safe plans and QR codes to maximise public safety and support contact-tracing efforts. Late in June 2021 there was a spike in COVID-19 cases in NSW as the Delta strain took hold.

On 26 June 2021 we reinstated the Crisis Management Team as NSW was forced into lockdown again.

While our main functions fall under the *Local Government Act 1993*, we have powers and obligations under a number of other Acts. Some of these are: *Companion Animals Act 1998*, *Copyright Act 1968 (Commonwealth)*, *Crown Land Management Act 2016*, *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Commonwealth)*, *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997*, *Environmental Protection Act*, *Food Act 2003*, *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*, *Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Act 1992 (Commonwealth)*, *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998*, *Protected Disclosures Act 1994* and *Work and Health Safety Act 2011*.

We also have a significant number of other compliance obligations including Office of Local Government directions, standards, and codes. Staff are provided with regular updates on changes to legislation to ensure compliance. We maintain a legislative compliance register detailing all applicable legislation and use this to monitor compliance.

### PROBITY IN PROCUREMENT, CONTRACTS AND TENDERING

The *Local Government Act 1993* requires councils to prepare, approve and comply with a procurement policy. Our procurement policy outlines how to act in a transparent and fair manner when purchasing goods, services and works by Willoughby City Council and dealing with contracts and tendering. We engaged independent probity auditors for the expression of interest for design services for the Gore Hill Indoor Sports Centre.

### IMPACTS OF NEW LEGISLATION

Council monitors updates to new legislation. We responded to 10 public health orders and directions, often in advance of the details or the enabling legislation which lagged behind the announcements.

Changes were made to functions under the *Local Government Act 1993*, including in relation to council meetings and preparation of integrated planning documents and financial statements. Changes also impacted the planning functions of Council, with changes to the normal development process.

These changes included reforms to ensure a fairer and more flexible rating system for councils and ratepayers, councillor superannuation and minor changes that relate to council elections. They also introduced streamlines integrated planning and reporting.

A temporary amendment exempted councils from complying with the requirement under their codes of meeting practice for councillors to be personally present at meetings to participate in them. The exemption expires on 31 December 2021.

## AUDIT AND RISK

### AUDIT, RISK AND IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE

The Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee independently reviews the objectivity and reliability of our financial information, and ensures financial statements are supported by appropriate management sign off on the adequacy of internal controls. The Committee met four times in 2020/21. The committee also facilitates sound risk management.

| Attendees   | Meeting          |
|---|------------------|
| Mr R Dobbie (Chair); Mr A Hanigan; Mr B Hrnjak, Councillor C Tuon, Councillor N Wright. | 29 July 2020     |
| Mr R Dobbie (Chair); Mr A Hanigan; Mr B Hrnjak, Councillor C Tuon                       | 4 November 2020  |
| Ms E Gavey (Chair), Mr R Lagaida, Mr C Davies, Councillor C Tuon, Councillor N Wright.  | 16 December 2020 |
| Ms E Gavey (Chair), Mr R Lagaida, Mr C Davies, Councillor C Tuon, Councillor N Wright.  | 17 March 2021    |

### INTERNAL AUDIT

The internal audit function brings a systematic, disciplined approach to evaluate and improve organisational systems, processes and reporting. Internal audit activities undertaken during the year included emergency response processes, Accounts Payable review of vendor information, fleet management and safety processes and local infrastructure contributions processes.

### EXTERNAL AUDIT

A private firm appointed by the audit office annually audits our financial statements. It provides an independent opinion on whether our financial statements are true and fair and comply with Australian accounting standards.

### FRAUD AND CORRUPTION PREVENTION

We are committed to implementing and maintaining fraud and corruption controls and meeting all legislative compliance obligations. We continue to raise awareness of

fraud risk and fraud control responsibilities.

We do this through:

- A fraud and corruption prevention training program for staff
- An internal reporting process for the management of public interest disclosures
- Council's *Fraud and Corruption Prevention Policy* and *Fraud and Corruption Prevention Plan*
- Risk treatments as appropriate

## DISCLOSURE

### ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY

We regularly inform the public on our performance and expenditure of funds through quarterly budget reviews, six-monthly progress reports on the *Delivery Program 2017-2022* and the annual report.

### OPEN ACCESS INFORMATION

We comply with the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009*, usually called the *GIPA Act*. Under the *GIPA Act*, certain documents are available on our website or for inspection free of charge at our Help and Service Centre. Information not already available in these two locations can be obtained by submitting an informal or formal request for the release of government information under the *GIPA Act*. These requests are accepted unless there is an overriding public interest against the disclosure. We received 46 GIPA applications in the 2020/21 financial year.

### PUBLIC INTEREST DISCLOSURES

Our councillors and staff are encouraged to report what they believe to be serious wrongdoings within the organisation. We are required under the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2013* to collect and report on information about public interest disclosures. No disclosure was made for the period 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021.

Our disclosures coordinator and disclosures officers are responsible for receiving public interest disclosures. Our public interest disclosure policy is at [willoughby.nsw.gov.au](http://willoughby.nsw.gov.au)

### FINANCIAL REPORTING AND DISCLOSURE

Council considered reports on financial impacts of COVID-19 including a strategy for managing the COVID-19 pandemic and proposed changes to the *Operational Plan 2020/21*, based on different budget scenarios. We continue to monitor the financial impact and deliverables.

## REGISTERS

There is certain information prescribed in the *GIPA Act* which is made available on Council's website. This includes the following:

- Register of Delegations
- Register of voting on planning matters (Sec 375A LGA)
- Contracts Register
- Register of Council decisions made against staff recommendations
- Voluntary Planning Agreement Register
- Councillors' Attendance at Council Briefing
- Councillors' Attendance at Council and Committee Meetings
- Register of returns of the interests of councillors, designated persons and delegates

## MANAGING GIFTS AND BENEFITS

Councillors and staff may be offered gifts. We manage the response to the offer of gifts and benefits through our code of conduct and by keeping a gifts and benefits register.

## RECOGNISING AND MANAGING RISK

Our risk management and internal audit framework was reviewed. The framework aims to combat fraud and corruption and is embedded in our strategic and operational policies and practices.

Risk management activities undertaken in 2020/21 included:

- Reviewed and updated Pandemic COVID-19 response using Business Continuity Management Plan and Pandemic Plan
- Identified critical function and services required during business interruptions
- Building recovery test exercise for continuity of staff workplaces
- Completed an external review of strategic risks
- Alignment of operational risks with business plans

We maintain and regularly review our risk registers for key strategic, operational and significant project risks.

### FORMAL RISK MANAGEMENT

We investigate existing and known risks, as well as risks that have not yet materialised into damage to people, property, the environment or our operations. Pre-emptive treatment of these risks is an essential component of comprehensive risk management.

### INFORMAL RISK MANAGEMENT

Information on our risks comes from many and various sources, including members of the public and employees. Risk management responses are initiated when we receive this information.



**OTHER STATUTORY  
INFORMATION**



## OTHER STATUTORY INFORMATION

This section contains further legislative information we are required to disclose.

### OVERSEAS VISITS

No paid overseas visits were undertaken by councillors, staff or other persons representing Willoughby City Council.

### MAYOR AND COUNCILLOR ALLOWANCES, FEES AND EXPENSES

Councillors are entitled to reimbursement for reasonable business expenses when attending conferences, seminars, meetings or functions. Councillors are also entitled to receive facilities such as a computer and printer for council business purposes, stationery and refreshments at council meetings. Councillors receive an annual allowance set by the remuneration tribunal. This allowance is paid in recognition of the demands placed on councillors in carrying out their civic duties.

In addition, the Mayor is entitled to receive a mayoral allowance, and reimbursement of reasonable expenses incurred when attending functions or performing duties in the role of the Mayor.

The allowances and fees are below.

| Allowances and fees              | Amount (\$)      |
|----------------------------------|------------------|
| Mayoral allowance                | \$68,530         |
| Councillors' fees and allowances | \$335,270        |
| <b>Total</b>                     | <b>\$403,800</b> |

Councillors incur expenses in the course of fulfilling their roles. Our Mayor and Councillor facilities and benefits policy provides these benefits:

| Councillor expenses                                       | Amount (\$)   |
|---|---------------|
| Office equipment  | 0             |
| Communications  | 9,486         |
| Conference and seminars                                   | 9,113         |
| Training and provision of skills development              | 1,507         |
| Accommodation and other out-of-pocket travelling expenses | 6,610         |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>26,716</b> |

You can see the policy at [willoughby.nsw.gov.au](http://willoughby.nsw.gov.au)

## CONTRACTS AWARDED

Purchasing decisions are made under Section 55 of the *Local Government Act 1993*. The major contracts and agreements (>\$150,000 each) below were awarded.

| Contractor                                       | Goods and services supplied  | Amount (\$)                            |
|--|--|--|
| Bitupave Ltd T/as Boral Asphalt                  | Road Surfacing, Patching and Associated Works                                    | Schedule of Rates Combined \$3,000,000 |
| Downer EDI Works Pty Ltd                         | Road Surfacing, Patching and Associated Works                                    | Schedule of Rates Combined \$3,000,000 |
| Complete Linemarking Services Pty Ltd            | Road Surfacing, Patching and Associated Works                                    | Schedule of Rates Combined \$3,000,000 |
| Workforce Road Services Pty Ltd                  | Road Surfacing, Patching and Associated Works                                    | Schedule of Rates Combined \$3,000,000 |
| SuperSealing Pty Ltd                             | Road Surfacing, Patching and Associated Works                                    | Schedule of Rates Combined \$3,000,000 |
| FH Painting Services                             | Provision of Painting Services   | Estimate \$1,500,000                   |
| CBD Electrical Pty Ltd                           | Provision of electrical, voice & data services                                   | Combined Estimate \$2,500,000          |
| Buildcorp Group Pty Ltd                          | The Concourse Chatswood façade upgrade   | \$7,663,977                            |
| Sydney Electrical & Data Services Pty Ltd        | Provision of electrical, voice & data services                                   | Combined Estimate \$2,500,000          |
| Benedict Recycling Pty Ltd                       | Disposal of Excavated Material and Spoil from within the Willoughby Council area | Estimate \$200,000                     |
| Glascott Landscape and Civil Pty Ltd             | Wilkes Avenue Upgrade - Construction Services                                    | \$847,329                              |
| Growth Civil Landscapes Pty Limited              | Naremburn Park Playground Upgrade  | \$289,566                              |
| Group GSA Pty Ltd                                | Chatswood to St Leonards Bicycle Routes Improvement - Detailed Design            | \$490,281                              |
| Elliam Pty Ltd                                   | SES Garage Upgrade 25 Station St Naremburn                                       | \$180,378                              |
| Sydney City Building Group                       | Affordable Housing Project 258 Sailors Bay Rd Northbridge                        | \$196,557                              |
| Capstone Recruitment Group Pty Ltd               | Recruitment services   | \$179,402                              |
| Data#3 Ltd                                       | Microsoft Licencing  | \$249,562                              |
| Garwood International Pty Ltd                    | Two Dual Control Regenerative Suction Road Sweeper                               | \$499,451                              |
| J.G. Anson Consulting Pty Ltd                    | Leadership Development and Coaching  | \$237,098                              |
| R&N Paddison Pty Ltd (t/as Turf Drain Australia) | Reconstruction of sportsgrounds at Bales Park and Willoughby Park No.1 Oval      | \$1,561,513                            |
| SJB Architecture NSW Pty Ltd                     | Artarmon Parklands Pavillion - Design Services                                   | \$235,620                              |
| Statecover Mutual Ltd                            | Workers Compensation Premiums  | \$1,550,488                            |

## LEGAL PROCEEDINGS AND COSTS

During 2020/21, we incurred legal costs for the legal proceedings below.

| Matter/<br>Counter Party   | Property/Type of Matter  | Status   | Fees Paid<br>Jul 20-<br>Jun 21 | Legal Cost<br>Recovery<br>(Expected/<br>Paid) |
|----------------------------|--|--|--------------------------------|---|
| LAND AND ENVIRONMENT COURT |  |  |                                |   |
| LEC<br>2018/00391545       | Deemed refusal of 19 room boarding House in Artarmon. DA 2018/189  | Appeal upheld. Development Consent is granted subject to conditions. Matter complete.        | \$1,011                        | \$6,000                                       |
| LEC<br>2018/00243687       | Appeal against deemed refusal of boarding house. DA 2018/191   | Appeal dismissed. Matter complete.   | \$1,010                        | \$30,000 received                             |
| LEC<br>2019/00234535       | Appeal to modify condition to allow the gymnasium to operate 24 hours on a permanent basis. DA 2017/240/A  | Modification DA is approved subject to conditions. Matter complete.                          | \$14,746                       |   |
| LEC<br>2019/00086793       | Appeal against deemed refusal alterations and additions for shop top housing in Chatswood CBD.   | Appeal upheld. Application amended. Matter complete.   | \$26,745                       | \$17,000 requested                            |
| LEC<br>2019/00112220       | Appeal against refusal of 80 place Childcare centre. DA 2019/12  | Appeal dismissed. Matter Complete.   | \$207,869                      |   |
| LEC<br>2019/00260878       | New dwelling, swimming pool, landscaping and associated works. DA 2019/185   | Appeal upheld. Deferred commencement consent granted subject to conditions. Matter complete. | \$37,001                       |   |
| LEC<br>2020/00270766       | Refusal of Development Consent proposing seniors housing facility comprising 15 independent living units, associated parking and landscaping.                        | Matter resolved by s34 agreement. Costs being pursued. Matter complete.                      | \$30,127                       |   |
| LEC<br>2020/00120432       | Failure to comply with terms of development approval - unlawful works in Heritage Conservation area. DA 2019/22  | Appeal upheld. Development consent is granted subject to conditions. Matter complete.        | \$58,501                       |   |
| LEC<br>2020/00142239       | DA for strata subdivision of an existing dual occupancy development is refused.  | Appeal dismissed, judgment made. Matter complete.  | \$10,280                       |   |
| LEC<br>2020/00173203       | Appeal against Council's refusal for change of use and fit-out of the first floor of the existing building for a massage parlour and sex service premise. DA 2020/66 | Appeal dismissed. Matter complete.   | \$78,869                       |   |
| LEC<br>2020/00123138       | Appeal against Council's issue of Development Control Order. DA 2018/229   | Works now completed and inspected as satisfactory. Matter complete.                          | \$45,039                       |   |

| Matter/<br>Counter Party | Property/Type of Matter  | Status  | Fees Paid<br>Jul 20-<br>Jun 21 | Legal Cost<br>Recovery<br>(Expected/<br>Paid) |
|--------------------------|--|---|--------------------------------|---|
| LEC<br>2020/00327199     | Appeal against Development Control Order requiring demolition of unauthorised works and compliance with approved Development Consent plans.  | Matter ongoing.   | \$15,162                       |   |
| LEC<br>2020/00327200     | BIC Appeal   | Matter ongoing.   | \$6,808                        |   |
| LEC<br>2020/00155414     | Appeal against deemed refusal of application for demolition of existing structures and construction of shop top housing development with basement car parking, landscaping and associated works. DA 2020/85  | S34 Agreement filed.<br>Matter complete.                                    | \$43,110                       |   |
| LEC<br>2020/00247753     | Class 1 appeal against Council order issued in relation to part-built decking around pool without consent.   | Conciliated agreement reached acceptable to Council.                        | \$18,944                       |   |
| LEC<br>2020/0016928      | Appeal against conditions of Development Consent.  | Upheld with amended conditions. Matter complete.                            | \$7,402                        |   |
| LEC<br>2020/00227729     | Appeal against WCC's refusal of BIC in relation to internal layout changes and increased staffing to brothel not in accordance with development consent.   | Matter ongoing.   | \$8,513                        |   |
| Order 3299               | Non-compliance of Swimming Pool.   | Compliance achieved.<br>Matter closed.                                      | \$1,608                        |   |
| LEC<br>2020/00160587     | Demolition of the existing dwellings and structures on the site, construction of a new multi dwelling housing development comprising eleven dwellings and associated common access driveway, parking, landscaping and associated works. Refused by WLPP. | Matter ongoing.   | \$26,585                       |   |
| LEC<br>2021/0023645      | Change of Use to a Boarding house.   | Matter ongoing.   | \$2,153                        |   |
| LEC<br>2021/00019964     | Appeal against deemed refusal for alterations and additions.   | Matter ongoing.   | \$11,448                       |   |
| LEC 2021/54509           | Appeal against refusal of seniors living development.  | Matter ongoing.   | \$22,650                       |   |
| LEC<br>2021/0019527      | Demolition of existing structures and construction of multi dwelling housing containing 8 townhouses with basement parking and roof top terrace.   | Court order received regarding conciliation conference.<br>Matter complete. | \$27,596                       |   |
| Legal Advice             | Prosecution for unlawful heritage trees removal  | Matter complete.  | \$14,978                       |   |

| Matter/<br>Counter Party                  | Property/Type of Matter   | Status   | Fees Paid<br>Jul 20-<br>Jun 21 | Legal Cost<br>Recovery<br>(Expected/<br>Paid) |
|---|---|--|--------------------------------|---|
| LEC<br>2017/0015679                       | Ch. 9 Site Class 4 Appeal   | Matter complete.   | \$4,515                        |   |
| LEC<br>2020/352922                        | Chatswood RSL Class 4 Appeal<br>for SNPP decision   | Notice of Discontinuance<br>filed. Matter complete.  | \$9,505                        |   |
| Order 3160 -<br>Cladding                  | Replacing all the building's<br>external aluminium composite<br>panels with acceptable<br>aluminium panels which has not<br>been complied with. | Civil enforcement<br>proceedings halted<br>as rectification works<br>are commencing.<br>Matter complete. | \$11,421                       |   |
| <b>Total - Land and Environment Court</b> |   |  | <b>\$748,648</b>               | <b>\$53,000</b>                               |

### WORKS CARRIED OUT ON PRIVATE LAND

In 2020/21, no works on private land were undertaken under Section 67 of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

### PARTNERSHIPS, COOPERATIVES AND JOINT VENTURES

Partnering with other organisations and groups is an efficient way for us to offer services and deliver projects.

We were a party to the partnerships, cooperatives and joint ventures below.

| Program  | Description  |
|--|--|
| Aboriginal Heritage Program                                      | Joint venture between Lane Cove, North Sydney, Ku-ring-gai, Strathfield, Northern Beaches, and Willoughby councils, and the Department of the Environment and NSW Heritage Office to effectively manage and preserve Aboriginal heritage sites across the participating government areas.                  |
| Civic Place Trust  | The trust is a public fund that holds donations and bequests and assists in the maintenance and operation of facilities in The Concourse in Civic Place.   |
| Civic Risk Mutual Insurance Pool                                 | A cooperative of a number of councils with the objective of minimising the insurance premiums payable by member councils and sharing risk strategies.  |
| Dougherty Apartments Retirement Housing Project                  | A Company Limited by Guarantee, membership comprising Willoughby City Council and NSW Department of Housing. The Apartments, at No 1 Victor Street, Chatswood, is a 168 bed aged care facility that provides a mixture of accommodation with residential care rooms, a dementia wing and retirement units. |
| Harvesting of Treated Water from Lane Cove Tunnel Lane Cove West | Memorandum of understanding between Willoughby City Council and Connector Motorways P/L to clarify access to the treated groundwater from Lane Cove Tunnel for use in the water harvesting project at Mowbray Park.  |
| North West Metropolitan Region Emergency Management Committee    | This committee manages the arrangements for the prevention of, preparation for, response to, and recovery from emergency situations in the North West Emergency Management Region of Sydney.   |

| Program   | Description  |
|---|--|
| Northern Sydney Councils Waste Services Alliance  | A waste processing and disposal participation agreement between Willoughby, North Sydney, Ku-ring-gai, Lane Cove, Hunters Hill and Ryde councils, setting out how the councils will make decisions about the procurement and management of a joint municipal solid waste processing and disposal contract. |
| Northern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils | An organisation representing issues in local government for the Greater Sydney region. Local Government members include Willoughby, Hornsby, Hunter's Hill, Ku-ring-gai, Lane Cove, Mosman, North Sydney and Ryde.   |
| StateCover  | StateCover is a company providing workers' compensation insurance cover to the NSW local government industry and specifically councils. We are a member of StateCover Mutual Limited and hold a partly paid share in the entity.   |
| Sydney Coastal Councils Group                     | The group comprises nine councils. It promotes coordination on environmental issues and sustainable management of the urban coastal environment.   |
| Willoughby / Lane Cove Local Emergency Committee  | This committee is responsible for the preparation, response and recovery for emergencies which require a significant and coordinated response at the local level. It operates under the provisions of the <i>State Emergency and Rescue Management Act, 1993</i> .   |

### FUNCTIONS DELEGATED TO EXTERNAL BODIES

We did not delegate functions to any external bodies during 2020/21.

### CONTROLLING INTEREST IN COMPANIES

We have no controlling interests in any companies.

### SENIOR STAFF REMUNERATION

The total amount of money payable in respect to the employment of senior staff, including money payable for salary, the provision of fringe benefits, and for all other costs associated with their employment, was \$1,678,298.

The total remuneration packages for our senior staff for 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021 was:

| Position                | Total remuneration (\$) |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Chief Executive Officer | 388,104                 |
| Senior Staff            | \$902,090               |
| <b>Total</b>            | <b>1,290,194</b>        |

### STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

We levied an annual charge for stormwater management services yielding \$694,000.

### COASTAL PROTECTION SERVICES

We do not levy an annual charge for coastal protection services.

### FISHERIES MANAGEMENT ACT 1994 AND THREATENED SPECIES CONSERVATION ACT 1995

We are not identified in any recovery or threat abatement plan under the Fisheries Management Act 1994 and Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995.

### COMPANION ANIMAL MANAGEMENT

Our rangers work with the community to protect residents, their pets and the natural environment by enforcing companion animal laws.

The information in this section is reported to the Office of Local Government under its guidelines.

During 2020/201, we received 23 reports of alleged dog attacks. As required, all dog attacks were reported to the Office of Local Government within 72 hours of being reported to us. Only dog attacks reported to us are included in this figure.

We conduct companion animal community education programs. This includes providing brochures on the

responsibilities of pet ownerships to owners of newly registered animals. These are available from our website and Help and Services Centre. We also provide dog litter disposal bags in selected unleashed dog exercise areas. 14 of our parks are off-leash areas for the exercise of dogs. Our rangers do regular patrols of public places to ensure compliance with the *Companion Animals Act 1998*.

We spent around \$11,146 on companion animal activities this year.

Non-desexed pets that are impounded are desexed before being re-homed. We have an animal rehoming centre services agreement with our pound, which ensures animals are rehomed where possible. Animals are only euthanised if they have behavioural issues or significant health issues

that make them unsuitable to rehome. We cover all the costs of this agreement.

#### COMPETITION POLICY

The principle of competitive neutrality requires that government businesses, including those significant business functions operated by local government, operate without net competitive advantages over the private sector as a result of their public ownership.

The functions below were categorised as business activities where the principles of competitive neutrality apply.

The special purpose financial reports for the year ended 30 June 2021 disclose the operating results for category 1 and category 2 activities.

### Category 1 – Turnover of more than \$2m per annum

| Name                      | Description of activity   |
|---------------------------|---|
| The Concourse Retail      | The Concourse Precinct includes the Chatswood Library, a Concert Hall, Theatre, Art Space, Urban Screen, restaurants, cafés and other entertainment and parking facilities. |
| Willoughby Leisure Centre | Willoughby Leisure Centre includes a public swimming pool, gymnasium, indoor sports hall and other associated facilities.   |

### Category 2 – Turnover of less than \$2m per annum

| Name   | Description of activity  |
|--|--|
| Devonshire Street Child Care                           | Provides long day child care services for 59 places.   |
| Family Day Care  | Provides day care services for children in need of care aged 0 to 12 at a registered carer's home.   |
| Before (BSC) / After School Care (ASC) & Vacation Care | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Artarmon (BSC &amp; ASC)</li> <li>• Chatswood (ASC)</li> <li>• Bales Park (ASC)</li> </ul> <p>Before school care hours are from 7.30am to 9am and after school care hours are from 3pm to 6pm. We also operate services in conjunction with the state government during school holidays at:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Artarmon Vacation Care Centre</li> <li>• Bales Park Vacation Care Centre</li> <li>• Chatswood Vacation Care Centre.</li> </ul> |
| Dougherty Food Services                                | Dougherty Food services is a commercial food kitchen that supplies meals to a number of organisations as well as catering for functions and the operation of a coffee shop.  |

### SPECIAL RATES AND LEVIES

We have an infrastructure levy arising from an approved special rate variation. The additional income raised through this levy (and the movement in the associated reserves) is shown in the audited financial statements.

The following table shows the movement in the Infrastructure Levy Reserve for the 2021/22 Financial Year

| Infrastructure Levy Reconciliation                   | \$'000  |
|--|---------|
| 2020/2021 – Beginning Balance Infrastructure Reserve | 2,024   |
| 2020/2021 – Income Raised from Infrastructure Levy   | 3,153   |
| 2020/2021 – Amounts spent from Infrastructure Levy   | (1,715) |
| 2020/2021 – End Balance Infrastructure Reserve       | 3,462   |

### RATES AND CHARGES WRITTEN OFF

Rates and charges totalling \$453,477 were written off this fiscal year as shown below. These figures include \$450,775 of pensioner rebate amounts.

| Rates and charges            | Amount (\$)    |
|------------------------------|----------------|
| Rates written off            | 452,864        |
| Interest charges written off | 613            |
| <b>Total</b>                 | <b>453,477</b> |

### ACCESS APPLICATIONS

Section 125 of the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* (GIPA Act) requires us to report in detail on the handling of access applications. This statement is in line with GIPA reporting requirements.

#### Number of access applications received

During the reporting period, we received a total of 47 access applications.

#### Number of refused applications

During the reporting period, we refused nil access applications.

| Number of applications refused | Wholly | Partly | Total |
|--------------------------------|--------|--------|-------|
| 0                              | 0      | 0      | 0     |





## Number of applications by type of applicant and outcome\*

|  | Access granted in full | Access granted in part | Access refused in full | Information not held | Information already available | Refuse to deal with application | Refuse to confirm / deny whether information is held | Application withdrawn | Total     | % of Total |
|--|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|-----------------------|-----------|------------|
| Media  | 0                      | 0                      | 0                      | 0                    | 0                             | 0                               | 0  | 0                     | 0         | 0%         |
| Members of Parliament                            | 0                      | 0                      | 0                      | 0                    | 0                             | 0                               | 0  | 0                     | 0         | 0%         |
| Private sector business                          | 0                      | 0                      | 0                      | 0                    | 0                             | 0                               | 0  | 0                     | 1         | 2%         |
| Not for profit organisations or community groups | 0                      | 0                      | 0                      | 0                    | 0                             | 0                               | 0  | 0                     | 0         | 0%         |
| Members of the public (by legal representative)  | 3                      | 3                      | 0                      | 2                    | 0                             | 0                               | 0  | 0                     | 8         | 18%        |
| Members of the public (other)                    | 19                     | 11                     | 0                      | 5                    | 0                             | 0                               | 0  | 0                     | 35        | 80%        |
| <b>Total</b>                                     | <b>22</b>              | <b>15</b>              | <b>0</b>               | <b>7</b>             | <b>0</b>                      | <b>0</b>                        | <b>0</b>   | <b>0</b>              | <b>44</b> |            |
| <b>% of total</b>                                | <b>50%</b>             | <b>34%</b>             | <b>0%</b>              | <b>16%</b>           | <b>0%</b>                     | <b>0%</b>                       | <b>0%</b>  | <b>0%</b>             |           |            |

\* More than one decision can be made in respect of a particular access application. If so, a recording must be made in relation to each such decision.

## Number of applications by request type and outcome\*

|  | Access granted in full | Access granted in part | Access refused in full | Information not held | Information already available | Refuse to deal with application | Refuse to confirm / deny whether information is held | Application withdrawn | Total     | % of Total |
|--|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|--|-----------------------|-----------|------------|
| Personal information applications <sup>1</sup>   | 1                      | 2                      | 0                      | 1                    | 0                             | 0                               | 0  | 0                     | 4         | 9%         |
| Access applications (other than personal information applications)                     | 21                     | 9                      | 0                      | 6                    | 0                             | 0                               | 0  | 0                     | 36        | 82%        |
| Access applications that are partly personal information applications and partly other | 0                      | 4                      | 0                      | 0                    | 0                             | 0                               | 0  | 0                     | 4         | 9          |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>22</b>              | <b>15</b>              | <b>0</b>               | <b>7</b>             | <b>0</b>                      | <b>0</b>                        | <b>0</b>   | <b>0</b>              | <b>44</b> |            |
| <b>% of total</b>  | <b>50%</b>             | <b>34%</b>             | <b>0%</b>              | <b>16%</b>           | <b>0%</b>                     | <b>0%</b>                       | <b>0%</b>  | <b>0%</b>             |           |            |

\* More than one decision can be made in respect of a particular access application. If so, a recording must be made in relation to each such decision.

<sup>1</sup> A personal information application is an access application for personal information (as defined in clause 4 of Schedule 4 to the Act) about the applicant (the applicant being an individual).

## Invalid applications

| Reason for invalidity   | Number of applications | % of total |
|---|------------------------|------------|
| Application does not comply with formal requirements (section 41 of the Act)  | 1                      | 100%       |
| Application is for excluded information of the agency (section 43 of the Act) | 0                      | 0%         |
| Application contravenes restraint order (section 110 of the Act)              | 0                      | 0%         |
| Total number of invalid applications received                                 | 1                      | 100%       |
| Invalid applications that subsequently became valid applications              | 1                      | 100%       |

## Conclusive presumption of overriding public interest against disclosure: matters listed in Schedule 1 of Act

|   | No of times consideration used* | % of total |
|---|---------------------------------|------------|
| Overriding secrecy laws                               | 0                               | 0%         |
| Cabinet information                                   | 0                               | 0%         |
| Executive Council information                         | 0                               | 0%         |
| Contempt  | 0                               | 0%         |
| Legal professional privilege                          | 0                               | 0%         |
| Excluded information                                  | 0                               | 0%         |
| Documents affecting law enforcement and public safety | 0                               | 0%         |
| Transport safety                                      | 0                               | 0%         |
| Adoption  | 0                               | 0%         |
| Care and protection of children                       | 0                               | 0%         |
| Ministerial code of conduct                           | 0                               | 0%         |
| Aboriginal and environmental heritage                 | 0                               | 0%         |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>0</b>                        |            |

\* More than one public interest consideration may apply in relation to a particular access application and if so, each such consideration is to be recorded (but only once per application).

## Other public interest considerations against disclosure: matters listed in table to section 14 of Act

|  | No of times consideration used* | % of total |
|--|---------------------------------|------------|
| Responsible and effective government                                 | 2                               | 12%        |
| Law enforcement and security   | 0                               | 0%         |
| Individual rights, judicial processes and natural justice            | 13                              | 76%        |
| Business interests of agencies and other persons                     | 2                               | 12%        |
| Environment, culture, economy and general matters                    | 0                               | 0%         |
| Secrecy provisions   | 0                               | 0%         |
| Exempt documents under interstate Freedom of Information legislation | 0                               | 0%         |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>17</b>                       |            |

\* More than one public interest consideration may apply in relation to a particular access application and if so, each such consideration is to be recorded (but only once per application).

## Timeliness

|  | No. of times consideration used* | % of total |
|--|----------------------------------|------------|
| Decided within the statutory timeframe (20 days plus any extensions) | 42                               | 95%        |
| Decided after 35 days (by agreement with applicant)                  | 2                                | 5%         |
| Not decided within time (deemed refusal)                             | 0                                | 0%         |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>44</b>                        |            |

## Number of applications reviewed under Part 5 of the Act (by type of review and outcome)

|  | Decision varied | Decision upheld | Total    | % of total |
|--|-----------------|-----------------|----------|------------|
| Internal review  | 0               | 0               | 0        | 0%         |
| Review by Information Commissioner*                              | 0               | 0               | 0        | 0%         |
| Internal review following recommendation under section 93 of Act | 0               | 0               | 0        | 0%         |
| Review by NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal                  | 0               | 1               | 1        | 100%       |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>0</b>        | <b>1</b>        | <b>1</b> |            |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>0%</b>       | <b>100%</b>     |          |            |

\* The Information Commissioner does not have the authority to vary decisions, but can make recommendations to the original decision-maker. The data in this case indicates that a recommendation to vary or uphold the original decision has been made by the Information Commissioner.

## Applications for review under Part 5 of the Act (by type of applicant)

|   | No. of applications for review | % of total |
|---|--------------------------------|------------|
| Applications by access applicants   | 0                              | 0%         |
| Applications by persons to whom information the subject of access application relates (see section 54 of the Act) | 0                              | 0%         |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>0</b>                       |            |

## Applications transferred to other agencies

|                               | No. of applications transferred | % of total |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------|
| Agency initiated transfers    | 0                               | 0%         |
| Applicant initiated transfers | 0                               | 0%         |
| <b>Total</b>                  | <b>0</b>                        |            |

## Planning agreements

The following planning agreements were in place during the 2020/21 financial year.

| Date        | Land subject of agreement   | Parties to agreement               | Description of agreement  | Notes/Status   |
|-------------|---|------------------------------------|---|--|
| 2010        | ABC Site at Gore Hill - 217 Pacific Hwy (cnr Campbell St), Artarmon | Lindsay Bennelong Developments P/L | The effect of the Planning Agreement is that the developer must provide: 1. a Community building, and 2. a Shuttle bus service, and 3. a Sporting and recreation facility; in lieu of s.94 (s7.11) and s 94A contributions. The Agreement sets out how and when the facilities are to be provided.  | Revoked by new VPA dated 27 September 2017 (See below)                 |
| 16 Sep 2013 | 65 Albert Avenue, Chatswood   | Mandarin Development P/L           | The VPA makes a monetary contribution towards a shortfall in car parking arising from the development   |  |
| 14 Oct 2013 | 1 Anderson St, Chatswood  | Westfield Shopping Centre          | The VPA makes a monetary contribution towards a shortfall in car parking arising from the development of the Anderson "Eat Street" area   | Payment had been satisfied in Feb 2014                                 |
| 14 Jan 2014 | 73 Albert Avenue, Chatswood   | Iglu No 202 P/L                    | The Agreement comprises: 1. Dedication of Thomas Lane Road Reservation Land 2. Thomas Lane Embellishment Works  | Land dedicated and Thomas Ln; Embellishment Work completed in Jan 2014 |
| 5 Feb 2014  | 16 Thomas St, Chatswood   | Karimbla Properties                | The VPA makes a monetary contribution towards: Willoughby City Council for the following Public Benefit Works including but not limited to: 1. Upgrade of Chatswood Oval and surrounding community facilities 2. Upgrade of the Chatswood High Oval to a synthetic surface and redevelopment of the abandoned tennis courts 3. Upgrade of playing surface at Beauchamp Oval, including drainage improvements and change room upgrades. 4. CBD streetscape improvements where required, it being noted that the works may vary as planning and costings for these are further developed. | Payment had been satisfied in Oct 2015                                 |

| Date          | Land subject of agreement  | Parties to agreement   | Description of agreement   | Notes/Status   |
|---------------|--|--|--|--|
| 25 Jun 2015   | 654-666 Pacific Highway, 2A Oliver Road and 1 Freeman Road, Chatswood                  | Daraki Holdings P/L  | This Agreement: 1. Dedicates 3m along Oliver Road for the purposes of local road widening 2. Dedicates 1m along Freeman Road for the purposes of local road widening   | Waiting for proponent's evidence for clearance of land contamination |
| 27 Sep 2017   | Gore Hill Technology Park (Former ABC Site) Lots 1-6 DP 270714 Broadcast Way, Artarmon | Lindsay Bennelong Developments P/L and Gore Hill Developments 1, 2 and 3 | The effect of this Agreement is the provision of a monetary contribution for a Sporting and Recreation facility and the provision of a bus service. The Agreement sets out how and when the funding and bus service will be provided.  | Payment had been satisfied in July 2019                              |
| 27 Nov 2017   | 12 Frederick Street, St Leonards   | Dexus Projects Pty Limited   | The VPA makes a monetary contribution towards sports and recreation facilities and/or traffic management in the Willoughby Local Government Area   | Payment had been satisfied in Feb 2019                               |
| 30 Nov 2020   | 1-31 Walter Street, Willoughby, and 452-462 Willoughby Road, Willoughby                | Walter Projects P/L  | The effect of the Planning Agreement is that the developer must provide: 1. \$1,000,000 towards works for existing or new active transport network; 2. \$1,000,000 towards works for upgrading Willoughby Leisure Centre; and 3. \$520,660 towards works for public purpose determined by Council (within the meaning of the EP&A Act) The Agreement sets out how and when the facilities are to be provided.      | All 3 payment categories had been satisfied in May 2021              |
| 10 March 2021 | 6-30 Artarmon Rd, 13 & 25 Richmond Ave, Willoughby                                     | MIRVAC Residential (NSW) Developments P/L                                | The effect of the Planning Agreement is that the developer must provide: 1. \$500,000 towards upgrade works to Willoughby Rd, Artarmon Rd & Small St intersection; 2. \$1,000,000 towards public access and regeneration works to Walter St Reserve; and 3. 1,769m <sup>2</sup> (approx. 17 units) of Affordable Housing Units dedication The Agreement sets out how and when the contributions are to be provided | Payment of first instalment is yet due                               |

### Swimming pool inspections

Our swimming pool inspection program aims to increase pool safety, particularly for children. The program includes the inspection of privately-owned pools to ensure swimming pool fences and barriers are compliant. Swimming pool inspections carried out in 2020/21 are below.

| Inspection type   | No. |
|---|-----|
| Inspections of tourist and visitor accommodation  | 0   |
| Inspections of premises with more than two dwellings  | 20  |
| Inspections that resulted in a certificate of compliance under s22D of the Swimming Pools Act             | 55  |
| Inspections that resulted in a certificate of non-compliance under cl 21 of the swimming pools regulation | 11  |

### Councillor professional development

A councillor professional development program is provided over the term of the council to build the skills, knowledge and personal attributes necessary to be an effective mayor or councillor. The professional development activities below took place in 2020/21.

| ACTIVITY                                    | Cr Giles-Gidney | Cr Campbell | Cr Coppock | Cr Eriksson | Cr Fernandez | Cr Mustaca | Cr Norton | Cr Rozos | Cr Rutherford | Cr Saville | Cr Tuon | Cr Wright | Cr Zhu |
|---|-----------------|-------------|------------|-------------|--------------|------------|-----------|----------|---------------|------------|---------|-----------|--------|
| Local Government NSW Annual Conference 2020 | ●               | ●           |            | ●           |              |            | ●         | ●        |               | ●          | ●       | ●         | ●      |
| A Special Transport Congress                |                 | ●           |            | ●           |              |            |           |          |               |            |         |           |        |
| Prevent Sexual, Domestic & Family Violence  |                 |             |            |             |              |            |           |          |               | ●          |         |           |        |
| Board Effectiveness for Women               | ●               |             |            |             |              |            |           |          |               |            |         |           |        |
| ALGA National General Assembly              | ●               | ●           |            | ●           | ●            |            |           | ●        |               | ●          |         |           |        |

The total cost for professional development and training programs for councillors for 1 July 2020 to 30 June 2021 was \$1,507.



**A P P E N D I X**



## **APPENDIX**

- 1. Financial Statements**
- 2. End of Term Report 2017-21**







WILLOUGHBY  
CITY COUNCIL

Published December 2021

**ADDRESS**

Level 4, 31 Victor Street, Chatswood, NSW 2057  
PO Box 57 Chatswood, NSW 2057

**PHONE**

02 9777 1000

**EMAIL**

[email@willoughby.nsw.gov.au](mailto:email@willoughby.nsw.gov.au)