



STATE OF OUR CITY REPORT

2021/22 - 2023/24



28 October 2024

Acknowledgement of Country

Woollahra Council acknowledges the Gadigal and Birrabirragal people who are the traditional custodians of this land and pay respects to Elders past, present and emerging.



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Macquarie Lighthouse

Cover image: *One Bright Pearl* by artist Lindy Lee. Installed in Blackburn Garden, Double Bay in 2022.

About this Report

State of Our City Report

Under the NSW Government's Integrated Planning and Reporting Legislation for Local Government, Council is required to produce a report on its progress in implementing the Community Strategic Plan during its term.

The aim of the State of Our City Report is to provide an update to the Woollahra Community on how the Council is progressing towards achieving the social, environmental, economic and civic leadership objectives of the Community Strategic Plan, *Woollahra 2032*, and in doing so, provide information about how effective the Community Strategic Plan has been in delivering the desired outcomes.

Woollahra 2032

Woollahra 2032 was adopted by Council, as its Community Strategic Plan on the 27 June 2022. *Woollahra 2032* is informed through Council's ongoing community engagement on strategies, plans and policies. The Community Strategic Plan is formally reviewed, usually every four years in line with Council's election cycle and integrated planning and reporting legislative requirements.

Term of the sitting Councillors

In response to the global Covid-19 pandemic, on 25 March 2020, the NSW Minister for Local Government announced amendments to the Local Government Act 1993 (NSW) to delay scheduled elections from September 2020 by one year and so adding one year to the term of the then-sitting Councillors. This was later extended on 25 July 2021, due to an outbreak of the

Delta strain of the Covid-19 virus in NSW. Elections were ultimately held 4 December 2021. This reduced the elected term of the sitting Council from four years to a three year term, due to end September 2024.

Thus this document reflects a three year term (2021-2024) before returning to the regular 4-year cycle.

Progress reporting

Responding to the issues the community have told us are important, *Woollahra 2032* presents the long term vision for Woollahra around key Goals and Strategies for Council to pursue and facilitate in partnership with our community and other government agencies.

In addition to the Community Strategic Plan, Council's Integrated Planning & Reporting Framework extends to include a 4 year Delivery Program and an annual Operational Plan.

The Delivery Program describes how Council will work with the community to achieve community Goals. It outlines the priorities that Council will pursue to meet the Goals and Strategies Council has adopted and presented in *Woollahra 2032*.

The Operational Plan includes Council's annual budget and provides detailed information on the range of Actions and Projects Council will undertake in the financial year that will assist in progressing towards the agreed community Goals. For ease of reference Council has combined its Delivery Program and Operational Plan into a single document which is reviewed and updated on annual basis.

Our State of Our City Report provides comments in respect of progress Council has made through its Delivery Program and Operational Plans between 2021 and 2024 against each of the agreed performance measures presented in *Woollahra 2032*. The Report also highlights what Council considers to be the significant achievements during this term of Council (2021- 2024).

Council’s State of Our City Report will be presented to the second meeting of the incoming Council following the Local Government Elections held on 14 September 2024. Presenting the Report in this manner will assist the incoming Council to undertake a review of *Woollahra 2032* to inform the development of a new Community Strategic Plan in partnership with the community, and to prepare the Council’s next Delivery Program and Operational Plan.

Guiding principles

Council’s Community Engagement Strategy is guided by our values, the principles of social justice and the IAP2 spectrum¹.

Woollahra 2032 is a community-owned document detailing community priorities and aspirations, built on the principles of social justice. The goals reflect our communities’ vision for their future. The performance measures reflect our progress as a Council toward that future.

Principles of social justice

Social justice is a concept which holds that all people should have equal access to wealth, health, well-being, justice, and opportunity. Council should consider the economic, environmental, social and cultural sustainability of its actions. To uphold social justice principles in a local government context, Woollahra Council endeavours to:

- address access and equity issues
- provide cultural activities and community facilities as well as recreation for active living
- plan for growth through urban design in the built environment, while remaining sensitive to heritage issues
- care for public health and safety
- support education, affordable housing initiatives and transport links within our communities
- provide consultation networks.

SOCIAL JUSTICE IN AN ENGAGEMENT CONTEXT	
Principle	Meaning
Equity	Inclusive and representative views from the community
Access	Appropriate methods for engagement selected
Participation	The community has a clear understanding of how they can get involved
Rights	People have a right for their views and voices to be heard

Our Community*



Population
53,496



Median age
41 years



Families with kids
7,142
1.8 kids per family



People per household
2.3



Born Overseas
34.2%



Born North West Europe
10.1%



Speak English at home
84.5%



Australian citizen
84.9%

Owns a house
35.3%



Owns with mortgage
24%

Rent
36.8%



Labour force participation
64.1%

Of these 62.4% were employed full time, 26.6% were employed part-time and 3.3% were unemployed.



University qualified residents
55.2%

Top 5 industry sectors:



Professionals



Managers



Clerical and Administrative



Sales



Community and Personal Service

*From 2021 Australian Bureau of Statistics census
abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/quickstats/2021/LGA18500

Woollahra Municipality

Woollahra Municipality is located in Sydney's eastern suburbs, about 5 kilometres from the Sydney GPO.

The Municipality is bounded by Port Jackson (Sydney Harbour) in the north, the Waverley Council area in the east, Randwick City in the south and the City of Sydney in the west. The Woollahra Municipality includes the suburbs of Bellevue Hill, Darling Point, Double Bay, Edgecliff, Paddington (part), Point Piper, Rose Bay (part), Vaucluse (part), Watsons Bay and Woollahra.

The total land area is 12 square kilometres including harbour foreshore and beaches. The area is predominantly residential, with some commercial land use, parklands and a military reserve. Natural features of the Municipality include 18 kms of harbour

foreshore consisting of rocky headlands, coastal cliffs and beaches, approx. 30 hectares of bushland located in 5 reserves with 3 vegetation communities containing over 300 plant species including 2 threatened and 1 vulnerable species.

Other prominent features include Sydney Harbour National Park, the Macquarie Lighthouse, Gap Park and the award winning Rose Bay Promenade. Woollahra is also the location of some of Sydney's premier shopping precincts such as Double Bay, Paddington and Queen Street, Woollahra.

The traditional custodians of the Woollahra area are the Gadigal and Birrabirragal people.

Our Elected Councillors 2021-2024

Our Woollahra local government area consists of five electoral wards, with three Councillors representing each Ward, a total of fifteen (15) Councillors. The last election was held 4 December 2021, with a term until the most recent election held 14 September 2024.

We thank our Councillors for their service during their elected term.

BELLEVUE HILL WARD	COOPER WARD	DOUBLE BAY WARD	PADDINGTON WARD	VAUCLUSE WARD
 <p>Sean Carmichael Councillor</p>	 <p>Luise Elsing Councillor</p>	 <p>Richard Shields Mayor</p>	 <p>Peter Cavanagh Councillor</p>	 <p>Mary-Lou Jarvis Councillor</p>
 <p>Lucinda Regan Councillor</p>	 <p>Nicola Grieve Councillor</p>	 <p>Mark Silcocks Councillor</p>	 <p>Harriet Price Councillor</p>	 <p>Merrill Witt Councillor</p>
 <p>Isabelle Shapiro Councillor</p>	 <p>Sarah Swan Deputy Mayor</p>	 <p>Toni Zeltzer Councillor</p>	 <p>Matthew Robertson Councillor</p>	 <p>Susan Wynne Councillor</p>

Our Community Vision & Mission

Our Vision

A thriving, inclusive, sustainable and resilient community that will benefit future generations.

Our Mission

To lead climate action and promote respectful connections between people and place, so we can enhance, protect and celebrate Woollahra's beauty, heritage and quality of life, for the enjoyment of all.



Rose Bay beach clean up

We will do this by:

- Prioritising carbon neutrality, environmental sustainability and community resilience to meet the challenges of climate change and social and economic wellbeing.
- Acting as custodians and stewards of our highly-valued natural environment, including our harbour foreshore and marine ecosystems, and our leafy streetscapes and urban forest.
- Acknowledging the Aboriginal custodianship of Woollahra and fostering greater community understanding and appreciation of our Aboriginal history, heritage and culture.
- Celebrating the unique built heritage of our area by honouring it and furthering generational efforts to conserve it.
- Creating opportunities for community connection, engagement and partnerships so we can be proud of our shared commitment and achievements.
- Demonstrating our commitment to customer experience by being respectful, open, responsive, accountable and agile.
- Building long term financial sustainability so we are in the best economic position to provide for the diverse needs of our community now and in the future.

Our Community Satisfaction and Priorities

In 2024 Council appointed Micromex to conduct a community satisfaction survey. This survey also asked the community to rank the importance of services, assisting Council to better understand community priorities.



91% of residents are somewhat satisfied, satisfied or very satisfied with the performance of Council in the last 12 months.

85%



2012

86%



2017

87%



2021

91%



2024

The primary drivers of satisfaction in 2024 revolve around Council governance/ communication:



Community input to Council decision making



Financial responsibility



Provision of information

Top 5 priorities as rated by Woollahra residents 2024:



Domestic garbage collection



Recycling



Condition/ maintenance of local roads



Parks and playgrounds



Walkways and footpath accessibility

Top satisfaction areas as rated by Woollahra residents 2024:



Library services



Woollahra Gallery at Redleaf



Community safety/crime prevention



Health inspections/food safety



Bushland management



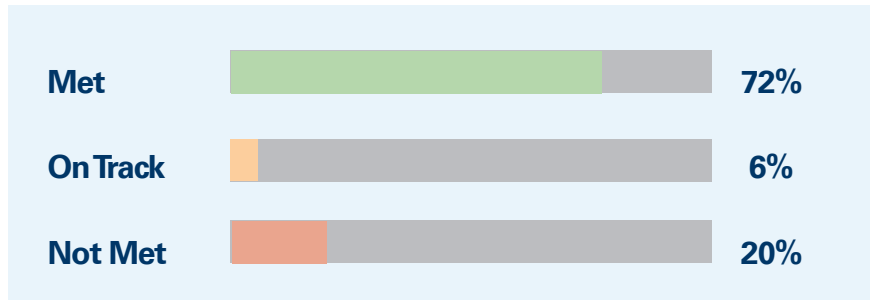
Appearance of local area/ town centre

Our Performance



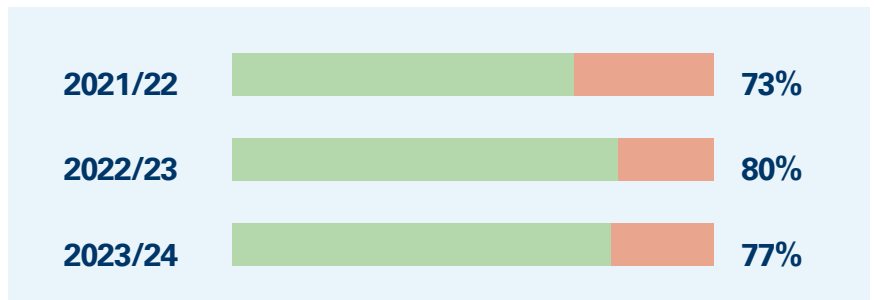
Performance Measures

Woollahra 2032 contains 65 quantitative Performance Measures. 78% have met or are approaching the target.



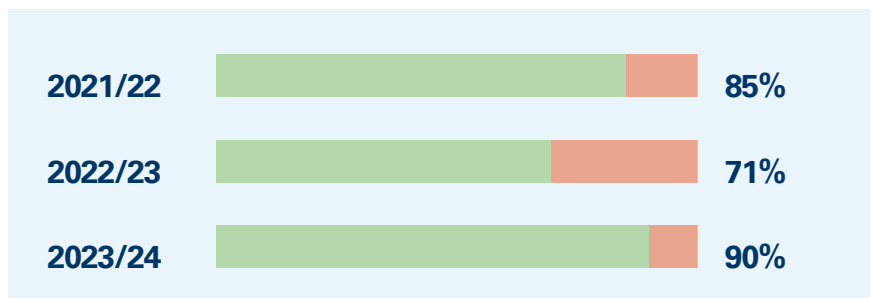
Operational Project progress

For the term, on average 77% of operational projects were complete or achieved as at 30 June of each year.



Capital Project progress

For the term, on average 82% of capital projects were complete or in progress as at 30 June of each year.



Council adopted 65 quantitative performance measures outlined in the Community Strategic Plan *Woollahra 2032* with achievement reported in this State of Our City report.

Councils' performance against these measures is outlined over the following pages by Focus Area (Environmental, Social, Economic and Civic Leadership), noting all of our measures may deliver benefits across more than one of the four Focus Areas.

Our Environmental Focus

Introduction

Woollahra has 18km of harbour foreshore, consisting of rocky headlands, coastal cliffs and beaches. There are approximately 88 hectares of bushland in Woollahra containing more than 400 plant species including three endangered plant species. Seven vulnerable fauna species have also been recorded in the Woollahra area.

The Woollahra Local Government Area is part of the Sydney Metro Catchment. The majority of land in Woollahra drains to the Port Jackson (Sydney Harbour) sub-catchment, with only 5% draining to the Eastern Beaches sub-catchment. There are four significant waterways within the Municipality; Parsley Creek, Cooper Park Creek, Vaucluse Creek and Rose Bay Creek.

A healthy environment underpins the prosperity of our area and it must be considered in everything we do. Local government has a legislative responsibility to protect the natural environment. This means all Council actions must support healthy ecosystems with clean air, clean land and clean waterways. To reduce our impact on the environment and mitigate climate change, Woollahra must continue to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and ensure sustainable use of resources including energy and water.

It is important that Council continues to plan for climate change, adapting to address risks to ensure resilience.

Key Opportunities and Challenges

- Environmental sustainability
- Tree canopy and tree management

- Tree management
- Waste management
- Climate change mitigation and adaptation
- Protection of waterways
- Protection of bushland and threatened species
- Clean up of environment, rubbish and stormwater pollutant management.

Our Partners

- Our community
- NSW National Parks and Wildlife
- State government
- Sydney Water
- State Emergency Services
- Waverley Council
- Randwick Council
- Local schools
- Local clubs.

Environmental Measures & Targets

We have tracked the achievement of our goal and strategies through the measurement and reporting of performance indicators. For our Environmental measures there may be reporting lags from our partners.

Legend



Target achieved



Target not achieved



Target date beyond 30 June 2024

Term Highlights



Whilst taking up new tree planting opportunities we have also increased our regular tree maintenance during this term, including for our Hills Figs.



We heard overwhelming support for a playground upgrade and expansion, and clear priorities for new inclusive play features and accessible infrastructure at Lyne Park playground in Rose Bay.



New EV charger at Cooper Park Community Hall.



Urban Forest

On 27 November 2023 Council adopted an Urban Forest Strategy with the target of planting 13,410 new trees across our local area over 25 years to create 30% tree canopy cover by 2050.



Lyne Park

We received 227 survey responses and spoke to many families during pop-ups in Lyne Park in 2022. Lyne Park Playground was upgraded based on this community input and re-opened in 2024.










Winner



We were recognised in 2022 and 2023 with Local Government Excellence Awards for our Charging the East - The Eastern Suburbs Electric Vehicle Charging Project (with our colleagues at Waverley & Randwick Councils). 13 new EV charging stations have been installed in the Woollahra LGA this term.

Our Environmental Measures

Measure	Target	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Met?
Council operations are certified carbon neutral.	Climate Active Certification obtained each year	Neutral for 2020/21 (certified December 2021)	Neutral for 2021/22 (certified March 2023)	Neutral for 2022/23 (certified August 2024)	✓
Decrease carbon emissions offset by Council. 2018/19 result of 7,412 tonnes CO ₂ e.	Decrease in Carbon emissions offset per annum	5,616.2t CO ₂ e offset result for 2020/21	4,699t CO ₂ e offset result for 2021/22	3,710t CO ₂ e offset result for 2022/23	✓
100% of Council's electricity use is from renewable sources.	100% of renewable energy purchased	30%	100%	100%	✓
No increase in potable water use by Council operations. 2018/19 result of 88,655 kL.	Maintain or reduce kL of potable water used per annum	70,293kL	88,841kL	90,740kL (2% increase on 2018/19)	✗
Reduce community greenhouse gas emissions, aspiring to net zero emissions by 2030. 2018/19 result of 518,349 tonnes CO ₂ e.	Reduce total community greenhouse gas emissions per annum	510,664t of CO ₂ e result for 2020/21	473,365t of CO ₂ e result for 2021/22	425,561t of CO ₂ e result for 2022/23	🕒
Reduce community water use per capita. 2018/19 result of 6,616,365kL / 59,387 = 111.4kL per person.	Reduce total water use per capita per annum	115.1kL per person for 2020/21	110kL per person for 2021/22	105kL per person for 2022/23	✓
Increase in canopy cover. 2016 result of 28%.	Increase in % canopy cover	N/A (Biennial)	27.8%	N/A (Biennial)	✗
Increase in percentage of drainage outlets treated by stormwater quality improvement devices.	% increase in outlets with treatment devices including Gross Pollutant Traps and raingardens	1 GPT installed	1 raingarden installed	2 GPTs installed	✓
Maintain or increase number of native flora and fauna species found in Woollahra 2020 result (introduced species excluded): Flora species = 219 Fauna species = 57	Maintain or improve # of flora species, number of fauna species	N/A (Biennial)	Flora species = 219 Fauna species = 56	N/A (Biennial)	✓

Our Environmental Measures

Measure	Target	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Met?
100 Bushcare volunteers by 2030. 2020/21 result of 81 volunteers.	100 Bushcare volunteers (20% increase by 2030)	81 volunteers	90 volunteers	90 volunteers (11% increase)	
All of Council's six swimming beaches rated 'Good' or 'Very Good' by Beachwatch. 2020/21 results: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Watsons Bay: Good Rose Bay: Good Parsley Bay: Good Murray Rose (Redleaf) Pool: Good Nielsen Park: Very Good Camp Cove: Very Good. 	100% rated 'Good' or 'Very Good'	5/6 Good; 1/6 Poor (Rose Bay)	5/6 Good; 1/6 Poor (Rose Bay)	4/6 Good; 2/6 Poor (Rose Bay and Murray Rose [Redleaf])	
Increase number of electric and hybrid vehicles on Council's passenger fleet to 100% by 2025. March 2022 result of 11 electric or hybrid vehicles from a total of 99 passenger vehicles = 11%.	% increase linked to the general rate of vehicle turnover	11% of passenger vehicles are electric or hybrid	18% of passenger vehicles are electric or hybrid	47% of passenger vehicles are electric or hybrid (100% of passenger vehicle turnover for the period)	
Increase public electric vehicle charging by 2 stations per year. 2020/21 result of 3.	2 charging stations installed per year	1 installed	3 installed	9 installed	
% of waste, recyclables and organics collected from kerbside bins that is diverted from landfill. 2020/21 result of 62%.	Increase	62%	55%	49%	
Direct cost* of the kerbside waste bin collection service per kerbside waste collection bin. Benchmark pending Service Review.	Reduction	\$457*	\$487*	\$497*	
Direct cost* of the kerbside recyclable bin collection service per kerbside waste collection bin. Benchmark pending Service Review.	Reduction	\$107*	\$110*	\$119*	

Our Environmental Measures					
Measure	Target	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Met?
Condition of Open Space assets (e.g. playgrounds, fencing). 2020/21 result of 95.8% rated at Condition rating 1 (Excellent /Very Good), 2 (Good) or 3 (Satisfactory)	98% of open space assets rated at Condition rating 1, 2 or 3	97.3%	96.3%	94.1%	
Renewal of Open Space assets (e.g. playgrounds, fencing). 2020/21 result of 73.4% of assets at Condition rating 4 (Poor) or 5 (Very Poor) scheduled for renewal within 24 months	100% of open space assets rated at Condition rating 4 or below scheduled for renewal with 24 months	75%	87%	100%	

*The amounts shown is the direct cost of collecting and processing the 3 domestic waste stream bins. It does not include waste projects/ education, or hard waste collection and processing, plus provision for future sustainability initiatives.

Commentary on outcomes

Councils' potable water use fell during the Covid-19 lockdown period, however has bounced back to 2% higher than pre-Covid usage levels. On 11 March 2024 Council adopted a new Environmental Sustainability Action Plan with ambitious targets to guide Council efforts to protect our environment use resources sustainably.

Canopy cover has been maintained without an increase at last measurement in 2022. Since measuring, Council has adopted its Urban Forest Strategy with a canopy cover target of 30% by 2050. In setting this target we have considered the species mix used in our tree plantings, the financial commitment required to plant and establish trees and where to plant trees first in order to maximise the benefits provided to our community.

Maintaining water quality at Rose Bay Beach in particular remains a challenge. In addition to proactively installing Gross Pollutant Traps and raingardens, Council facilitates the Rose Bay Beach Working Party and continues to collaborate with Sydney Coastal Councils Group to progress Coastal Management Programs.

The diversion rate from landfill by household waste is falling, particularly from Multi Unit Dwellings. If all recyclables and Food Organics Garden Organics (FOGO) was put in the correct bin, landfill diversion would increase to 68%. This is a future focus for improved education. Direct costs for kerbside domestic waste streams have not decreased but remain stable.

Condition of Open Space assets is trending downward because some significant assets which are currently under renewal were graded at Condition 4 (Poor). In addition, the recent audit has identified some previously unknown assets in Bushland which are in poor condition. Major works completed in the term include the renovation of Gugara Park, Paddington and Lyne Park, Rose Bay; relocation and upgrade of basketball and netball mini court installed at Harbourview Park, Woollahra; Spicer Lane Reserve half court basketball court in Woollahra 2 sets of binoculars have been installed at Jacobs Ladder viewing area and Christison Park, Vauclose.

Our Social Focus

Introduction

Our community wellbeing is dependent on our social connections and our sense of community.

Building community harmony is about having a sense of belonging and feeling welcomed. People do not exist in isolation. Strong networks including families, neighbourhoods, community groups, cultural organisations, churches, government agencies and businesses are essential building blocks of our community.

Community wellbeing is influenced by sense of connection with community and place. This can be expressed through participation in community, cultural and recreational activities. Access to facilities, information and social services is also important to ensure community health, wellbeing and safety.

Woollahra has a unique and distinctive natural and built environment. Its landform includes the prominent cliff faces of Watsons Bay, low lying harbour foreshore areas and land that rises to a ridgeline along Old South Head Road and Oxford Street. Maintaining local character and amenity is important to Council and the community and urban planning plays a vital role in retaining this residential amenity. Planning, providing and maintaining public places and spaces are of paramount importance to the Woollahra community. Access to these places and spaces is vital in maintaining a liveable and convenient place to live, work and visit.

Key Opportunities and Challenges

- Customer experience
- Housing availability and affordability
- Overdevelopment
- Customer being at the centre of how services are designed and delivered

- Community services and supports that respond to the needs of all ages and stages of life supporting the vulnerable
- Responding to diversity and access issues
- Community services
- Heritage protection.

Our Partners

- Our community
- Resident groups
- Not-for-profit organisations
- Community groups and organisations
- La Perouse Local Aboriginal Land Council
- Holdsworth
- Women's Housing Company
- Woollahra History and Heritage Society
- NSW State Library
- Create NSW
- Cultural institutions and groups
- NSW Police
- NSW Department of Planning
- NSW State and Federal governments and agencies.

Social Measures & Targets

We have tracked the achievement of our goal and strategies through the measurement and reporting of performance indicators.

Legend



Target achieved



Target not achieved



Target date beyond 30 June 2024

Term Highlights



The Vauclose Bowling Club and Community Facility has been renovated and re-opened to the public for hire and new health services.



Services

Council successfully applied for a \$3.74m grant to upgrade Vauclose Bowling Club and has been appointed as Crown Land Manager. South Eastern Sydney Local Area Health will be now be providing maternity, child and family health care services from the Club, which is also available as a venue for community hire.



New ramp at Trumper Park pathway can accommodate a mobility scooter.



Accessibility

Major works to improve accessibility undertaken at Trumper Park pathway in Paddington, with a Bellevue Park pathway extension, in Plumer Road, Rose Bay and in Bay Street, Double Bay to improve ferry access.



Woollahra Gallery at Redleaf.



Winner

We were recognised in 2022 at the Local Government Excellence Awards, receiving an Arts & Culture Award for our Woollahra Gallery at Redleaf. Since opening 3 November 2021, the Gallery has welcomed 35,549 visitors.


Our Social Measures

Measure	Target	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Met?
Timeliness of complaint responses. Complaints are directed and acknowledged within 2 business days with a response provided within 7 business days.	100%	100%	100%	100%	✓
# of calls answered by Customer Experience team. National Local Government Customer Service Network benchmark of 15,500 per quarter. 2020/21 result of 19,776 per quarter.	Maintain or improve	Average of 18,498 per quarter (73,992 annual total)	Average of 16,537 per quarter (66,149 annual total)	Average of 16,080 per quarter (64,318 annual total)	✓
% of calls answered within a fixed timeframe. 2020/21 result of 96% of calls answered within 20 seconds.	>93%	96%	94%	95%	✓
% of calls abandoned by the caller before reaching a staff member. 2021 National Local Government Customer Service Network benchmark of 5.13%.	<3%	1.3%	1.2%	0.9% (national benchmark has now risen to 5.7%)	✓
Increased community engagement awareness as measured by community visits to the 'Your Say Woollahra' site. 30 June 2020 result of 5,899 visits.	10% growth in site visits	18,200 visits	38,691 visits	19,069 visits (223% increase on 2019/20 result)	✓
Social media growth in followers. 30 June 2021 result of -WMC Facebook: 3,900 followers -WMC Instagram: 2,698 followers	15% growth in followers	N/A	N/A	-WMC Facebook: 5,250 followers (35% increase) -WMC Instagram: 4,927 followers (83% increase)	✓

Our Social Measures

Measure	Target	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Met?
Maintain higher than industry average open rates for Woollahra eNews (monthly). Open rate industry average is 20%, government average is 26%. 2020/21 result of 50-58%.	>26%	51% open rate	56% open rate	57% open rate (gov. average has now fallen to 19.4%)	✓
# of website users. 2020/21 result of 457,089 website users	10% growth in website traffic per year	448,661 (-2% on 2020/21)	464,511 (4% growth on 2021/22)	474,206 (2% growth on 2022/23)	✗
Increase in community satisfaction as measured by biennial Library Satisfaction Survey. 2020/21 result of 97%.	Increase	97%	N/A	98%	✓
Library members as percentage of population. 2020/21 result of 53.76%.	Median for urban libraries is 42.88%	50.44%	52.40%	48.82%	✓
Total number of loans of physical and digital collection items per member of population. 2020/21 result of 3.92 loans per item.	State median 3.08 loans per item	7.3	10.35	10.84	✓
Total number of visits to library service points per member of population. 2020/21 result of 4.21 visits	Increase on 4.21 visits per population	4.78	9.32	10.42	✓
Woollahra Gallery at Redleaf visitation rate (opened 3 November 2021)	6,000 per year	8,365 visitors	13,496 visitors	13,688 visitors	✓
Usage level of Council's venues	Increase	32% decrease on 2018/19 (pre-Covid-19) usage	10% decrease on 2018/19 (pre-Covid-19) usage	4% decrease on 2018/19 (pre-Covid-19) usage	✗
Customer satisfaction with venues	Increase	88%	N/A	91%	✓
# of citizens participated in citizenship ceremonies hosted by Council. 2020/21 result of 450.	100% of requests met	572 (100% of requests met)	379 (100% of requests met)	311 (100% of requests met)	✓

Our Social Measures

Measure	Target	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Met?
Meet or exceed the National Quality Standards in all 7 categories of assessment at audit by external body Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority (ACECQA). 2021 result of 'Exceeding' all 7 categories.	'Exceeding' in all 7 categories	N/A*	N/A*	N/A* (Audits conducted every 3-5 years)	

* ACECQA did not elect to undertake an audit in the period of this term.

Measure	Frequency	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Grants applications received	Biannual	66	64	73
# of Community and Cultural Grants applications received	Biannual	19	35	45
# of Community and Cultural Grants projects funded	Biannual	12	26	27
\$ value of Community and Cultural Grants awarded	Biannual	\$48,699	\$205,945	\$106,474.15

Commentary on outcomes

The 2020/21 year prior to this term saw an increase in website users of 13%. This coincided with the COVID-19 pandemic and changing NSW public health orders which likely drove higher engagement with Council information. Website visitation fell by 2% in 2021-22. A project was undertaken to improve the accessibility and utility of our Council website during the term, with the refreshed website launched 10 October 2023. A total of 4% growth was achieved over the term.

During the reporting period we undertook significant renovations on our two largest halls for venue hire. Cooper Park Community Hall was closed from 8/4/22 to 5/4/23, and the Vaucluse Bowling Club was closed from 1/4/23 to 1/5/24.

Our Economic Focus

Introduction

The Woollahra area is distinctly urban in character and is one of Australia's most prestigious residential locations. It is substantially residential, intermixed with shopping centres of various sizes, large and small recreational and open space areas and large private schools.

We support our local economy whilst balancing growth with business and tourism demands and community desires. A prosperous community is one that has a strong economy but also one which is healthy and happy. A prosperous community is able to enjoy the lifestyle benefits of our harbour location and a wide variety of facilities and activities. It also enables fulfilment of family, community and leisure interests.

Woollahra is the location of some of Sydney's premier shopping precincts, such as Double Bay, Paddington and Queen Street, Woollahra. Set amid residences of great heritage value and adjoined by Sydney Harbour, open parks and tree-lined boulevards, our vibrant retail precincts present wonderful shopping and dining in the relaxed ambience of small villages. This provides many opportunities for prosperity and development of a robust local economy. Set on Sydney Harbour, Woollahra is also a premier tourist area. From Watsons Bay to Paddington, the area is one of Sydney's most visited regions.

Key Opportunities and Challenges

- Planning controls
- DA processing times
- Improving the public domain
- Traffic congestion
- Improving active transport
- Pedestrianisation and traffic calming.

Our Partners

- Our community
- Local business
- Visitors to Woollahra
- Paddington Chamber of Commerce
- City of Sydney Council
- Tourism NSW
- Southern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils
- Greater Sydney Commission
- NSW Department of Planning, Industry & Environment
- Developers
- Independent Planning Panels
- NSW Police
- NSW Roads and Maritime Services
- NSW Department of Transport
- State Transit Authority of NSW,
- Sydney Ferries
- NSW State and Federal governments and agencies.

Economic Measures & Targets

We have tracked the achievement of our goal and strategies through the measurement and reporting of performance indicators.

Legend



Target achieved



Target not achieved



Target date beyond 30 June 2024

Term Highlights



Artists' impression of the Double Bay Centre. The Strategy sets a vision to guide the future development of the Double Bay Centre.



Planning

Double Bay Centre Planning and Urban Design Strategy was adopted 27 November 2023 after review of 200+ submissions. Edgecliff Commercial Centre Planning and Urban Design Strategy was adopted 29 April 2024 after review of 153 submissions.



In February 2022 we were awarded NSW Government grant to fund Rose Bay Connectivity Program as part of Streets as Shared Spaces program (pictured: Collins Laneway activation, pre and post).



Rose Bay focus

In 2022 we introduced upgrades and temporary activations to side streets, laneways and carparks in Rose Bay to enhance pedestrian connectivity and to strengthen businesses following COVID-19 lockdown. This includes street greening, public art, lighting, signage and wayfinding.









We have collaborated with the Gujara Foundation, Gamay Rangers and La Perouse Aboriginal Land Council to complete our Aboriginal Heritage Study (pictured: Vaucluse rock shelter).








Winner

We were recognised with a National Trust Heritage award in 2022, and in the 2022 Local Government Excellence Awards receiving both a Planning Award and an Arts & Culture Award, for our Aboriginal Heritage Study.

Our Economic Measures

Measure	Target	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Met?
Median determination time for Development Applications and related applications received, eg Section 4.55 Modification Applications (an application to modify an approved Development Application). 2020/21 result of 70 Median days, 93 Mean days.	Maintain or improve	Median 77; Mean 102	Median 80; Mean 110	Median 84; Mean 118	
The number of Development Applications and or related applications determined, including: -Development Applications, -Pre-Development Applications (the opportunity to meet with Council staff and receive written comment prior to lodging a Development Application), -Section 4.55 Modification Applications -Level of delegations and -Heritage exemptions determined. 2021 result of 979 excluding re-Development Applications, level of delegations and heritage exemptions determined.	Maintain or improve	1,041	1,017	947	
Development Control appeal volumes of Class 1 appeals lodged. 2020/21 result of 47.	Maintain or improve	33	68	55	
# of minor gazettals (ie finalisation) of non-heritage Local Environment Plan planning proposals (gazettal by NSW Government)	100% of completed LEP gazetted	1 (Basic)	1 (Basic)	1 (Basic)	
# of major gazettals (ie finalisation) of non-heritage Local Environment Plan planning proposals (gazettal by NSW Government)	100% of completed LEP gazetted	1 (Standard)	1 (Standard)	1 (Standard)	
# of complex gazettals (ie finalisation) of non-heritage Local Environment Plan planning proposals (gazettal by NSW Government)	100% of completed LEP gazetted	0 (Complex)	1 (Complex)	0 (Complex)	

Our Economic Measures

Measure	Target	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Met?
Condition of Building assets (community, sporting and operational buildings). 2020/21 result of 97.9% rated at Condition rating 1 (Excellent /Very Good), 2 (Good) or 3 (Satisfactory)	98% of building assets rated at Condition rating 1, 2 or 3	97.8%	97.8%	97.93%	
Renewal of building assets (community, sporting and operational buildings). 2020/21 result of 113.25% of buildings at Condition rating 4 (Poor) or 5 (Very Poor) scheduled for renewal within 24 months	100% of Buildings rated at Condition rating 4 or below scheduled for renewal with 24 months	100%	100%	100%	
Building & Infrastructure Renewal Ratio Benchmark. This ratio compares the proportion spent on infrastructure asset renewals and assets deterioration. 2020/21 result of 94.02%.	>100%	57.32%	62.69%	82.71%	
Asset intervention level for civil infrastructure assets in condition 4 (Poor) or 5 (Very Poor). 2020/21 result of 98.4%.	98% of Civil Infrastructure rated at Condition rating 1, 2 or 3	98.70%	99.00%	93.30%	
Renewal of civil infrastructure including transport assets (roads, footpaths, kerb and gutter); Stormwater assets (pipes, pits, quality improvement devices); and Land Improvements (retaining and sea walls, harbour structures). Condition rating 4 (Poor) or 5 (Very Poor) scheduled for renewal within 24 months	100% of Civil Infrastructure rated at Condition rating 4 or below scheduled for renewal with 24 months	100%	100%	100%	

Measure	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
# of planning certificates processed as: -Standard -Expedited	Planning certificates Standard = 2753 Expedited = 225 Notices and Orders Certificates Standard = 562 Expedited = 18	Planning certificates Standard = 2431 Expedited = 225 Notices and Orders Certificates Standard = 390 Expedited = 3	Planning certificates Standard = 2524 Expedited = 248 Notices and Orders Certificates Standard = 484 Expedited = 6
# of new heritage items listed in the Woollahra Local Environment Plan 2014 register	1	6	28
# of new Development Control Plan amendments commenced	5	1	5

Commentary on outcomes

Development Assessment processing times continue to be a statewide issue, with the NSW Minister for Planning and Public Spaces issuing the *Environmental Planning and Assessment (Statement of Expectations) Order 2024* commencing 1 July 2024. At Council we undertook a service review into our Development Assessment operations, endorsed by Council 15 November 2023. We continue to implement its recommendations and have seen an improvement in the January-June 2024 results compared to July-December 2023.

The Building & Infrastructure Renewal Ratio Benchmark, Renewal of Civil Infrastructure and Condition of Building assets are all trending upward year on year toward the target level. Asset intervention level for civil infrastructure assets was achieved in 2/3 of the reporting years.

Council adopted urban design strategies in Edgecliff and Double Bay which set out our communities desired vision for development. This provides Council with a tool for advocacy on placement and scale in response to new housing targets (1,900 new dwellings completed by 2029) set by the NSW State Government.

Improvements to the public domain have included delivery of our capital works program, with 90% of programmed works completed or in progress as at 30 June 2024. This included the Rose Bay Promenade seawall conservation and rehabilitation and significant works completed for the Trumper Park pathway in Paddington, the Bellevue Park pathway extension, improvements to Plumer Road, Rose Bay and new paving in Bay Street, Double Bay. Council has also sought and was awarded \$480,100 in grant funding for placemaking with the Rose Bay Connectivity Program.

Our Civic Leadership Focus

Introduction

Our community expects ethical and inspired leadership from all levels of government with a genuine commitment to work together to make our community a better place to live. This includes providing our community with the opportunity to participate in decision-making on things that are important to us, such as infrastructure, transport, public services, facilities, financial management and service provision.

Through responsive community leadership we will demonstrate 'best practice' and work together to achieve a more sustainable Woollahra.

Council can improve community governance by empowering communities to actively engage in civic life, to be involved in the decision-making process and to take responsibility for identifying and providing solutions to their own concerns.

Transparency and accountability – knowing what is done, and why it is done – is extremely important to our community. Community confidence in these areas is achieved through having a strong and effective corporate governance framework of systems, policies and procedures that underpin everything we do as an organisation.

Key Opportunities and Challenges

- Financial sustainability
- Service reviews
- Compliance
- Getting things done
- Responsiveness (to the community and Councillors)
- Customer Experience and Responsiveness (to the Community & Councillors).

Our Partners

- Our community
- NSW Office of Local Government
- Southern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils
- NSW Audit Office
- Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal.

Civic Leadership Measures & Targets

We have tracked the achievement of our goal and strategies through the measurement and reporting of performance indicators.

Legend



Target achieved



Target not achieved



Target date beyond 30 June 2024

Term Highlights



The Special Rate Variation supports us to achieve a significant uplift in tree and footpath investment, and the stormwater infrastructure that our community expects (pictured: sustainable upgrade of the stormwater system at George St, Paddington).



SRV funding

In 2022 we commenced consultation with the community on a Special Rate Variation (SRV) application, approved by the IPART in May 2023. The increase in rates collected have improved our financial sustainability to maintain a modest (\$1-\$1.5m) financial buffer whilst delivering community supported projects.



The Woollahra Council app makes it quicker and easier for our residents to request and receive updates on our most used services.



10,241 users

Following a pilot on e-waste pick up only, in July 2021 the Woollahra App launched with expanded functionality to receive customer requests relating to Waste and recycling, Street cleaning, Tree management, Road and footpath maintenance and Clean-up collections.



Workplace Health & Safety including mental health, resilience and wellbeing is a priority of our Workforce Management Strategy.







Winner

We were recognised at the 2023 Local Government Excellence Awards for our Early Intervention Program which proactively addresses workplace injuries.

Our Civic Leadership Measures

Measure	Target	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Met?
Total expenses per head of population. 2021 result of \$1,883 per head.	Maintain or increase	\$1,981	\$2,043	\$2,292	✓
<i>Annual Financial Ratios</i>					
Operating Performance Ratio Benchmark. Measures a councils' ability to contain operating expenditure within operating revenue Operating Performance ratio is an indication of continued capacity to meet on-going expenditure requirements. 2020/21 result of -15.08%.	> 0%	-4.58%	3.64%	5.44%	✓
Unrestricted Current Ratio Benchmark. This ratio is specific to local government and is designed to assess the adequacy of working capital and the ability to satisfy its obligations in the short term for unrestricted activities of council. 2020/21 result of 3.94x.	> 1.5	3.49	3.41	4.42	✓
Cash Expense Cover Ratio Benchmark. This liquidity ratio indicates the number of months a council can continue to paying for its immediate expenses without additional cash inflows. 2020/21 result of 6.02 months.	> 3 months	11.05 months	12.84 months	11.13 months	✓
Debt Service Cover Ratio Benchmark. The ratio measures the availability of operating cash to service debt including interest, principal and lease payments. 2020/21 result of 0.14x.	> 2	2.10	3.63	4.18	✓
Outstanding Rate & Annual Charges Ratio Benchmark. Used to assess the impact of uncollected rates and annual charges on liquidity and the efficiency of a council's debt recovery. 2020/21 result of 4.16%.	< 5%	4.54%	5.18%	4.16%	✓
Own Source Operating Revenue Ratio Benchmark. Measures the level of a council's fiscal flexibility. It indicates the degree of reliance on external funding sources such as grants and contributions. 2020/21 result of 90.37%.	> 60%	87.25%	86.68%	84.70%	✓
Integrated Planning & Reporting documents adopted to schedule and meet NSW Office of Local Government benchmarks.	100%	100%	100%	100%	✓

Our Civic Leadership Measures

Measure	Target	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Met?
Compliance activities in response to unauthorised uses and works are actioned within agreed timelines. 2020/21 result of 575 customer requests received; 639 customer requests finalised; 72 'Notices of intention to give an Order' served; 25 Orders served; 4 penalty infringement notices (PIN) issued.	100%	396 customer requests received; 400 customer requests finalised; 47 'Notices of intention to give an Order' served; 36 Orders served; 1 penalty infringement notice issued	357 customer requests received; 269 customer requests finalised; 40 'Notices of intention to give an Order' served; 25 Orders served; 1 penalty infringement notice issued	442 customer requests received; 467 customer requests finalised; 47 'Notices of intention to give an Order' served; 34 Orders served; 1 penalty infringement notice issued	
Investigation relating to incidents of potential water pollution actioned within agreed timelines. 2020/21 result of 49 requests investigated.	100%	78 requests investigated	93 requests investigated	68 requests investigated	
Erosion and sedimentation controls are actioned within agreed timelines. Controls are in place for new development where there is potential for the escape of sediment into the drainage system. 2020/21 result of 39 requests for dust and sediment control; 40 requests for building site discharges, wash-downs and spills.	100%	17 requests for dust and sediment control; 57 requests for air and dust pollution issues ; 26 requests for water pollution issues incl. building site discharges, wash-downs and spills	46 requests for air pollution issues, incl. dust matters; 73 requests for sediment control / water pollution issues incl. building site discharges, wash-downs and spills	68 requests for air pollution issues, incl. dust matters; 68 requests for sediment control / water pollution issues incl. building site discharges, wash-downs and spills	
# of Government Information Public Access (GIPA) applications processed and % completed within Service Level Agreement (SLA). 2020/21 Benchmark is 1,609 applications (1,590 informal, 19 formal); with 100% meeting the SLA.	100%	1,609 applications (1,590 informal, 19 formal); 100% met SLA	1,486 applications (1,469 informal, 17 formal); 100% met SLA	1,440 applications (1,435 informal, 5 formal); 91% met SLA	

Commentary on outcomes

Prior to 31/10/2023, in accordance with the GIPA Act, the Service Level Agreement (SLA) for Informal Applications was 10 working days. From 01/11/2023 to 30/06/2024, under the GIPA Act, SLA for Informal Applications was increased to 20 working days. The SLA for Formal Applications remained 20 working days for the full reporting period. 100% of Formal GIPA Applications have met the SLA during this term. In 2023/24 only, the SLA for Informal GIPA Applications fell to 78% prior to the GIPA Act changes, and then improved to 98% following the GIPA Act changes.

In response to Long Term Financial Plan projects and through financial sustainability measures undertaken over the course of the term, Council has moved from 2021/22 forecast Operating Deficit of \$7 million to achieving a modest surplus. Measures undertaken this term include introducing a new income stream via Bus Shelter Advertising for non heritage bus shelters and bus shelters in non heritage areas, productivity improvements and applying for a Special Rate Variation. The Independent Pricing And Regulatory Tribunal approved Council's Special Rate Variation (SRV) application in June 2023, with an increase of 13.7% in 2023-24 and 7.5% in 2024-25. The SRV has enabled Council to undertake much needed projects totalling \$48.9 million over the next ten years.

Council adopted a Service Review Framework on 27 February 2023. A service review is a process that considers the costs, quality and efficiency of a Council service and assesses whether the current mode of delivery is appropriate. This formal process of data collection enables a Council to make informed decisions about the services Council delivers. In the term of this Council 5 service reviews have been undertaken in the service areas of:

- Waste Services
- Business Centres and Street Cleaning
- Events
- Development Assessment process
- Open Space and Trees (covering open space maintenance, tree maintenance, tree management, and parks infrastructure, open space and recreational planning management).

The completed reviews contain recommendations that we have commenced and will continue to implement to improve the quality and efficiency of these services. Each financial year an additional two services will be reviewed in a rolling program of improvement.

In addition to the introduction of the Woollahra App to improve the customer experience of interacting with Council, on the 11 December 2023 Council adopted a Customer Experience Strategy. This document outlines our commitment to improving the customer experience with Council and our approach to listening to our customers including when designing our services and programs so that they better meet community needs.

Woollahra Municipal Council



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Double Bay NSW 2028

woollahra.nsw.gov.au

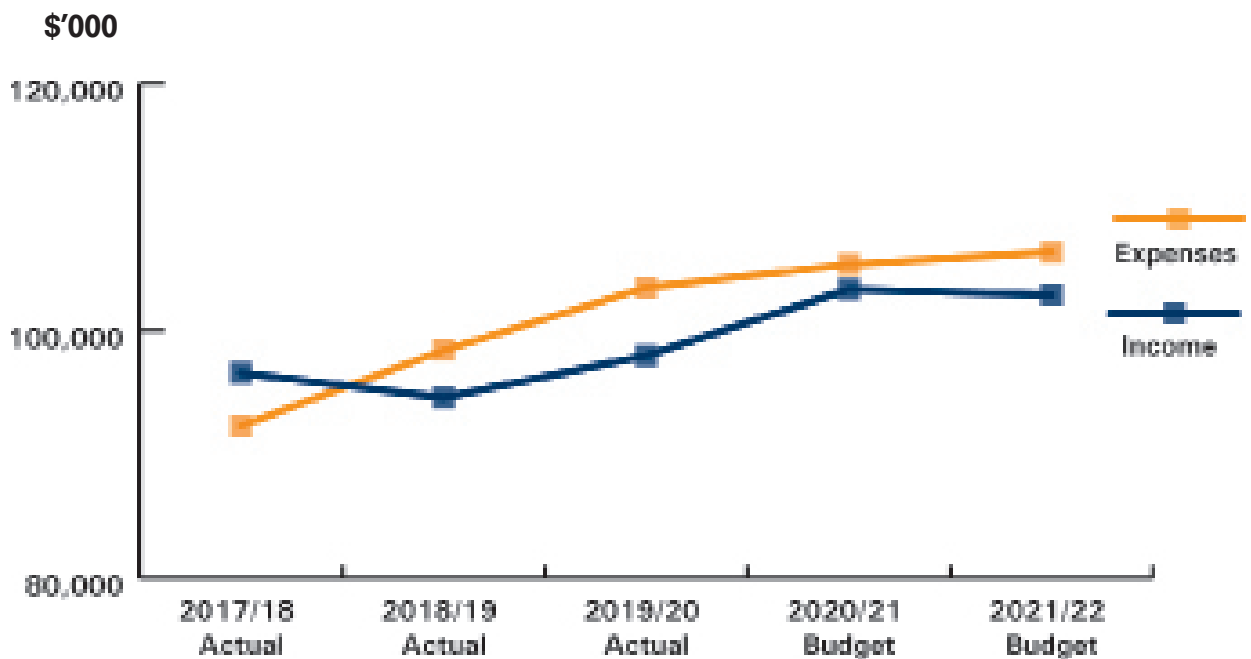
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Preparing for the next Term of Council

Long Term Financial Sustainability of Council

A 2021/22 forecast Operating Deficit of \$7 million is a result of the challenges faced by Council over the last five years or so including rising expenditure, reduced income and interest rates and as a local government we have a limited capacity to increase rates income or fees and charges.

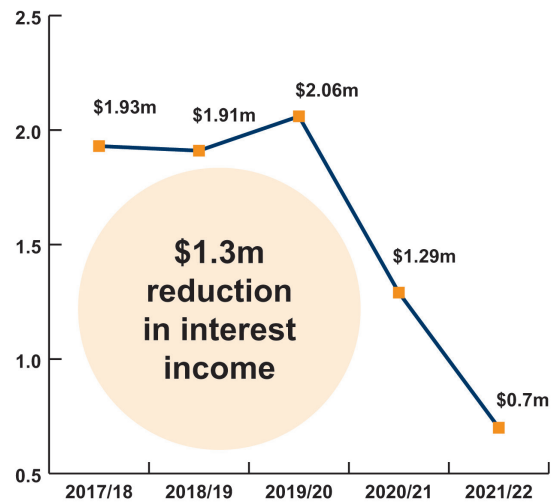


	2017/18 Actual (\$'000)	2018/19 Actual (\$'000)	2019/20 Actual (\$'000)	2020/21 Budget (\$'000)	2021/22 Budget (\$'000)
Income	96,560	94,556	97,969	103,326	102,860
Expenses	92,280	97,969	103,476	105,339	106,328

To meet the challenge of COVID-19 we responded quickly and were one of the first Sydney councils with financial relief for its commercial tenants and small businesses. We provided over \$7.9million in financial support assisting residents and local businesses in easing the economic pressure from the pandemic and promoting recovery. More information on our response to COVID-19 is available [here](#) (hyperlink).

Our other challenges have included:

- Over recent years significantly lower interest rates have resulted in a reduction in interest earnings of \$1.3 million per annum.
- \$42 million (37%) of our income comes from rates. The increase in rates income is set annually by the independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART). This constrains on our ability to increase our revenue to adequately cover increases in our costs.
- Increases in our expenditure.



We have taken a proactive approach to improving our financial position through the following actions:

- We refinanced our Loan for Kiaora Place, the Council-owned Double Bay commercial centre, resulting in:
 - decreases annual interest expense by \$700,000
 - total savings of \$7.87 million over the life of the loan.
- The replacement of passenger fleet vehicles has been extended from a 2.5 year replacement cycle to a 4 year replacement cycle. This is expected to save \$3.5 million over 10 years.
- We limited our increases in discretionary expenditure and identified efficiencies of \$526,000 in 2021/22.

Actions we are considering

We are also considering a number of other measures, subject to further decisions by Council:

- We are looking at opportunities to increase income including the potential of Bus Shelter Advertising for non heritage bus shelters and bus shelters in non heritage areas. This is subject to changes in the Local Environment Plan
- Productivity Improvements/Service Review commenced in May 2021 to identify areas of the business where cost savings or income generation could be achieved without reducing our commitment to service
- Special Rate Variation – with the specific aim of generating funding for a pre-determined and agreed outcome i.e. financial sustainability and / or things like Streetscape improvements, environmental initiatives, infrastructure upgrades etc.

Ongoing information on the financial sustainability of Council is available [here](#). (hyperlink).

Making the Community Strategic Plan

How we consulted

This strategic plan for our future integrates the engagement feedback we have received since our last Community Strategic Plan in 2018. Most recently these engagement opportunities have included:

- Community Satisfaction Survey – 2021
- Focus groups with residents, community groups and strategic partners
- Adopted a Community Facilities Study and commenced its recommendations
- Online engagement at Council's Your Say Woollahra
- Exhibiting the draft Community Strategic Plan for public submissions prior to adoption.

Working together

Many of our services and strategic plans are directly linked to other levels of government and other service providers that directly or indirectly influence the quality of life within our local area.

We acknowledge these important linkages and aim to work collaboratively to improve the liveability and sustainability of our community. To do this, Council has aligned its Community Strategic Plan with the goals and strategies of the State Government as outlined in the following key plans:

- NSW 2021 State Plan
- Greater Sydney – Eastern District City Plan

Structure of the Plan

Woollahra 2032 is based on four broad and interrelated pillars of sustainability. Under each of these pillars are key goals and strategies for Council, that best summarise what our community values most, to facilitate and deliver in partnership with our community and other government agencies.

Key performance indicators for each of these focus areas will be used to determine where we are and what we have achieved over time. Each key performance indicator will be measured periodically and published in a report to the community.

Our Community Strategic Plan features Focus Areas and Goals. Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting framework includes four broad interrelated Focus Areas which support a sustainable Council:

- Environmental
- Social
- Economic
- Civic Leadership.

Each area is supported by a number of Goals and Strategies. At the Delivery Program level, there are identified Priorities; at the Operational Plan level, there are supporting Actions.

Details of our key challenges in the future and key performance indicators are also outlined for each Focus Area. Throughout the Community Strategic Plan and its supporting documents, the Delivery Program and Operational Plan, these four focus areas are colour-coded:

- Environmental
- Social
- Economic
- Civic Leadership.

All of our Goals may deliver benefits across all of the four Focus Areas; the grouping reflects the primary benefit only.

Our Goals

Our aim is to deliver services in our focus areas within our scope of influence, to achieve the Goals below:

- **1. A connected, harmonious and engaged community for all ages and abilities**
- **2. A supported, enabled and resilient community**
- **3. A creative and vibrant community**
- **4. Well planned neighbourhoods**
- **5. Liveable places**
- **6. Getting around**
- **7. Protecting our environment**
- **8. Sustainable use of resources**
- **9. Community focused economic development**
- **10. Working together**
- **11. A well managed Council**

Have your say

Council's **Draft Community Strategic Plan Woollahra 2032** was placed on formal public exhibition from 6 April 2022 to 15 May 2022. Members of the community were invited to make public submissions expressing their views on the draft plan during the public exhibition period to be considered by Council.

Public submissions received during the exhibition period were considered by Council at a meeting of the Strategic & Corporate Committee held 30 May 2022. The Plan was adopted by Council on 27 June 2022, coming into effect 1 July 2022.

To continue to engage with Council and to have your say you can:

- Go to Council's website
www.woollahra.nsw.gov.au
- Email council at
records@woollahra.nsw.gov.au

