



PORT STEPHENS
COUNCIL

End of Term Report 2017 to 2021



Making a
difference



About this report

Welcome to the Port Stephens Council End of Term Report 2017 to 2021. The theme of this report is reflective of our journey with the community, our partners and volunteers over the past four years - 'Making a Difference'.

This report is designed to provide a snapshot upfront of who we are, the highlights and challenges of 4 years at a glance (pages 6 to 20). We then look in more detail at what we said we would do and the progress made in achieving outcomes over the reporting period (page 29 to 64).

The report has been prepared in accordance with the Integrated Planning and Reporting requirements of the Local Government Act 1993 and is a report on Council's achievements and progress in implementing the Community Strategic Plan over the past four years 2017-2018 to 2020-2021.


Council continues to deliver on the Community's vision of '*A great lifestyle in a treasured environment*' and quadruple bottom line (social, economic, environmental and governance) considerations through 4 main focus areas of the [Port Stephens Council Community Strategic Plan 2018 to 2028](#)[^]

Our Community | Our Place | Our Environment | Our Council

Each key direction/goal of the Community Strategic Plan has a corresponding set of objectives which we deliver on through our 4-year Delivery Program and annual actions in our Operational plan.

We have formed partnerships with many other government departments, agencies and private enterprises (outlined on page 7

and 66 of our Operational Plan) to help deliver on all aspects of the community's aspirations and priorities. We effectively resource the community's priorities, delivery program and annual actions via our Long Term Financial Plan (finance), Strategic Asset Management Plan (assets) and Workforce Plan (people).

A number of Community Indicators measured over time help us to understand if the community is better off as a result of the work carried out by Council and our partners. More detail on these indicators, trends and outcomes can be found on pages 67 to 74, with highlights provided throughout the report wherever this  symbol is shown.

Our Annual and Six Monthly reports also outline progress made on our Delivery Program and Operational Plans. These can be found on our website – www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au

In this report, we have taken a plain English, honest and authentic approach, as with many of our other reports. This is the fourth report of its type to be prepared for our Local Government Area (LGA).

We have made our best effort to provide the latest data available from external sources and Council's operations at the time of writing this report. The report has been prepared for the period ending 30 June 2021, with more detailed information on Council's financial and operational performance available in Volumes 1 and 2 of the 2020 to 2021 Annual Report.

As required under the Local Government Act, this report is presented at the last meeting of the outgoing Council – 26 October 2021.

[^]This report also captures the achievements of the last year of the Community Strategic Plan 2013 to 2023 under the 4 focus areas mentioned above.

Authorised by Port Stephens Council's General Manager Wayne Wallis 116 Adelaide Street Raymond Terrace NSW 2324 and printed by Port Stephens Council.

Contents

2 | About this report

Our Port Stephens

6 | Port Stephens snapshot

8 | Our vision and values

9 | Our elected Council

Our journey

12 | Message from the Mayor

13 | Message from the General Manager

14 | Our community advocacy priorities

4 years at a glance

18 | Our highlights

20 | Our challenges

21 | Our scorecard

24 | Awards and recognition

25 | Engaging with community

26 | Liveability Index 2020

Our progress

29 | Overview - our progress | making a difference

30 | Our community

36 | Our place

52 | Our environment

60 | Our council

Appendices

67 | Community Indicators

We acknowledge the Worimi people as the traditional custodians of this land.

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Despite our best efforts Council makes no statements, warranties or representations about the accuracy, completeness or reliability of any information contained in the report. The Council disclaims all responsibility and liability (including without limitation, liability in negligence) for all expenses, losses, damages and costs you might incur as a result of the information being inaccurate or incomplete in any way, and for any reason.

Our Port Stephens

SECTION 1

6 | Port Stephens snapshot

8 | Our vision and values

9 | Our elected Council





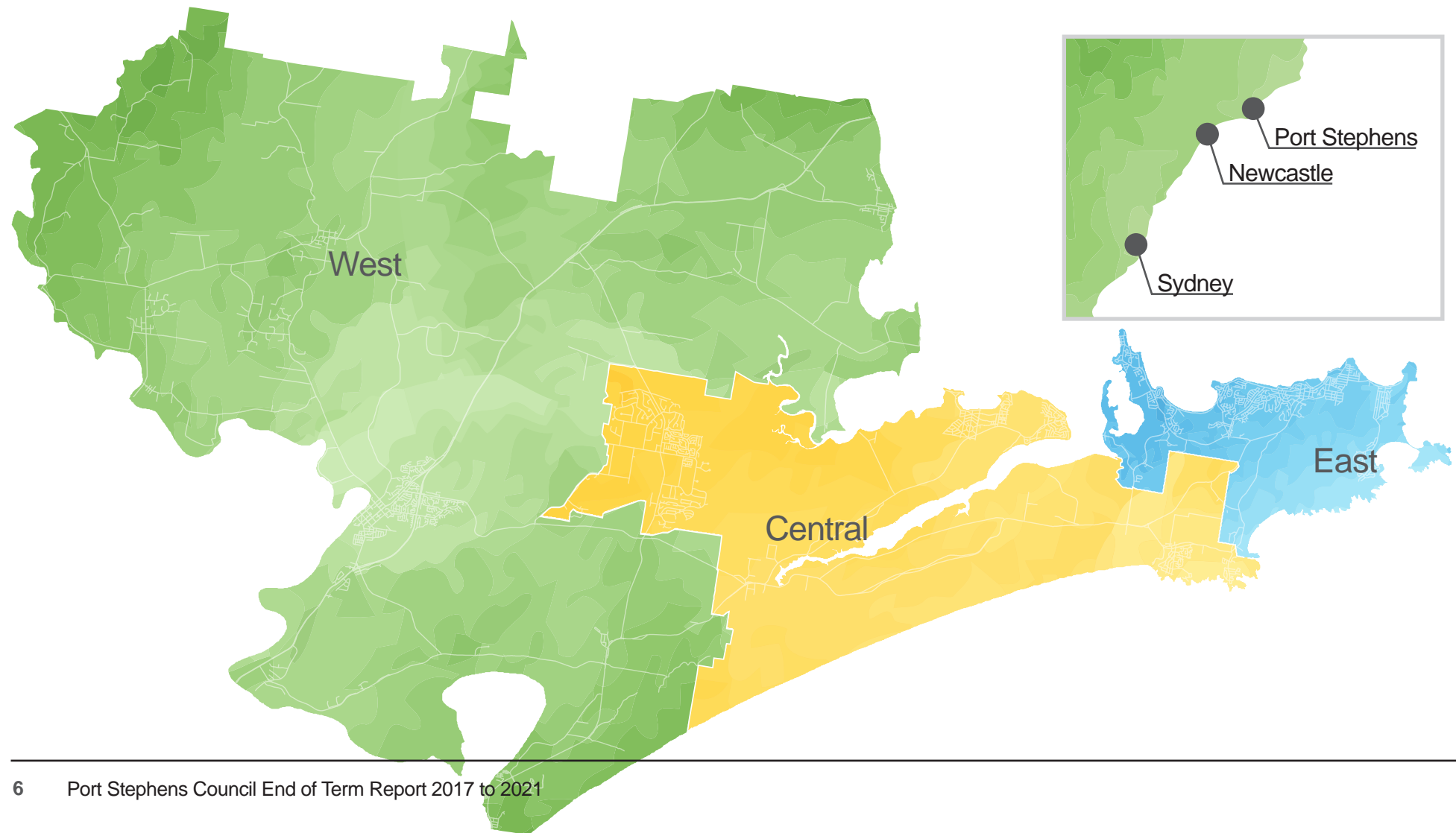
Port Stephens snapshot

Our location

Located on the east coast of Australia, about 2 hours north of Sydney, Port Stephens is known for its incredible natural beauty and vibrant community. These characteristics make our place an ideal tourist and retirement destination as well as a great place to live, work and play.

Area: 858.5 km² Protected Land: 322 km² Region: Hunter Suburbs: 44

Major centres: Raymond Terrace, Medowie, Nelson Bay



Our people

POPULATION

74,506



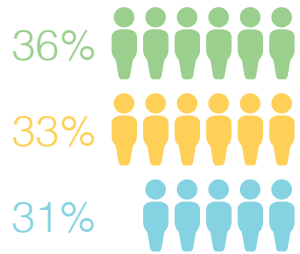
(2020 Estimated Resident Population)



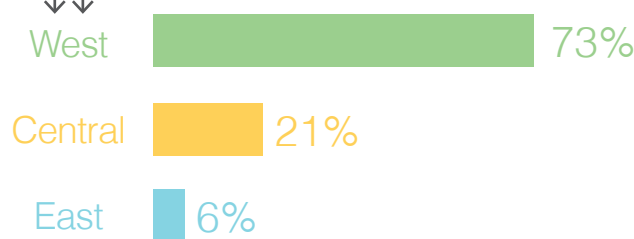
5.5% Population change in last 5 years

MEDIAN AGE
45 YEARS

Population by ward



% of the land area



35% FAMILIES ARE WITH CHILDREN



18% of our population is school aged children (5 to 19)

3297

Making up 4.74% of our population

ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER POPULATION

Our environment



42,000 HECTARES

LARGEST MOVING COASTAL DUNES IN SOUTHERN HEMISPHERE



26 PRISTINE BEACHES

Our economy



PEOPLE IN WORKFORCE

27,346

(ABS 2016)

6.65%

UNEMPLOYMENT (March 2021)



NUMBER OF TRADING BUSINESSES

4900



\$5.4 billion

GROSS REGIONAL PRODUCT
Nominal GRP as at June 2020

MAIN EMPLOYING INDUSTRIES

Public administration and safety 15%

Manufacturing 12%

Construction 11% (ABS 2016)

Source: Remplan 29 September 2021



Read more about Port Stephens economic and community profiles:

app.remplan.com.au/portstephens/community/summary?state=YVQOuN014SLm9j6cG4Gya5F4F2F1Lz

Our vision and values

Our Community's vision

A great lifestyle in a treasured environment.

Council's vision

Engaged and resilient people in strong healthy relationships, working collaboratively, enhancing community wellbeing.

Council's purpose

To deliver services valued by our community in the best possible way.

Values



Respect - creating a unique, open and trusting environment in which each individual is valued and heard.

Integrity - being honest and inspiring trust by being consistent, matching behaviours to words and taking responsibility for our actions.

Teamwork - working together as one Council, supporting each other to achieve better results for everyone.

Excellence - improving the way we work, to meet the challenges of the future.

Safety - providing a safety focused workplace culture to ensure the wellbeing of staff, their families and the community.



Council Administration Building, Raymond Terrace

Our elected Council

Port Stephens Council has a popularly elected Mayor and 9 Councillors representing 3 wards – East, Central and West.

The community normally elects its Council for a 4 year term. The current Council term was originally 3 years because the State Government's council amalgamation process delayed elections in 2017. The election due to be held in September 2020 was also postponed until December 2021 due to COVID-19.

Elected Council

17 September 2017 to current



Mayor
Ryan Palmer

West Ward



Councillor
Giacomo Arnott



Councillor
Ken Jordan



Councillor/Deputy Mayor
Paul Le Mottee

Central Ward



Councillor
Chris Doohan



Councillor
Sarah Smith



Councillor
Steve Tucker

East Ward



Councillor
Jaimie Abbott



Councillor
Glen Dunkley



Councillor
John Nell



Read more about our elected council at : portstephens.nsw.gov.au/your-council/about-council/mayor-and-councillors

Our journey

SECTION 2

12 | Message from the Mayor

13 | Message from the General Manager

14 | Our community advocacy priorities





Message from the Mayor

Together as a community we have continued to remain strong, resilient and have supported each other through the past 4 years. While we faced significant challenges in 2020 and 2021, we have also achieved many milestones that we as a community should celebrate and be proud of.

In September 2017, my first year as Mayor and alongside a new team of Councillors, we set out to make a difference in our Council term. We heard a number of community priorities — from accessible playgrounds, cycleways and footpaths to coastal management, key roads, revitalised town centres and more for business.

To ensure we delivered on these community priorities, we included several key projects in our Delivery Program 2018 to 2022. Today we can celebrate the work we've done including the Port Stephens Koala Sanctuary, Nelson Bay Next, 7 Day Makeovers at Anna Bay and Medowie, Medowie Sport and Community Facility Centre and a 20-year vision for land use as part of our Local Strategic Planning Statement.

We continue to check in with what our community values most. In September 2020, we teamed up with Place Score to hear from 3,700 people as part of our first Liveability Index. This score from our community helps to inform decisions we make, like which projects we should focus on, how these projects compare over time and whether our community is better off as a result of our actions. Through programs and projects such as Port

Stephens 2020, Restart Port Stephens and the Liveability Index, we continue to make a difference to our community.

When preparing the Community Strategic Plan in 2018, we said that we alone 'cannot address all of our community's aspirations and must partner with others to achieve these outcomes'. Through strong leadership and stewardship we have worked with our partners to:

- secure the Williamstown Special Activation Precinct (SAP)
- develop Stage 2 of the Coastal Management Program
- restart Port Stephens through advocating for funding for economic stimulus packages and investment in infrastructure
- rebrand and promote Port Stephens through our Incredible Place Strategy
- secure competitive grants totalling \$36 million
- sign the Yabang Gumba-Gu agreement
- develop a Community Wellbeing Strategy

It's my pleasure to share with you our highlights and challenges over the past 4 years as we worked to deliver on our community's priorities. I hope it makes a difference in the lives of our community and provides a platform for us to build our future together.

Ryan Palmer
Mayor of Port Stephens



Message from the General Manager

We should be proud of what we have achieved over the past 4 years. Together with our community, our elected Council, highly engaged workforce, dedicated volunteers and strong relationships with our key partners, we have continued to deliver for Port Stephens.

I am extremely grateful to our Mayor and Councillors for working cooperatively with our management team over the term and our employees for getting on with the job particularly in the wake of the challenges we have experienced over the past year — continuing to come to work each day during the COVID-19 pandemic and the natural disaster in March 2021 which caused

significant infrastructure damage across our region.

An unprecedented amount of rain having widespread impacts on our community, infrastructure and bottom line – causing delays in major projects and redirecting our crews and funds to repair infrastructure. With the total repair bill estimated at \$7 million, we're firmly focused on fixing our roads.

All the while, our employees have adapted and continued to think of alternate ways to deliver services, connect and act as a key response agency for our community despite the challenges we have faced.

We've continued to carefully manage our resources amidst COVID-19 and following the natural disaster – despite the loss of airport dividends, reduced income and ongoing cost increases. Implementing a range of measures to ensure our financial and operational sustainability, which has enabled us to continue our services in the areas most valued by our community.

Through our service review program and commitment to Business Excellence, we have been able to continue to improve our efficiency and effectiveness. We don't keep just doing things the same way — every 4 years, we conduct a thorough review of our processes and have a strong culture of 'delivering services valued by our community in the best way'.

We are firmly focused on reviewing how we

are meeting our community's 4 focus areas. We keep track of our progress by maintaining a scorecard (refer to page 21 for more) of our key results: service delivery, community satisfaction, employee engagement, governance, risk management, financial sustainability and infrastructure backlog.

Understandably, in the aftermath of the natural disaster and impacts of COVID-19, we weren't surprised when our Community Satisfaction score dropped and our infrastructure backlog gap widened. However, over the term, we have made a difference by delivering our largest ever capital works program, with \$91 million of infrastructure and committing to focus on what matters most to our community.

Despite living in a global pandemic we have turned our financial situation around from a projected underlying deficit of \$4.4M to a small underlying surplus at the end of June 2021.

In 2021, we have also achieved our highest ever employee engagement score all while ensuring our governance and risk frameworks were in check.

I am proud of what we have achieved together and I look forward to the next chapter in making a difference in our community's lives.




Wayne Wallis

General Manager of Port Stephens Council

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Wayne Wallis". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Our community advocacy priorities

Council cannot deliver on all the community priorities alone. We advocate to other levels of government to deliver and support for many aspects. Our focus over the term has been:

-  Advocacy continued
-  Project underway
-  Funding secured



Better connections

Sought firm commitment and funding for the extension of M1, upgrades for Cabbage Tree Road and Nelson Bay Road, sealing of unsealed roads and pathway connections across Port Stephens. A total of \$3 million has been secured from the NSW Government Public Space Legacy fund.

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- 



Birubi Information Centre

We secured **\$5.4 million** from the NSW Government for a purpose built tourism facility at Anna Bay. The centre will provide an improved visitor experience and ease congestion on the Birubi headland. Construction is scheduled for 2022

- 
- 



Connecting our community

Advocated to improve high-speed internet connectivity and addressing telecommunications 'black spots' throughout the Port Stephens area, particularly around the Williamtown aerospace precinct.



Expansion of Newcastle Airport

Runway upgrades to accommodate long-range international flights, terminal expansion and development of Hunter Defence Aerospace Zone. Government funding of **\$66 million** has been announced for the runway upgrades.

- 
- 



Foreshore revitalisation

Funding to implement foreshore revitalisation works that seek to maximise the social and economic value of our foreshore areas through improving facilities to cater for visitors, tourism businesses and residents. Stage 1 of the Coastal Management Program has been completed, with Stage 2 final report received. Council will now apply for grant funding for stage 3 and 4 of this program.





Future-proofing Local Government

Indexing Federal Assistance Grants to future proof funding for local government. We have continued advocacy and maintained existing funding levels.



Innovation hub

In partnership with local industry associations, Council advocated for improved education opportunities in Port Stephens. Seeking a commitment to facilitate discussions with tertiary institutions regarding creation of a regional innovation hub in the local government area. Funding of **\$7 million** was announced by the NSW State Government for a new Connected Learning Centre (CLC) TAFE campus in Salamander Bay.



Kings Hill urban development

Sought commitment to assist the Council and landowners to implement the Kings Hill urban release area, delivering approximately 4,000 dwellings.



Responding to PFAS

Continuing to engage with the Department of Defence around its ongoing PFAS contamination remediation program and liaise with relevant agencies, community groups and residents as appropriate.



Progressing the Williamstown Special Activation Precinct (SAP)

Advocated for the development of a masterplan for the Williamstown SAP. Progress planning for and funding of the establishment of a SAP at Williamstown. An allocation has been secured for the project from the State Government Snowy Hydro fund.



Sports and recreation infrastructure

Sought funding support for a high class, multi-functional sports complex that will cater for local, regional and national sporting organisations and events. **\$2.4 million** from the NSW Government and over **\$800K** from the Federal Government have been secured for sport and recreation infrastructure projects such as Tomaree and King Park Regional sports complex.



Town centre revitalisation

Sought support and funding opportunities to complement the Council's financial commitment to invest in and rejuvenate the town centres of Port Stephens. Over **\$730,000** from the State government provided for trial temporary improvements to Nelson Bay and Raymond Terrace



4 years at a glance

SECTION 3

18 | Our highlights

20 | Our challenges

21 | Our scorecard

24 | Awards and recognition

25 | Engaging with our community

26 | Liveability index





Our highlights Four years at a glance

Our Community



YABANG GUMBA-GU
historic agreement signed




FIRST EVER LIVEABILITY INDEX
to plan for our community's wellbeing



77%
average community satisfaction*

DOUBLING
CHILDCARE PLACES
to 83,550 at our award-winning Thrive Kids*




RECOGNISING COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTION
through annual awards



\$528 K
IN COMMUNITY GRANTS*
through our Community Support, Mayoral and Ward funds

KEEPING CONNECTED DURING COVID
through our Community Connections Program including Have A Yarn

Our Environment



AWARD
Roadside Environmental Management



22,474 T*
OF RECYCLING
collected

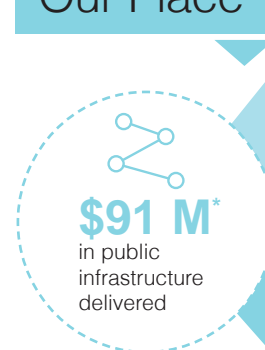
1,840 HA*
bushland regeneration

42,210 TREES*
planted



REDUCING ELECTRICITY CONSUMPTION
by installing solar panels on Council buildings.

Our Place




\$91 M*
in public infrastructure delivered


- \$44 M*** spent on roads
- \$6 M*** spent on open spaces
- \$6 M*** spent on footpaths and cycleways to construct 5.8km

\$2.4 B* in visitor expenditure

AWARD
Making housing more affordable



42 DAYS#
average pre-gateway assessment time (from 504 days^)



9,338
DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS*
determined with median turnaround reduced to 26 days

Our Council

DECREASE
in legal cases

\$36 M*
in competitive grants received

AWARD
Excellence in Work Health and Safety Culture

299*
new citizens welcomed

BALANCING THE BUDGET* through careful cash flow management and strong non-rate revenue

NEW DISASTER DASHBOARD
to manage emergencies including COVID-19

81%#
EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT
a record high

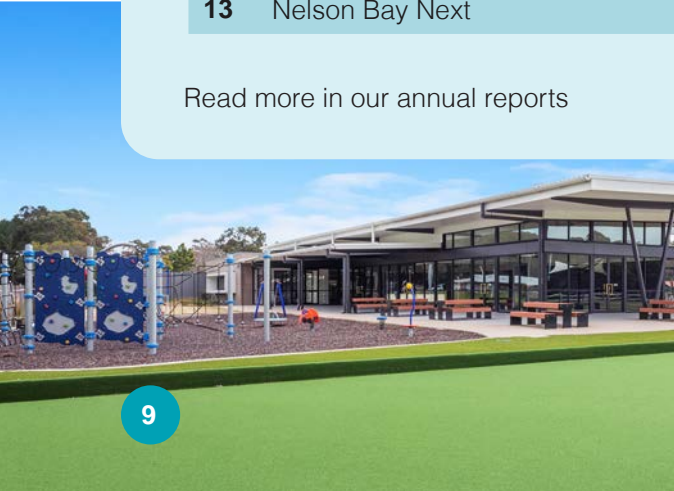
NEW RISK AND ENVIRONMENTAL
management systems implemented

#2020-21, *2017-18 to 2020-21, ^2017-2018

Highlights – Projects

- 1 East Seaham Road construction
- 2 Robinson Reserve rehabilitation
- 3 King Park and Tomaree Sports Complex Master Plans
- 4 Planning Acceleration Program
- 5 Koala Sanctuary construction and opening
- 6 Place activation and business support (Ranging from Incredible Place Strategy to Business Support Fund)
- 7 Lagoons Estate drainage
- 8 Smart parking
- 9 Medowie Social
- 10 Strategic Planning Framework (LSPS, Live Port Stephens)
- 11 Newline Road landfill capping
- 12 Town centre planning and improvements
- 13 Nelson Bay Next

Read more in our annual reports



Our challenges

As with all things in life, our journey has not been without a number of challenges along the way. There have been 7 natural disasters - 3 fires, 2 storms, 1 flood and a pandemic. Whilst challenging, these events have also connected us closer as a community together, given us further insight about what is most important and enhanced our approach to disaster management.



NATURAL DISASTERS

The drought, bush fires and rain events have all had wide-reaching effects on our community, environment and local infrastructure. We've reached out to support NSW farmers and continuing to do our best to repair our roads and infrastructure from these disastrous events. Read more on page 49.



COVID

One of our greatest challenges has been managing the social and economic impacts of COVID-19 on our community and our Council. We anticipate the effects of COVID-19 will be felt for many years to come. To help and unite our community Council adopted our Restart Port Stephens Plan.



DELIVERING MORE PROJECTS WITH LIMITED FUNDING

Following Council's unsuccessful application for a Special Rate Variation in 2019 Council endorsed a number of projects called PSC 2020 that were important to the community. Read more on page 40.

Our scorecard

Our 7 key result measures underpin everything we do at Port Stephens Council.

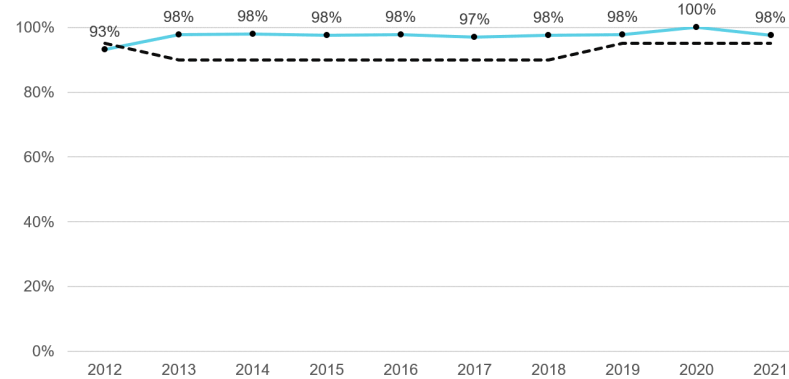


Read more about our result measures and integrated plans on our website - www.portstephens.nsw.gov.au

1. Service Delivery

Target: >95% Integrated Plans delivered on time

Achievement: 98% (June 2021)



2. Community Satisfaction

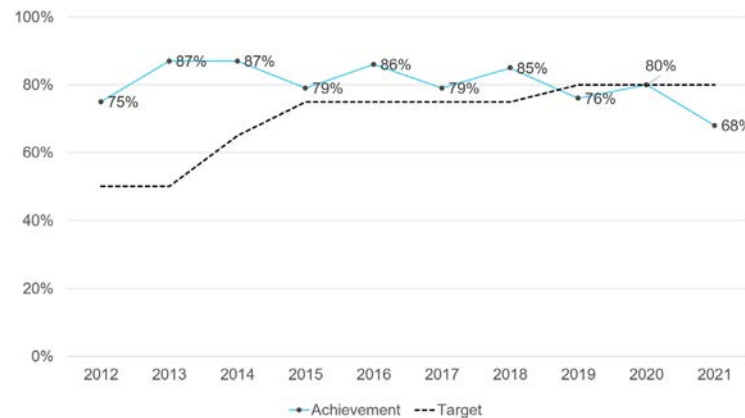
Target: >80%

Achievement: 68% (June 2021)

For more detail read our Community Satisfaction Survey report on:



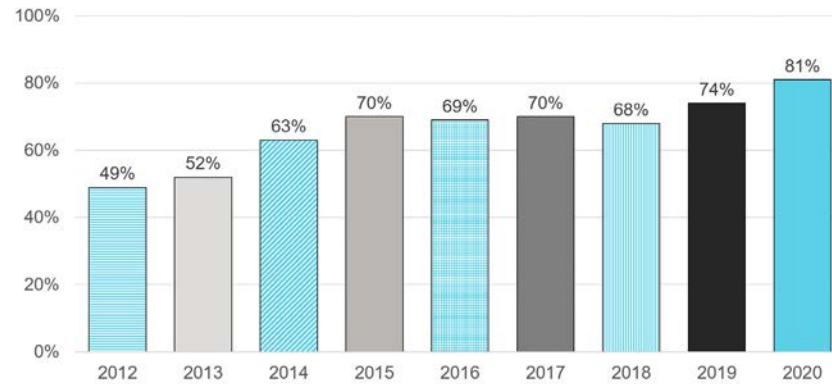
portstephens.nsw.gov.au/your-council/policies-forms-publications/publications-and-information/community-satisfaction-survey



3. Employee engagement

Target: >70%

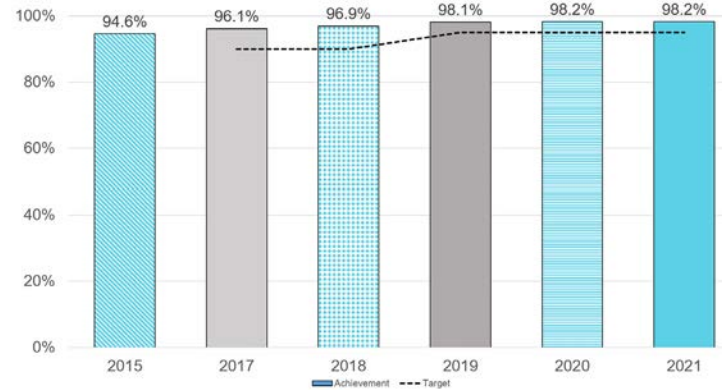
Achievement: 81% (October 2020)



4. Governance

Target: >95% governance health check

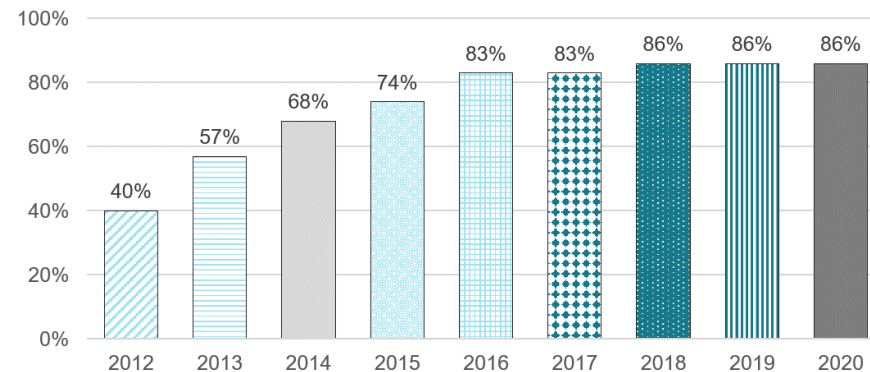
Achievement: 98.24% (June 2021)



5. Risk Management

Target: >80% risk management maturity score

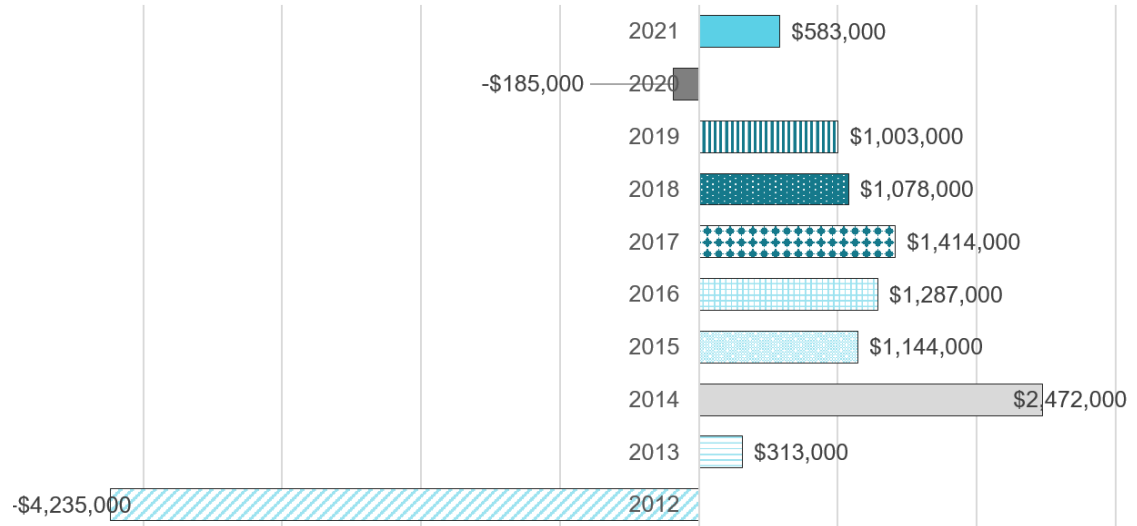
Achievement: 80% (October 2020)



6. Financial sustainability

Target: underlying surplus

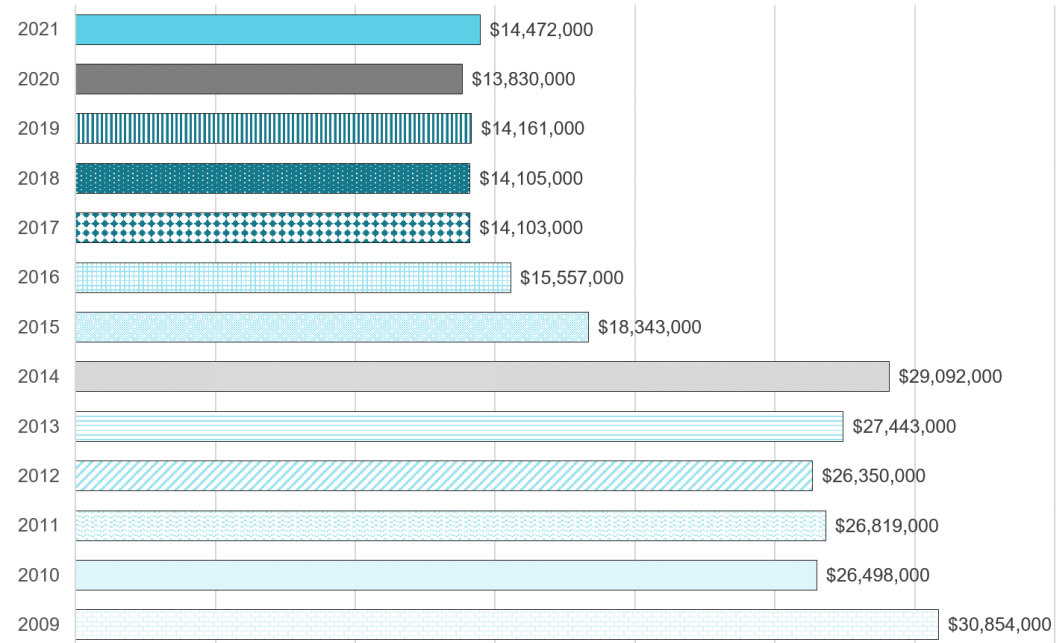
Achievement: \$582,807 (June 2021)



7. Infrastructure backlog

Target: reduction in backlog


Achievement: \$14.47 million gap (June 2021)



Awards and recognition

Council awards

At Port Stephens Council, we believe in doing the right things in the best possible way. We are proud of our culture of excellence and the recognition we have received for over **30 awards received** during this term - doing our best for our community and striving to make a difference. The awards span each of our focus areas from “Making housing more affordable” (Place) to “Winning our war on weeds” (Environment), “Thrive Kids expansion” (Community) to “Excellence in Workplace Health and Safety Culture” (Council).

 For more detail read our Annual Reports on: portstephens.nsw.gov.au/your-council/policies-forms-publications/publications-and-information/annual-reports

Community awards

Over the term, we formally recognised outstanding contributions made by both individuals and groups to our community fabric, environment and culture. These awards are presented on Australia Day with winners recognised in the following categories. We applaud these individuals and groups who together with our council, partners and volunteers go a long way to making a difference in our community.

 Read more on: portstephens.nsw.gov.au/live/community/community-awards

Community Awards	2018	2019	2020
Freeman of Port Stephens		Lorraine Nicol	
Citizen of the Year	Ben Niland	Alicia Cameron	John Chambers
Young Citizen of the Year	Amy Dufour	Tasmyn Fellows	Daniel Howard
Port Stephens Medal	Hunter Region Botanic Gardens Michael Murray Lee Anlezark	Mambo Wanda Wetlands Reserves and Landcare Committee Kenyon Windeyer Donald ‘Steve’ Jones	Medowie Girl Guides Dennis Peters John de Ridder Andrew Smith
Sports person of the Year	Graeme Chamberlain	Dion Cooper	Maya Stewart
Cultural Endeavour	Michael Francis	Rhys Fabris	Kay Newton and Peter Robinson
Environmental Citizen of the Year		Nigel Waters	Lia and Ryan Pereira

Engaging with community

Community Engagement Strategy

We are committed to listening to our community and ensuring they are actively involved in shaping the future of Port Stephens through community engagement. Over the term, we have further refined our approach which is reflected in our Community Engagement Strategy endorsed by Council in November 2019. This strategy recognises that community information sharing, consultation and participation are vital for effective decision making. It includes a Community Participation Plan that sets out how we consult with our community on planning documents and development applications.

You can read more about our Community Engagement Strategy:



portstephens.nsw.gov.au/grow/port-stephens-planning-strategies/community-engagement-strategy

We have a dedicated online community engagement platform: haveyoursay.portstephens.nsw.gov.au where community members can also learn and participate in current projects and programs.

Community Satisfaction Survey

We check in annually with our community to help plan for the future, find out how we are performing in our service delivery and what we can do to improve. Understandably it's a key driver for Council and one of our key result measures. You can read more about the results of our community satisfaction survey on our website.



portstephens.nsw.gov.au/your-council/policies-forms-publications/publications-and-information/community-satisfaction-survey

Liveability Index 2020

Another dimension of our community engagement has been via a place census, conducted in September 2020 to better understand what our community values most and how they rate their neighbourhoods. This is different from the annual community satisfaction survey as it looks more broadly at community wellbeing, liveability and where the community is now to plan for the future. Read more on page 26.



In September 2020 we teamed up with Place Score to complete our first ever place census. Over 3,700 people told us what they value (CF – Care Factor) and how they rate their neighbourhood (PX – Place Experience).

The results allow us to focus on the things most valuable to our community and help us make decisions that will have the biggest impact on the community’s wellbeing.



1,717

rated a neighbourhood



3,700

people shared their values



3,738

people shared ideas for change

In Port Stephens our ideal neighbourhood has:

- Locally owned and operated businesses that provide the community with their daily needs
- A well maintained and managed public domain, footpaths, parks, roads and other public assets
- Easy to access shared community amenities, like the local shops, on foot or bike

LIVEABILITY what a place is like to live in - a liveable place is a healthy place

Port Stephens



National Average



Liveability is influenced by safety, the natural environment, infrastructure, accessibility, things to do, attractiveness and inclusivity.

OUR TOP COMMUNITY VALUES

Things most important to us in our ideal neighbourhood:

-  Elements of natural environment
-  Locally owned and operated businesses
-  General condition of public open space
-  Local businesses that provide for daily needs
-  Sense of neighbourhood safety
-  Walking/jogging/bike paths that connect housing to communal amenity
-  Protection of the natural environment

OUR STRENGTHS






Things our community cares about and rated as performing well. We must continue to celebrate and protect these.

-  Sense of personal safety
-  Access to neighbourhood amenities
-  Elements of natural environment
-  Locally owned and operated businesses
-  Local businesses that provide for daily needs

The results of the Liveability Index highlighted a number of things important to the community that were under-performing. Some of these included walking paths/cycleways, condition of public open space and protection of the natural environment. Over the period, Council has undertaken a number of projects and activities in these areas as outlined in this report, with the place census providing a further platform for us to build on as we review the priorities for the next Community Strategic Plan. Read more on page 30 onwards.

OUR LIVEABILITY PRIORITIES

Things important to our community and rated as under-performing. We must continue to work to improve these.

-  Access and safety of walking, cycling and/or public transport
-  Walking/jogging/bike paths that connect housing to communal amenity
-  Protection of the natural environment
-  Sense of neighbourhood safety
-  General condition of public open space



Our progress

SECTION 4

29 | Overview

30 | Our Community

36 | Our Place

52 | Our Environment

60 | Our Council

Overview - our progress | making a difference

How have we contributed to the Community Strategic Plan?

To illustrate our contributions in making a difference to our community and the Community Strategic Plan we've provided our progress and community indicators under each key direction of Our Community, Our Place, Our Environment and Our Council.



Community indicators to measure performance and effectiveness of long term strategies



Challenges faced



Port Stephens Council Liveability Index 2020 priorities



Our Community

Port Stephens is a thriving and strong community respecting diversity and heritage.



Our Place

Port Stephens is a liveable place supporting local economic growth.



Our Environment

Port Stephens' environment is clean and green, protected and enhanced.



Our Council

Port Stephens Council leads, manages and delivers valued community services in a responsible way.

Our community

Port Stephens is a thriving and strong community respecting diversity and heritage



C1 Goal: Community diversity

Our community accesses a range of services that support diverse community needs.

C2 Goal: Recognised traditions and lifestyle

Our community supports the richness of its heritage and culture.

C3 Goal: Community partnerships

Our community works with Council to foster creative and active communities.

What we said we will do?

Provide facilities and services for children.

Provide support for young people to build their confidence and contribution to the community.

Encourage Port Stephens to be inclusive and access friendly.

Support needs of an ageing population.

Support volunteers to deliver appropriate community services.

Recognise and support local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.

Support and promote local cultural activities.

Recognise and support the heritage of Port Stephens.

Provide public libraries as vibrant community spaces.

Assist community service providers to effectively deliver services in the region.

Support local community events that highlight and foster the creative, diverse nature of our community.

Provide recreational and leisure facilities.

Financially support creative and active communities.



Our community values **things to do** in their neighbourhoods and a **range of community activities**, for example, volunteering, gardening, art, community organised events and so on.

Ideal neighbourhoods should offer **sense of welcome** and have **access to shared community and commercial assets** such as library, sports facilities or gyms and so on.

C1 Community diversity | making a difference 2017 to 2021

Helping local kids thrive

We have proudly been supporting local families to help children thrive for more than 40 years by offering quality early education and childcare programs. Our trusted childcare service offers more than 75,000 childcare places for children attending OOSH (before and after school care and vacation care) in Port Stephens and the Hunter Region doubling the places filled since 2017. Additionally, Family Day Care provided over 7,000 childcare places across the Port Stephens, Hunter and Central Coast regions. We have:

Expanded - OOSH services to 8 locations and mobile preschool to 5 days a week.

Re-branded - our services so that all of our childcare options come under the same banner 'Thrive Kids'.

Provided vital service - to support working families throughout COVID.



Due to the impacts of COVID-19 we have faced a shortage of Educators - 42 Family Day Care Educators in 2020-2021 compared to 70 in 2018 -2019 and difficulty in recruiting Educators in OOSH.



Highlights:

83,550
TOTAL
CHILDCARE
PLACES



**THRIVE
KIDS**

CHILDCARE
RE-BRANDED

Supporting our youth - keeping our youth connected

Youth activities, programs and services we've provided that make a difference include:

- Youth Week
- Youth Advisory Panel
- Pathways and Possibilities project
- Youth Strategy 2020 to 2025
- Mayoral Academic Scholarships.

More opportunities will be available through:

Tomaree Sports Complex - with funding from the NSW Government we plan to construct a state-of-the-art multipurpose building for youth services in conjunction with the local sporting community.

New TAFE campus in Salamander Bay – following Council approval of a DA in December 2020.

seniors festival PORT STEPHENS



Making our place more inclusive

Accessibility and inclusivity have been a key priority of our Delivery Program 2018-2021, with a range of integrated plans, programs and projects occurring across the local government area, including:

- **Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP)** - adopted in October 2017, we have undertaken 22 out of 24 actions to make Port Stephens more inclusive and accessible. Some of these projects include a new all-abilities playground at Bernie Thompson Reserve, a new playground with inclusive play elements at Bagnalls Beach East, floating wheelchairs at our beaches, making access improvements when upgrading our amenities and making our communications user friendly.
- **Volunteers** - supporting our 590 plus volunteers to do the great job they do.



Highlights:

22 / 24 ACTIONS
COMPLETED OR MET
ANNUAL TARGET

**Disability
Inclusion
Action Plan**

C2 Recognised traditions and lifestyles | making a difference 2017 to 2021

Supporting our rich heritage and culture

We signed a unique agreement in 2018 called **Yabang Gumba-Gu: the Road to Tomorrow**.

This agreement is our partnership with Worimi Local Aboriginal Land Council and Karuah Local Aboriginal Land Council to improve the lives and outcomes for Worimi and other Aboriginal people.

The agreement is managed through our Aboriginal Strategic Committee and evolves as actions are completed and new ideas are created.

In partnership with Worimi Local Aboriginal Land Council and funded by NSW Government we installed new interpretive signs at Soldiers Point and Birubi Point Aboriginal Places. We also produced and released 3 Worimi dreaming videos featuring Uncle Graeme Russell. The videos are on repeat at the digital sign at Birubi Point Surf Life Saving Club viewing platform.



Connecting with our community

We believe our libraries are a vital part of our social infrastructure in making a difference to our community, as can be seen from the very high level of user satisfaction with this service, refer to page 67.

Our library services go above and beyond what traditionally libraries may have. They provide literacy support for young children, bridge the digital divide, serve as inclusive community spaces where everyone is welcome and connect people from all walks of life.

Library Services have made a difference to our community through a number of innovations during the past 4 years. Some of these include:

- implementing a **Seed Library**
- an annual **'Food for Fines'** amnesty
- **Story time** and **Read and Rhyme** sessions
- **Call & collect** and homebound delivery throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.



Highlights:

690,000 +

LIBRARY
VISITS

CASE STUDY

Bringing our commun-knitty together

In 2020 during COVID, we were fighting social isolation with... knitting needles! 'The pandemic impacted our way of life, connections and social networks, creating a sense of isolation and loneliness for many,' said our Community Development and Engagement Coordinator, Amber Herrmann.

During the lockdown, we asked our community to pick up their knitting needles, dial up a friend and Have a Yarn.

'This was a fun, inclusive and creative project that gave people a feeling of contributing to the broader community, a sense of pride and connection to their local area while maintaining a physical distance,' Amber said.

We received over 600 knitted and crocheted pieces — from simple squares to koalas, flowers and hearts. 'I wanted to give back to the community I grew up in,' remarked a 92-year old participant.

'The best thing was picking up my knitting needles for the first time in 50 years and sharing the experience with my friends, family and partner,' said another.

The finished designs were installed across public spaces in Port Stephens adding vibrancy and fun to our streets. The project was funded by the NSW Department of Communities and Justice to provide social inclusion for seniors — a key priority of the NSW Ageing Strategy.

Read more here:



portstephens.nsw.gov.au/your-council/news/commun-knity-connects-post-lockdown-by-having-a-yarn



C3 Community Partnerships | making a difference 2017 to 2021

Diversity of our community

We have been supporting our diverse community needs through working with other levels of government, agencies and partners. Council and staff participate in a range of Committees, Panels and groups from the Local Traffic Committee to the Williamtown Consultative Committee to discuss pertinent issues with relevant stakeholders – refer to our Annual Reports for a full list of all Committees.

Council also has a Community Directory on its website with a full guide to non-profit, local groups and services in our region for our community.

We annually celebrate diversity and welcome new citizens at our citizenship awards.

Supporting active communities

With 26 beaches and a port more than twice Sydney Harbour, it's no wonder Port Stephens has a strong connection

with the water, with **almost 3 million** people visiting our beaches during the past 4 years. We've been making a difference to our community by rescuing and providing first aid to **over 1000 people at our beaches**. In addition to our normal surveillance in 2020 we signed up Surf Life Saving to operate at One Mile Beach during the winter season - meaning for 2 years we have patrols that will be **looking after our swimmers all year round**.

We've also been working to support our active communities through our annual grant funding program running an altered program from 2020 to 2021, to **support our community during the COVID-19 pandemic**.

The 2020-2021 program was designed to support a range of activities and contributed to some amazing initiatives such as the Tomaree Museum Pop up Shop and Summer on Magnus Street.



Highlights:

299 New Citizens welcomed

\$528,778
Community grants
(refer page 69)

Our place

Port Stephens is a liveable place supporting local economic growth



P1 Goal:
Strong economy, vibrant local businesses, active investment

Our community has an adaptable, sustainable and diverse economy.

P2 Goal:
Goal: Infrastructure and Facilities

Our community's infrastructure and facilities are safe, convenient, reliable and environmentally sustainable.

P3 Goal:
Goal:
Thriving and safe place to live

Our community supports a healthy, happy and safe place.

What we said we will do?

Support sustainable business development in Port Stephens.

Support and deliver services that attract sustainable visitation to Port Stephens.

Plan civil and community infrastructure to support the community.

Build Council's civil and community infrastructure to support the community.

Maintain Council's civil and community infrastructure to support the community.

Deliver road infrastructure services on behalf of Roads and Maritime services.

Provide land use plans, tools and advice that sustainably support the community.

Enhance public safety, health and liveability through use of Council's regulatory controls and services.

Support the amenity and identity of Port Stephens.

Support emergency services and protect Council assets from bushfires and extreme weather events.



Our community values neighbourhoods with **locally owned and operated businesses** that provide the community with their daily needs.

Neighbourhoods should have easy to access **shared community amenities** like local shops **within walking or cycling distance**.

Neighbourhoods should have **well maintained and managed public domain, footpaths, parks, roads** and other public assets.

P1 Strong economy, vibrant local businesses, active investment | making a difference 2017 to 2021

Sustainable business environment

Supporting and growing local business and our economy has and continues to be a priority for our Council and the community, as highlighted in the 2020 Liveability Index.

A few of the initiatives we have undertaken are:

- **'Easy To Do Business'** program - assisting businesses in Port Stephens to reduce red tape and make business growth easier
- **Economic Development and Tourism Strategy 2019 to 2021** – adopted in 2019 to provide a framework for creating a vibrant place that supports local economic growth
- **Port Stephens Investment Prospectus and Investor Concierge Service** – an integrated approach to attract and support investment
- **Visitor Economy Start House program** – a innovative education and training program designed to increase and expand business opportunities within the visitor economy
- **Small Business Support Service** – a helpline and dedicated web-page making a difference in providing businesses with up-to-date information and support amidst COVID.

Highlights:



\$0.5 billion +
Visitor spend per annum



4900
Businesses



\$32 million
Economic benefit from major events over past 4 years

Creating active and vibrant spaces

Place activation is a deliberate effort to bring public space to life.

We have seen many vibrant examples, big and small, of place activation across our local government area from:

- **Illuminate Raymond Terrace** - attracting 7000 visitors to celebrate the new facilities in Boomerang Park, Raymond Terrace
- **Fern Bay Fiesta** - a family-friendly event to support our community to have a say on their suburb's future
- **7 Day – Makeovers** - Anna Bay and Medowie
- **Street Eats and Beat music event** - as part of the Robinson Reserve development
- **It's On** - new series of activities in Nelson Bay.

Over the term, we have attracted a wide variety of community events ranging from the **Port Stephens Seaside Scavenge** to the **Port Stephens Pro**, **Nations of Origin** to the **Tomaree Arts Festival**.

In 2019, in partnership with Destination Port Stephens we began to refresh our marketing pitch. In June 2020 we launched our new destination brand – **Incredible by Nature**.

Incredible by Nature perfectly captures what we all love about Port Stephens - **the amazing natural beauty and the personality of the people who call PS home**.

In September 2020, we also **opened the Koala Sanctuary**. Making a difference from an economic and environmental perspective:

- playing a vital role in caring for sick, injured and orphaned koalas
- research and education
- offering unique tourist accommodation

CASE STUDY

Better places. Better spaces. Power to the people.

7- Day Makeover for Anna Bay and Medowie

They say many hands make light work — that's certainly true for Anna Bay and Medowie's town centres. After the success at Anna Bay in December 2019, the community and Council joined together again in May 2021 to break ground again to makeover the town of Medowie.

The 7-Day Makeover program empowers communities to improve their town centres to create places that encourage people to gather, increase foot traffic, support business growth and improve liveability and wellbeing. That's a key part of our Council's commitment to creating a strong economy, vibrant communities and active investment.

Hundreds of community volunteers, Councillors and Council staff worked day and night to rejuvenate Anna Bay's town centre as part of the 7 Day Makeover in December 2019.

Medowie was also a record-breaker with the most volunteers in a single day at 201 and a new record for the highest number of sponsors of a 7 Day Makeover town.

Another marvellous example of Council, locals and partners working together to make a difference to our community.

See the results of the makeovers on YouTube:



[youtube.com/watch?reload=9&v=_k9jAaxXCR8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?reload=9&v=_k9jAaxXCR8)

[youtube.com/watch?reload=9&v=v1R736XPmyU](https://www.youtube.com/watch?reload=9&v=v1R736XPmyU)



Fern Bay Fiesta, 2019

P2 Infrastructure and facilities | making a difference 2017 to 2021

Investing (Building and Maintaining) in our infrastructure backbone

One of our **key resources, alongside our employees and funding, is safe and reliable infrastructure.**

Following an unsuccessful application for a special rate variation in 2018-2019, where IPART deemed us as financially fit and unable to raise a special rate, we set about **making the projects that make a difference** to the community in other ways.

We went back to the community in July 2019 with a shortlist of projects that could be delivered without increasing rates. Many large and small projects have been completed in this extraordinary program **Port Stephens 2020 Projects** (PSC 2020 Projects) along with continuing to maintain our existing portfolio of assets.

Over the past 4 years, we have spent in excess of **\$91 million on Public Infrastructure**, with these last 2 years our biggest capital works programs ever with PSC 2020 projects that include:

- **\$6 million** spent on a number of **footpaths and cycleways** including along Anna Bay to Boat Harbour, Gan Gan Road, Anna Bay, Waropara Road, Medowie, Medowie Road (Ferodale Rd to South Street) Medowie, Boomerang Park, Raymond Terrace, Seaham Park path, Avenue of the Allies, Tanilba Bay and many more.
- major **upgrades to our parks, reserves and community facilities** as outlined below.



Highlights:

95%**

Overall public asset condition rating **Between satisfactory to excellent condition (refer page 70)





We know that there is more work to do as extreme temperature fluctuations, severe weather events have impacted the surface and appearance of our roads.

With over 720 kilometres of local and regional roads to maintain, we have made significant progress over the period delivering some major road upgrade projects.

Over the 4 years, we have **spent \$44m on road projects**. Some of the **key road projects completed** include:

- Stage 1 Tomaree Road reconstruction,
- Lemon Tree Passage Road Salt Ash and Tanilba Bay,
- Vardon Road Fern Bay,
- Church Street, Nelson Bay,
- Tomaree Road, Shoal Bay (stage 1 and 2),
- Swan Bay Road,
- Holdom Road Karuah,
- Italia Road East Seaham
- East Seaham Road, East Seaham.



Highlights:

INFRASTRUCTURE BACKLOG

\$29
million
(2014)

▼

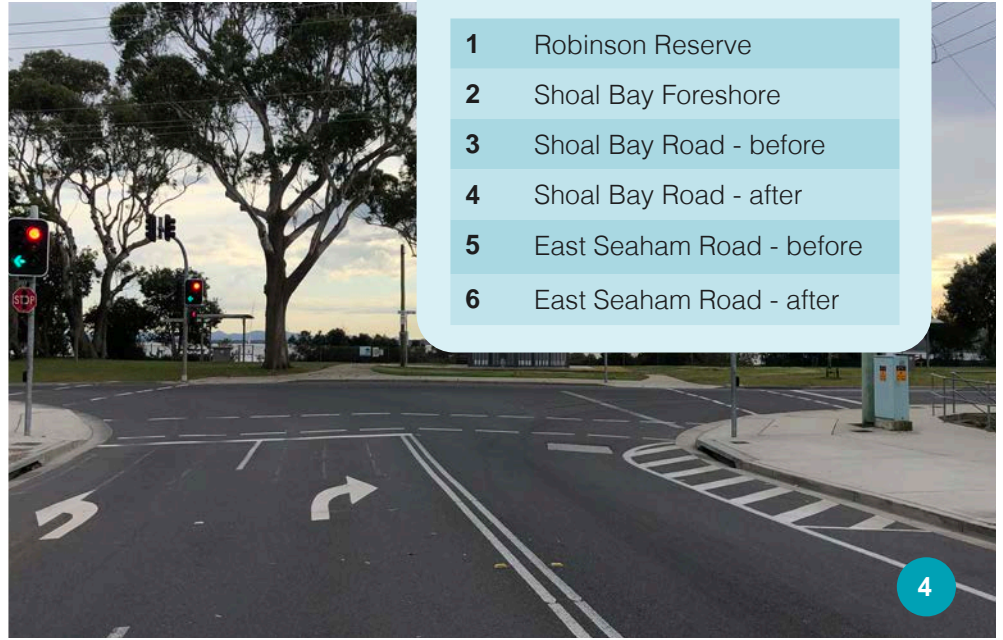
\$14.47
million
(2021)

Did you know Council is responsible for maintaining -

- 724 km local and regional roads
- 214 km of pathways
- 19 wharfs
- 329 hectares of natural bushland
- 298 hectares of watercourses
- 24 multipurpose community facilities
- 18 single use community buildings
- 46 public amenity buildings
- 5 depots
- 15 emergency services buildings
- 4 library branches
- 1 mobile library
- 45 sports grounds
- 57 playgrounds
- 9 skate parks
- 51 tennis courts
- 28 netball courts
- 4 fenced off-leash dog parks
- 3 aquatic centres
- 2 surf clubs
- 19 boat ramps
- 20 sea walls
- 122 km of open drains
- 319 km of drain pipes

This is not a full list.





- 1 Robinson Reserve
- 2 Shoal Bay Foreshore
- 3 Shoal Bay Road - before
- 4 Shoal Bay Road - after
- 5 East Seaham Road - before
- 6 East Seaham Road - after

P3 Thriving and safe place to live | making a difference 2017 to 2021

Making Port Stephens a better place

As outlined in the 2020 Liveability Index, our community highly values neighbourhood amenities, the overall visual character of the neighbourhood and sense of neighbourhood safety, as well as personal safety.

Making a difference to amenity and identity across Port Stephens has been a key priority of Council as outlined in the Delivery Program 2018 -2021. We have prepared **Public Domain Plans for both Nelson Bay and Raymond Terrace** to activate both these town centres.

To provide housing choice, supply and affordability, we prepared a 20-year vision for land use in Port Stephens, our **Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS)** and planned for the future housing needs of our area in our **Local Housing Strategy: Live Port Stephens**. These 2 key planning documents contribute to the long term objectives of the Community Strategic Plan by supporting housing diversity and more affordable housing choices across Port Stephens. By investing in establishing the Liveability Index we will be able to measure over time if we are making a difference in these and many other aspects important to the community.

Improving housing affordability is a key focus of the Local Housing Strategy we prepared in 2020.

2017 Award - Premier's award for Making Housing more Affordable for Development Applications Turnaround times.



Read the LSPS and Live Port Stephens:
portstephens.nsw.gov.au/grow/port-stephens-planning-strategies/port-stephens-local-strategic-planning-statement



The challenge for Port Stephens is to provide a sustainable supply of affordable housing choices at the right price and in the right locations. Many factors can influence property and rental prices, however there are opportunities for Council to plan for more affordable housing by reducing housing costs. This can be done through the local planning system and in partnership with developers, including community housing providers. We have made significant process improvements to lower costs for new homeowners by providing accelerated assessments and removing unnecessary requirements.

Port Stephens has been identified by the government as a pivotal location for economic growth. With **increasing private investment and substantial financial commitments** by state and federal government for projects ranging from infrastructure and residential development to defence, aviation, innovation and education; the future growth of the region is assured.

Council has invested significant resources over 20 years into supporting the development of a Defence and Airport Related Employment Zone—including the Williamtown Aerospace Centre. From 2014 to 2015 Council worked closely with the Department of Premier and Cabinet to determine the site's potential.

In May 2020 the State Government announced the establishment of the fifth **Special Activation Precinct (SAP)** in NSW to be established in Williamtown. The declaration of the SAP realises the alignment of the planning and investment necessary to realise Port Stephens Council's long term vision for the Williamtown area.

After more than 20 years of our Council advocating for a defence and airport employment zone, we are proud to have achieved this outcome for our community.

Planning Acceleration Program

We continue to make a difference to our community by reducing the net median development application (DA) turnaround (26 days) compared with the Premier's target of 40 days and reducing our planning proposal pre-gateway time from 504 days in 2017-2018 to 42 days in 2020-2021.



The community's satisfaction with new development has decreased over the period, requiring further investigation to establish the cause at a time when the capital investment from development applications is \$235 million (2020-2021).



Highlights:

26 DAYS

Net median time for DA turnaround

42 DAYS

Average pre-gateway assessment time

CASE STUDY

Revamping Rezoning

In 2018, our Strategic Planning team began a 2-year project to 'revamp' the rezoning process, making our planning processes more efficient.

At the time there was an average processing times of over 2 years. Many rezonings were inconsistent with local and State strategies or lacked sufficient information to progress, meaning that land release had stalled in Port Stephens.

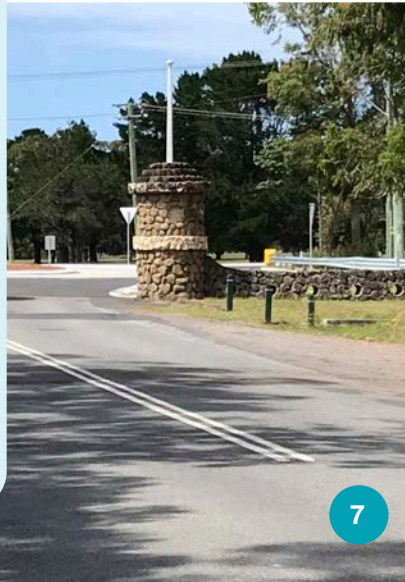
After a comprehensive review, our team developed a framework to better support decision-makers and made significant process changes to provide applicants with clearer guidance.

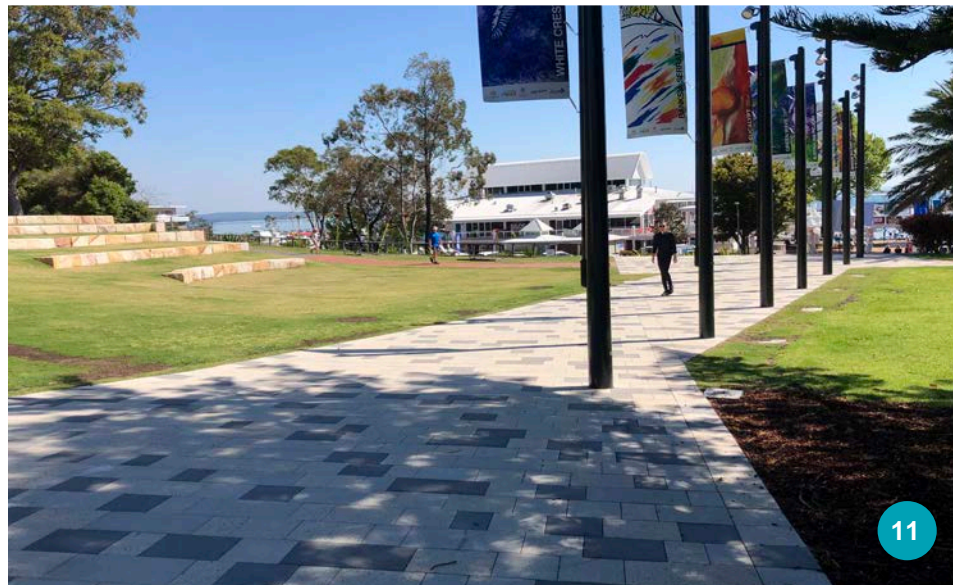
The changes have markedly **reduced the backlog of rezonings by 60%, fast-tracking delivery of land release in our growth areas, and increased transparency for applicants** and our community. Local assessment time-frames for rezonings are now some of the fastest in the State, with customer feedback overwhelmingly positive.

An efficient rezoning process helps us provide a sustainable supply of affordable housing choices for our community.

In 2021, the team was highly commended for the project by the Local Government Professionals Association.

- 7 Lemon Tree Passage Road
- 8 Tomago Boat Ramp - before
- 9 Tomago Boat Ramp - after
- 10 Apex Park, Nelson Bay - before
- 11 Apex Park, Nelson Bay - after
- 12 Boomerang Park, Raymond Terrace - before
- 13 Boomerang Park, Raymond Terrace - after





Importance of safety and emergency support

It is important that our community feels safe. Various factors contribute to the community feeling safe in their neighbourhood, including road safety, level of crime, environmental factors, only some of which can be influenced by Council. Our 2020 Liveability Index highlighted that sense of personal safety is a strength and something we should protect, however a sense of neighbourhood safety is a priority to work on.

Port Stephens Council is committed to reducing the crime rate, re-offending and anti-social behaviour. We have and continue to work closely with Port Stephens Police. Ongoing actions and initiatives relating to safety are undertaken by Council include statutory enforcement, ranger surveillance (animal compliance, illegal dumping) and education programs. These include:

- ranger services - enforcement of legislation (acts, regulations, codes and policies) and effective animal control to ensure compliance with statutory and safety requirements
- incorporating safer by design – Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design strategies into planning processes



Highlights:

65%

Community members feel safe in their neighbourhood
(2021 Community Satisfaction Survey)

- memorandum of understanding with Police
- facilitating the Local Emergency Management Committee
- Inspections/investigations – of on-site sewer management systems, food premises, private swimming pools, illegal waste and a range of other measures – Read more in our Annual Reports available on Councils website.

On page 49, we reflect on the journey we have faced together with the community amongst natural disasters and a global pandemic. Extraordinary and extreme circumstances! Whilst remaining agile to these situations, we prepare for emergency situations and support emergency services by:

- implementing and maintaining the Port Stephens Emergency Management Plan
- maintaining asset protection zones and registered fire trails on Council owned and managed land in accordance with Council agreed service levels
- construction of a much needed new Rural Fire Service facilities at Fingal Bay and Karuah
- ensuring the Rural Fire Service and State Emergency Service buildings are maintained within agreed levels.



CASE STUDY

EMERGENCY SUPPORT

Our community has seen and been impacted **by 7 natural disasters (drought, floods, fires, storms and a worldwide pandemic)**. At times a number of these emergencies have overlapped, adding to the challenges, disruption and despair felt by our community. The term '**unprecedented**' has been coined and used regularly over the past 18 months.

As the level of government closest to our community, we know the important role Council plays during times of emergency.

When COVID began, we quickly found ourselves as the first point of call for our community members and businesses who didn't know where to turn. To respond we connected our community and businesses with the information and support they needed, created programs to promote connection with each other and planned for how we'd help our people reconnect when it was safe to do so.

Having the right information straight from the source is so important. This dashboard provides our community with localised emergency updates, preparedness advice and seasonal awareness of potential risks.

The Port Stephens Disaster Dashboard is an online warehouse of real-time, local emergency information supported by Resilience NSW Regional Disaster Preparedness Program and rolled out to 27 councils across the state. The dashboard contains:

- real-time information related to live emergencies
- information to help prepare for an emergency
- guidance on the assistance available to recover from a recent emergency.

This dashboard has been an invaluable resource, particularly when the community was faced with the natural disaster in March 2021. Our community grappled with record rainfall which resulted in flooding, landslips, road closures and damage to property and infrastructure across our local government area.

Keeping the community and media up to date with the latest information all the while working hard with local authorities including the SES, Police and emergency services to support and respond to our community – *this is how all together we make a difference*. There is more work to be done in the recovery phase, which we will continue to keep the community updated on over the coming months.



14



15



16



17



18

- 14 Fern Bay Community Hall - before
- 15 Fern Bay Community Hall - after
- 16 Fern Bay Sports Court - before
- 17 Fern Bay Sports Court - after
- 18 Lionel Morten Oval - before
- 19 Lionel Morten Oval - after



19



19

Our environment

Port Stephens' environment is clean, green, protected and enhanced



E1 Goal: Ecosystem functions

Our community has healthy and dynamic environmental systems that support biodiversity conservation.

E2 Goal: Environmental sustainability

Our community supports the richness community uses resources sustainably, efficiently and equitably.

E3 Goal: Environmental resilience

Our community is resilient to environmental hazards and climate change.

What we said we will do?

Protect and enhance local natural environment.

Educate the community about the natural environment.

Reduce the community's environmental footprint.

Encourage community resilience to coastal hazards.

Encourage community resilience to detrimental impacts from the environment.

Encourage community resilience to the impacts of climate change.



Port Stephens community aspires to neighbourhoods that feature **unique natural elements**, views, landscapes or vegetation.

Our Council and residents must **protect and maintain the connection to nature** offered by the area by promoting sustainable **behaviours in the community**.

E1 Ecosystem functions | making a difference 2017 to 2021

Protecting our natural environment

A healthy natural environment is critical to our people, providing clean air, water and healthy soils. In turn, this supports ecological, cultural, recreational, economic and aesthetic values. As indicated in the Liveability Index our community highly values and wants Council and residents to protect our natural environment.

Council has continued to play an important role in protecting and enhancing the natural environment. Over the period we have been making a difference with a variety of programs and measures to do this including:

- Developing and implementing a **range of nature conservation programs**
- Rehabilitation and protection against invasive species of our significant environmental assets, **Mambo Wetlands**, through a \$100,000 grant from the NSW Government
- Adopting and implementing our **Local Weed Prioritisation Policy**
- Adopting the **Raymond Terrace Flying Fox Camp Management Plan**
- Revising our **Tree Vandalism Policy**
- Adopting our **Environmental Policy**
- Developing our **Natural Assets Register**



We are finalising a **Biodiversity Strategy** and a **Local Biodiversity Offsets Policy**.

Did you know the benefit of planting just one tree?

One tree absorbs on average 21.5kg carbon per year

Planting 42,210 trees absorbs on average 908 tonnes of carbon per year

To find out about more the benefits of trees refer:

portstephens.nsw.gov.au/grow/land-environment-and-heritage/trees



Highlights:

2017 to 2021

42,210
TREES PLANTED

1,840 hectares
BUSHLAND RESTORED

1,790
WEED TREATMENTS

7273
VOLUNTEERS



Volunteers at Bagnalls Beach

CASE STUDY

WAR AGAINST WEEDS

To win our war on weeds and make a difference we need to work smarter.

That's why our Natural Resources team developed an innovative model for prioritising and managing weeds.

'With 2700 introduced species to Australia, there are always going to be more weeds than there are resources,' said our Natural Resources team leader Jordan Skinner.

'Our model has ensured efforts are focused on managing the most significant weeds while maximising efficiency. It helps us work out what time and resources we'll need to make a real difference on the ground.'

The success of our model and the hard work of our team was recognised at the 2020 Local Government NSW Excellence in the Environment Awards.

Find out more about how we manage weeds in Port Stephens:



portstephens.nsw.gov.au/live/environment-and-sustainability/weeds-and-pests/your-responsibilities

Air and water quality

Air quality within Port Stephens is good¹. It is influenced by factors such as local traffic and rural activities, with air pollution sources generally limited to 10 facilities that occur within our region. With data for this report analysed from the Stockton Monitoring Station. Monitoring occurs at a number of sites within the Lower Hunter.

The **Beach Watch Program** monitors and reports recreational water quality at swimming sites. Beaches with the best water quality consistently over the 2017 – 2021 reporting period include Zenith Beach, One Mile Beach, Fingal Bay, Box and Birubi Beach. Beach Watch only collects data from 4 sites.

For more information, visit:

environment.nsw.gov.au/topics/water/beaches/reporting-beach-water-quality/about-weekly-star-ratings



When sewage or storm-water contamination is suspected, as was the case in January 2021 when a sewage leak occurred at Nelson Bay, Council closed the beaches and swimming area. We then conducted water quality testing until samples indicated that the water quality was suitable for swimming.

Educating our community

We're continuing to make a difference by educating our community on a variety of environmental matters to increase awareness and appropriate action. Examples of the programs include:

- Western LG Koala Corridors
- Share the Shore videos
- Birubi Sand Dune Rehabilitation
- Sustainability and Climate Change Survey
- TAFE and Coastal Management Program, Bio-security Act presentations
- Volunteer Introduction to Bush Regeneration

¹Air quality results from the Stockton Air Monitoring Station for the period July 2017 to March 2021 were all within the air quality category of 'Good' except for 2 occurrences of 'Fair' quality for particulate matter (PM10) during February to March 2019, and October to April 2019.

E2 Environmental sustainability | making a difference 2017 to 2021

Our environmental footprint

Water is a precious resource that we have become only too familiar with over the past few years with the effects of drought and necessary water restrictions.

We have been making a difference by:

- participating in the **Hunter Water Corporation (HWC) Community Consultative Committee**, (an advisory committee), to advise HWC on matters affecting Port Stephens
- preparing Drought Management Plans for our key water use areas in conjunction with HWC
- saving 71 Olympic swimming pools of water² in just one year through water saving initiatives.

Reducing our energy consumption

Our community is doing its bit to help the environment and reduce our environmental footprint, with yearly Ausgrid reports for our LGA, showing a **decrease in the daily electricity average** (kWh per customer per day) and an increase in the number of solar customers and solar energy exported to the grid³.

Council is also doing its bit by:

- proudly **joining the City Power Partnership**
- installing solar panels on Council's Administration Building, Salamander Waste Transfer Station, many of our libraries, community centres and Rural Fire Service buildings
- installing **solar pool pre-heating** at Lakeside Leisure Centre, Tomaree Aquatic Centre and Tilligerry Aquatic Centre
- we used recycled glass 'greencrete' in the upgrade of Tanilba Bay roundabout
- installing a **Building Management System** at our Administration Building, Lakeside Leisure Centre and many sports and community buildings to **deliver energy efficiencies and lower operating costs**
- commencing preparation of a **Sustainability Strategy and Action plan** to help our Council manage resources and energy consumption.

² Visit for more detail: [portstephens.nsw.gov.au/your-council/news/council-saves-\\$70k,-71-olympic-swimming-pools-of-water-in-just-one-year](https://portstephens.nsw.gov.au/your-council/news/council-saves-$70k,-71-olympic-swimming-pools-of-water-in-just-one-year)

³ Refer to Ausgrid website for more detail: ausgrid.com.au/Industry/Our-Research/Data-to-share/Average-electricity-use



Managing our waste

The way we currently manage waste has been in place since 1999 and it's now time to plan for the next 20 years. We are planning to make a difference to our community and the environment with our **war on waste**, by developing a **waste strategy** that will look at how we deal with garbage, recycling, green waste, litter, kerbside collections and drop-off days. It will also include how we'll educate our community on what they can do to reduce waste and make sure it goes in the right place. In late 2020 we held a number of face to face sessions with the community to help develop the strategy.

As we welcome over 1.5 million visitors to our area each year, using indicators like waste per capita becomes a bit problematic as an increase in visitation ultimately impacts the amount of waste generated and collected. Whilst some of the indicators on page 73 do not show an improvement over time we have continued with our war on waste despite the challenging impacts of both COVID-19 (more waste generated) and mixed organic waste by a number of **waste education programs**. These include:

- Waste avoidance and reuse workshops
- Youth education on better recycling practices and reducing litter

Did you know?

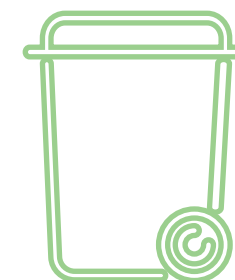
Managing litter costs more than \$180 million per year in NSW

43% of litter is cigarette butts

Waterways get polluted by litter




In 2018 the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) made a surprise announcement that has significantly impacted how we manage waste in Port Stephens. For 20 years, our domestic waste was composted with our state-of-the-art system. It allowed us to recycle 100% of green and food waste without the need for a separate green bin, diverting more than 50% of waste from landfills. In October 2018, a regulation known as the Resource Recovery Exemption Order was revoked for mixed organic waste. The order had allowed this compost to be used on land for grazing agriculture, forestry plantations and rehabilitated mine sites. Suddenly, this was forbidden due to potential physical contaminants and environmental risks. This meant an immediate stop to an important part of our waste management process.



E3 Environmental resilience | making a difference 2017 to 2021

Resilience to coastal hazards

Our community values the **coast, being one of our greatest assets** in living in a 'treasured environment'.

 The coast though is an ever-changing and dynamic environment with many threats which have the potential to impact how our community enjoys and uses the coast both now and into the future.

One of our key priorities is **making a difference for the long term**. A 10-year **Coastal Management Program (CMP)** will build resilience against environmental risks and help retain the unique natural environment we have in Port Stephens.

We've also been making a difference at the Little Beach boat ramp near Shoal Bay which is often being covered in the sand despite regular maintenance by our Council. In 2020 and 2021 we've taken action to address the cause of the problem — sand migrating around from Shoal Bay and inundating the boat launch site. We used drones to survey the beach and find where to remove sand and how much to take.



Highlights:



Quarterly monitoring of decommissioned waste landfill sites as per schedule

Supporting our community from environmental impacts



It has been 6 years since Williamstown residents were told their land had been contaminated by **PFAS** (per and poly-fluoroalkyl substances) from the historical use of firefighting foam at RAAF Williamstown. A Community Reference Group was originally created to keep affected communities informed and provide a forum to raise issues with government agencies — with our General Manager participating since its inception. Despite opposition from the community and our Council, the NSW Government abolished the group in October 2019 in preference of agencies speaking directly with the community as required.

Our Council asked the Premier to reinstate the Community Reference Group so that we could continue to support those who have been impacted by PFAS. Department of Defence has developed a remediation plan for the PFAS management zone and is progressively implementing remediation works.

In 2018-2019 we continued supporting landholders at Williamstown affected by PFAS contamination with a special sub-category of rates – a discount of 50% for residents in the primary zone, 25% in the secondary zone and 10% in the broader zone. Council has continued with **providing this rate relief** and monitors the Department of Defence's remediation activities along with supporting the affected communities however we can.

Completed capping and rehabilitation of the former waste landfill site (Newline Road, Raymond Terrace)

Taking action on climate change

Climate change action benefits everyone — it reduces potential damage to community and council assets, protects our environment and improves community wellbeing. We're seeking to make a difference which is why in 2020, Council **endorsed a Climate Change Policy** - an overarching guide for how our Council will **respond to climate change now and in the future**. The Policy has 3 main focus areas – education, mitigation and adaptation.



Read more: portstephens.nsw.gov.au/live/environment-and-sustainability/sustainability-and-climate-change

We're also committed to working in partnership with other councils, our community and all levels of government to respond to the challenges of climate change. Council also agreed that as part of the review of the Community Strategic Plan for 2022-2032 that climate change would form part of discussions with the community.

We're also in the process of updating our Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan to identify our priority actions to address climate change risks. Results in late 2020 of the review of the Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan were that:

- progress of the 35 treatment actions has been ongoing – the Coastal Management Program is expected to drive the completion of more actions over the next 18 months.
- updated climate data and modelling saw a moderate increase in risk level across 30% of priority risks, a minor increase across 65% and no change across 5%
- we lead our peers across 14% of key performance areas, the average for 57% of operational activities, lagging in 29% of operations (dedicated climate change officers and total funding dedicated to climate change).
- engage with the community on climate change actions through the Community Strategic Plan



Highlights:

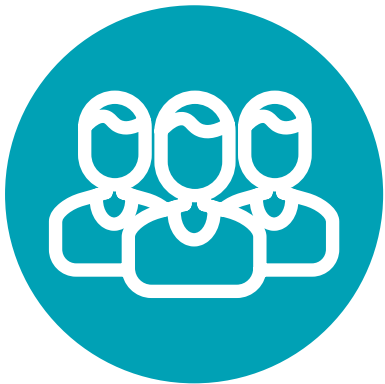
**26 actions
completed**
(out of 35)

**CLIMATE CHANGE
ADAPTATION ACTION
PLAN**



Our council

Port Stephens leads, manages and delivers valued community services in a responsible way



L1 Goal: Governance

Our Council's leadership is based on trust and values of Respect, Integrity, Teamwork, Excellence and Safety.

L2 Goal: Financial management

Our Council is financially sustainable to meet community needs.

L3 Goal: Communication and engagement

Our community understands Council's services and can influence outcomes that affect them.

What we said we will do?

Develop and encourage the capabilities and aspirations of a contemporary workforce.

Provide strong civic leadership and government relations.

Provide a strong ethical governance structure.

Provide strong supportive business systems for Council's Operations.

Reduce risk across Council.

Maintain strong financial sustainability.

Maximize non-rate revenue and investment to support Council services.

Provide a customer first organisation.

Provide information in a range of accessible formats.

Strengthen Council's reputation.

Provide a voice for the community.



Highlights:

81% EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT SCORE

October 2020

OUR HIGHEST SCORE

98%

GOVERNANCE HEALTH CHECK

77% AVERAGE COMMUNITY SATISFACTION SCORE

2018 to 2021

L1 Governance | making a difference 2017 to 2021

Employer of choice and excellence

Our organisational culture, the way we carry out our work through **business excellence** and having a **highly engaged workforce** are some of the key ingredients to making a difference to our community. People who go the extra mile and don't just do things the way we always have are critical to a **stable, efficient and productive workforce**. With many challenges faced over the past 4 years, moving from the threat of a merger to the impacts of COVID, our workforce has remained resilient, continuing to get on with doing the job, thinking of alternate ways to deliver services and connect with the community.

Valuing staff as your number one asset and investing in their mental and physical health with an **employee wellbeing program** is the true testament of being an employer of choice. This is a workforce that is willing to go above and beyond to serve its community, with staff available around the clock to communicate, direct help and assist a community in need during the many natural disasters over the past 4 years.

We have been able to govern the ship and ensure that our 7 key result measures, refer to page 21 are maintained amidst a global pandemic. These result measures are not mutually exclusive - we need to effectively balance and manage these together in a sustainable way.

Strong advocacy, governance, leadership

Council has been actively making a difference for our community in seeking funding and commitments to several projects from the NSW and Federal Government. This can take a long time and as with the **Special Activation Precinct**, it took over 20 years of lobbying to bring to fruition.

But getting the money and having the right people is only part of the equation in getting these projects off the ground for the community. At Port Stephens Council safety always comes first! We have a well-developed approach to risk management and safety through our Risk Management Framework.

We've been leading the way with our safety culture, **receiving multiple awards** in recognition of our approach.

Our annual Governance Health Check also provides reassurance to the community that we are **operating in a sound way meeting our legislative and operational requirements**. This is across the spectrum of ethics, risk management, information management and reporting.

L2 Financial Management | making a difference 2017 to 2021

Financially responsible and sustainable

The difference we have made to the community over the past 10 years can be seen in the **turnaround** from a large underlying deficit of \$4.235m in 2011-2012 to an underlying surplus of \$582,807 in 2020-2021. Despite the pandemic and 6 natural disasters, through careful management of our cash flow, reducing non-essential projects and reprioritising our spending, we have continued to:

- keep our **rates amongst the lowest** in the Hunter region,
- **meet asset renewal targets**, while improving service delivery to the community
- **balance our budget**.

In the past 4 years, we have increased returns from property developments and investments in our Holiday Parks operations and (prior to COVID) a dividend of \$2 million per annum for the Newcastle Airport.

A financially sustainable local government delivering prioritised services.

Whilst being financially responsible we've always been there to support our community no matter what. Realising that many businesses and our community were experiencing significant challenges from COVID-19, in 2019-2020 we offered several measures to **increase access to financial hardship**. Additionally, we reallocated funds from the PS 2020 projects to the Restart Port Stephens Plan.

L3 Communication and engagement | making a difference 2017 to 2021

Customers come first and foremost

We've been making a difference to our customer's experience by:

- being the first point of call during COVID – seeing a **25% increase in customer enquiries** from April to June 2020 alone
- continuing to update our **dedicated COVID-19 webpage** and **Disaster Dashboard** to ensure our community has quick access to all information they need
- continuing to actively review and **improve our website** to ensure information is easily accessible
- re-branding and **launching our e-newsletter PSToday** (previously known as Informe) to focus on good news in our community
- moving with the times from newspaper advertisements to digital as our main source of information. For more information, refer to our 2019-2020 Annual Report available on our website
- streamlining our customer request management
- launched a number of online forms.



Our Customer Relations team

Importance of community voice

Providing a **real voice for our community** is of the utmost importance to our Council.



It is not surprising that the impacts of the damage and devastation from both the March 2021 natural disaster and COVID-19 have been echoed in the Community Satisfaction Survey results in 2021 - with a reduction in overall satisfaction to 68% and a marked decline in satisfaction with maintaining local roads and stormwater management systems.

We know we have to work on this, which is why in 2020 we reached out to the community via the Liveability index to ensure we get a whole of community perspective on priorities. Over 3,700 people across our community told us what the value and how they rate their neighbourhoods. It will inform the review of the Community's Strategic Plan for the next 10 years, place planning, Wellbeing Strategy and so much more – but we know that the community is not interested in plans but on the ground results which is why we will be checking in with the community over the next 12 months to hone in on these priorities.

Having said that, we have done much to make a difference in engaging with our community over the past 4 years. We've been committed and do believe we've been listening to our community to ensure they are actively involved in shaping the future of Port Stephens.

The benefits are clear — we earn our community's trust, identify solutions to complex problems and get the best result for all.

Our Community Engagement Strategy, endorsed in November 2019, reflects this commitment and our approach. It includes a community participation plan that sets out how we'll consult with our community on planning documents and development applications - a legislative requirement for all NSW councils.

Below are a few of the many projects and activities that we've engaged our community on over the past 4 years:

- Local Strategic Planning Statement (LSPS) and Local Housing Statement (LHS)
- Coastal Management Program (CMP)
- Port Stephens 2020 projects and other major works
- Raymond Terrace Public Domain Plan
- Smart Parking System
- Special Rate Variation proposal
- Fern Bay and North Stockton Strategy
- Boomerang Park off-leash dog park and Robinson reserve
- Kings Park Sports Complex master plan
- Birubi Point Aboriginal Place
- Location of Karuah Rural Fire Service building
- Nelson Bay Public Domain Plan
- Waste Strategy
- and many more.



Community engagement at Shoal Bay, 2020

Appendices

SECTION 5

67 | Community Indicators



Community Indicators

▲ Progressing towards community outcome

▼ Progressing away from community outcome

— Stable

CSP Key Direction	Community Indicator	Measure	2017	2018	2019	2020	Making a difference
			- 2018	- 2019	- 2020	- 2021	
C1 Community Diversity	Usage of Council child care centres	Number of family day care places filled	6,837	6,735	7,843	7,113	▲
		Total number of childcare places filled (before and after school care)	36,406	58,354	70,926	75,227	▲
	Participation in Council youth activities	Data not available. Refer to page 31 for youth activities.					
	Usage of community halls	Percentage of community halls users (of total responses from annual community satisfaction survey)	-	36% n = 431	36% n = 524	18% n = 2028	▼
	Access friendly infrastructure	Disability Inclusion Action Plan - actions completed/met annual target	13* out of 24	15* out of 24	22* out of 24	22* out of 24	—
		Overall accessibility of facilities in the local area (% of total responses from annual community satisfaction survey)	-	65% n = 1146	68% n = 1507	74% n = 2187	▲
	Sustainable Volunteer Groups	Participation with a volunteer group (% of total responses from annual community satisfaction survey)	-	32% n = 1159	42% n = 1482	35% n = 2105	▼

- Data not available

* 8 of the above are ongoing.

CSP Key Direction	Community Indicator	Measure	2017	2018	2019	2020	Making a difference
			- 2018	- 2019	- 2020	- 2021	
C2 Recognised traditions and lifestyles	Cooperative activities with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people	% of actions completed or commenced in Yabang Gumba-Gu Plan	100%	95%	95%	100%#	—
	Participation in cultural activities and events	Average overall participation at cultural/ community activities or events (% of total responses from annual community satisfaction survey)	-	66%	88%	77%	▼
	Preservation of Port Stephens heritage	Heritage Projects Fund grants	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$5,500	\$4,597	▼
		Heritage advice on Development Applications (DA), Council Projects (CP) and requests for information (RI) within 10 days	-	-	DA - 11 CP - 34 RI - 10	DA - 23 CP - 35 RI - 19	—
	Public library usage (within Port Stephens Council local government area)	Library user satisfaction	99%	99%	# #	88%	▼
		Number of people visited library branches	217,360	199,610	146,881	134,673	▼
		Library use of resources - internet and Wifi (number of individual sessions)	42,176	35,485	27,336	19,900	▼
		Library use of resources - number of collection item loaned (checkouts)	318,869	299,371	243,337	233,795	▼
		Library use of resources - attendance at programs	8,126	9,184	6,471	3,246	▼

- Data not available

Comparative data not available

15 out of 19 actions in the Yabang Gumba-Gu Plan are completed. Remaining 4 actions are on going over multiple years. Actions in the plan are reviewed annually with the Aboriginal Strategic Committee.

CSP Key Direction	Community Indicator	Measure	2017	2018	2019	2020	Making a difference
			- 2018	- 2019	- 2020	- 2021	
C3 Community partnerships	Diversity of services available to the community	Current number and type of community services available	Data not available. Wide reaching variety of service available. For a guide on services available refer to the Community Directory on Council's website.				
	Participation in community activities and events	Number of community-run events supported and managed by Council	7	9	5	6	▼
		Average overall participation at cultural/community activities or events (% of total responses from annual community satisfaction survey)	-	66%	88%	77%	▼
	Usage of recreation and leisure facilities	Number of people/ attendance at swimming pools	225,167	263,838	183,632	101,318	▼
		Usage of recreation and leisure facilities	-	51% n = 1,159	56% n = 1,482	50% n = 2,105	▼
		Number of people/ attendance at beaches and surf clubs	617,469	764,840	767,273	738,786	—
	Usage of Council's financial assistance program	Annual grant funding (comprising Community project funds, Mayoral and Ward funds)	93 grants \$122,922	120 grants \$91,815	101 grants \$123,011	97 grants \$190,960	▲
P1 Strong economy, vibrant local businesses, active investment	Tourism spend	Number of tourists	1.5 million	1.8 million	1.7 million	1.7 million	—
		Total visitor expenditure	\$535 million	\$606 million	\$568 million	\$705 million	▲
		Financial support for Destination Port Stephens	\$397,500	\$397,500	\$407,962	\$400,000	—

- Data not available

CSP Key Direction	Community Indicator	Measure	2017	2018	2019	2020	Making a difference
			- 2018	- 2019	- 2020	- 2021	
	Competitive and sustainable business environment	Number of active businesses in Port Stephens	4,799	4,865	4,900	-	▲
		Business satisfaction survey result (Port Stephens is a good place to conduct business)	-	57%	-	82%	▲
	Range of and attendance at iconic events	Economic benefit from major events	\$8.2 million	\$10 million	\$7.8 million	\$5.6 million	▼
		Number and attendance at iconic events held	Data not available. Refer to page 38.				
P2 Infrastructure and facilities	Reduction in infrastructure gap	Infrastructure backlog (Infrastructure gap shown per annum)	\$14.11 million	\$14.16 million	\$13.83 million	\$14.47 million	▼
	Condition of public assets	Overall Council infrastructure assets between satisfactory to excellent condition as a percentage of gross replacement cost (buildings, storm water drainage, open spaces and recreational assets excluding roads)	94%	94%	95%	95%	—
		Community satisfaction with maintenance of parks and gardens	92%	91%	93%	88%	▼
		Community satisfaction with maintenance of operational cemeteries	94%	95%	92%	90%	▼
		Community satisfaction with maintenance of swimming pools	90%	91%	90%	88%	▼
		Community satisfaction with sports and recreational facilities	90%	91%	92%	89%	▼
		Community is confident that Council is managing its resources (assets) (% of total responses from annual community satisfaction survey)	73%	61%	63%	59%	▼

- Data not available

CSP Key Direction	Community Indicator	Measure	2017	2018	2019	2020	Making a difference
			- 2018	- 2019	- 2020	- 2021	
	Condition of Council controlled roads	Overall Council Roads between satisfactory to excellent condition as a percentage of gross replacement cost	90%	92%	95%	94%	▼
		Community satisfaction with maintenance of local roads	75%	71%	68%	45%	▼
		Community satisfaction with roadside maintenance	84%	81%	79%	68%	▼
P3 Thriving and safe place to live	Efficient planning processes	Number of development applications determined	871	801	775	964	▲
		Net median time for DA turnaround (Number of days)	34	38	34	26	▲
		Average planning proposal review time (Number of days)	504	344	174	42	▲
	Perception of safety	Perception of safety in the LGA 'How safe do you feel in your neighbourhood?'	-	72%	74%	65%	▼
	Housing affordability and stress	Number of residential building approvals (New houses and other residential) (Data Source - Remplan)	333	343	266	-	▼
		Value of residential building approvals (million) (Data Source - Remplan)	\$141 million	\$125 million	\$110 million	-	▼
	Emergency services support	Data not available. Refer to page 48 and 49					
Increased community satisfaction with new development	Community satisfaction with new developments	-	76%	69%	66%	▼	

- Data not available.

CSP Key Direction	Community Indicator	Measure	2017	2018	2019	2020	Making a difference
			- 2018	- 2019	- 2020	- 2021	
E1 Ecosystem function	Air and water quality	Refer to page 55					
	Habitat preserved and regenerated	Bushland restoration works (hectares)	968 ha	377 ha	346 ha	149 ha	▼
		Number of bushland sites managed	415	400	429	419	—
		Number of volunteers engaged	1,748	1,524	1,899	2,102	▲
		Number of trees planted	23,541	6,532	4,629	7,508	—
	Noxious weed infestations	Bio-security (weed) treatments on Council land	294	264	672	560	▲
		Bio-security (weed) private property inspections	513	583	823	1504	▲
		Number of compliance & enforcement actions	4	12	103	69	▲
	Participation in environmental education programs	Number of public events	9	6	18	2	▼
		Number of community members engaged	169	102	473	29	▼
		Number of face to face training sessions for weed management	91	93	559	1188	▲

CSP Key Direction	Community Indicator	Measure	2017	2018	2019	2020	Making a difference
			- 2018	- 2019	- 2020	- 2021	
E2 Environmental sustainability	Improved water consumption	Data not available for the local government area. Refer to page 56 for more information on what Council has been doing to make a difference.					
	Improved energy consumption	LGA daily average usage (residential) (kWh per customer per day)^	17.1	17.1	16.7	-	▲
		Energy exported to the grid from Solar (MWh)^	12,081	15,702	21,711	-	▲
		Council's usage of electricity (MWh)	8,400	8,400	7,137	7,004	▲
	Waste per capita (landfill, recycle, green)	Landfill - Red bin waste (tonnes)	20,137	19,727	25,318	23,533	▼
		Green waste (tonnes)	3,097	3,003	3,011	2,398	▼
		Recycling – yellow bin (tonnes)	6,382	5,892	5,069	5,132	▼
		Recycling - compost (tonnes)	5,783	6,022	6,085	5,213	▼
		Waste diverted from landfill (tonnes)	13,669	12,863	13,992	14,276	—
		Community satisfaction with waste collection service and access to waste depot/transfer stations	91%	92%	92%	95%	▲
	E3 Environmental resilience	Coastal hazards mitigation and response	Develop a Coastal Management Program (CMP)	Data not available. Refer to page 58 for Coastal Management Program progress.			
Rehabilitated landfill sites		Monitor and manage environmental impacts from decommissioned waste landfill sites	100%	100%	100%	100%	—
Climate change mitigation and response		Development and implementation of actions in the Climate Change Adaptation Action Plan (Number of actions completed)	-	13 out of 35	26 out of 35	26 out of 35	—

- Data not available

^ Data source - Ausgrid: ausgrid.com.au/Industry/Our-Research/Data-to-share/Average-electricity-use

CSP Key Direction	Community Indicator	Measure	2017	2018	2019	2020	Making a difference
			- 2018	- 2019	- 2020	- 2021	
L1 Governance	Stable and productive workforce	Employee Engagement	70%	68%	74%	81%	▲
		Community's confidence that Council is managing its resources (workforce)	75%	66%	67%	60%	▼
	Community satisfaction with Council	Community Satisfaction score	85%	76%	80%	68%	▼
L2 Financial management	A financially sustainable local government delivering prioritised services	Community confidence in Council's management of Finance	73%	51%	58%	56%	▼
		Underlying financial surplus (\$,'000)	\$1,078	\$1,003	-\$185	\$583	▼
L3 Communication and engagement	Positive media coverage	Media sentiment	-	-	-	96%**	
	Community perceptions of Community engagement	Community's perception of opportunity to provide input in Council projects	-	39%	27%	20%	▼
	Community perception of Council	Community's perception of trust that Council is working towards the community needs	-	42%	46%	-	—

- Data not available

** Aggregate of 'Neutral' and 'Positive'





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A row of four small, square social media icons: LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.