

Communications and Engagement Report

Community Wellbeing Strategy



Engagement report outlining engagement outcomes from Phase 1, 2 and 3, the public exhibition.

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Context and Engagement approach

Port Stephens Council (PSC) is preparing a Community Wellbeing Strategy to establish principles for a sustainable, healthy, safe and inclusive community. These principles will set the path for a clear set of aligned and prioritised actions.

The draft Strategy aligns social planning objectives with liveability priorities. By combining directions from several standalone strategies and policies, the document recognises the complexity and interconnectedness of factors contributing to wellbeing.

Phase 1 The Wellbeing and Disability Inclusion Survey was conducted in 2021. The 2021 survey data was used to develop key themes and priorities.

Phase 2 Community and stakeholder engagement to check in with the community and stakeholders to see if things had changed since 2021 feedback. Completed July/August 2023.

Phase 3 Public exhibition of the draft Community Wellbeing Strategy held from 29 January to 25 February 2024

The key objectives of engagement:



Ensure stakeholders are well informed about the key themes and actions in the draft Wellbeing Strategy



Involve people in a clearly defined, open and transparent engagement process



Use a range of digital and traditional tools and methods to gather feedback



Ensure communications are clear, concise, planned and tailored to the audience

Communications and Engagement methods

ENGAGEMENT METHODS		
ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	REACH
Phase 1	Wellbeing and Disability Inclusion Community Survey completed 2021	171 participants
Phase 2	<p>Check in Well-being Survey was open from 13 July to 7 August 2023.</p> <p>Workshops: Port Stephens Interagency: 25 July 2023</p> <p>Drop-in sessions Tilligerry Habitat walk and talk 1 to 2pm 26 July 2023</p> <p>Raymond Terrace Festival w/ drop-in weaving session 10am to 2pm 29 July 2023</p> <p>Two-hour drop-in session with two 30-minute intro to yoga session 9am to 11am at Appex Park, Nelson Bay 30 July 2023.</p>	<p>46 surveys completed</p> <p>18 participants</p> <p>250 people across drop-in sessions</p>
Phase 3	<p>Workshop: Port Stephens Interagency:</p> <p>Online, hardcopy and verbal submissions open from 29 January 2024 to Sunday 25th February 2024</p>	<p>12 participants</p> <p>3 responses</p>



COMMUNICATION METHODS

ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION	REACH
Website pages	/development/strategies-and-planning-guides/community-wellbeing-strategy	2023: 92 visits 2024: 195 visits
	/community/events/2023/wellbeing-walk-through-the-tilligerry-habitat	1 visit
	/community/events/2023/weaving-for-wellbeing	17 visits
	/community/events/2023/introduction-to-yoga	1 visit
Print advertising	Print advertising in News of the Area Port Stephens Examiner	25,000 distribution 10,000 distribution
Electronic Newsletter	Article in Your Business	1,073 contacts
	Article in Your Port	3,856 contacts
Social media	Facebook event for 19 July 2023	226 people reached 7 Engagements (likes, comments, shares)
	Instagram story, video of the 'Wellness Walk, 23 July 2023	246 accounts reached
	Facebook post Wellbeing video / strategy have your say, 25 July 2023	1826 impressions / 1634 accounts reached 39 Engagements (likes, comments, shares)
	Instagram story, video of the 'Weaving session', 28 July 2023	150 accounts reached
	Facebook post promoting public exhibition - Facebook 30 January 2024	6,130 accounts reached

	21 engagements (likes, comments, shares)
Easy read versions promotion - Facebook 9 February 2024	2,250 accounts reached 8 engagements (likes, comments, shares)

Key engagement findings – Phase 1

Phase 1: Wellbeing and Disability Inclusion Survey 2021

The top priorities identified in the survey included:

Which wellbeing themes are most important to you?

- Community safety and security 16%
- Health 15%
- Nature and local environment 14%
- Public open space eg. Parks, reserves 14%

Why is wellbeing important to me?

- To maintain my general health and wellbeing 35%
- To maintain lifestyle and support my family 34%

What do you do to maintain your wellbeing?

- Physical activity (gym, sport) 32%
- Maintaining connections (friends and family) 18%
- Outdoor leisure (caravanning, fishing, motorbike riding, beach, bushwalks, gardening) 15%

What one action could Council do to improve your wellbeing or your communities' wellbeing?

- Footpaths 25% - Improved and more bike tracks, shared pathways, and improved lighting in these areas
- Roads and Parking 16% - Improved roads and more disabled parking
- Facilities 13% - More and improved sporting facilities, parks and recreation areas.

Phase 2: Community Wellbeing Survey and face-to-face sessions

A community wellbeing survey was deployed to determine whether the draft themes and priorities were on the right track. Participants were presented with four theme areas including accessibility, security and safety, participation and inclusion and resilience.

Participants were asked to provide their level of support for each theme's priorities, identify what was missing and suggest any ideas to achieve the priorities. Hard copy surveys were available at Council run facilities.

The survey received 46 responses. Due to small sample size caution is advised when interpreting the results. Full details are available in Appendix I.

Key engagement findings – Phase 2

Online survey

Accessibility priorities

- Provide infrastructure and opportunities to enable people with a disability to fully participate in community life.
87% supportive, 7% neutral, 4.5% not supportive
- Reduce barriers to employment for people with a disability
80% supportive, 11% neutral, 7% not supportive
- Increase access to Council services through better systems and processes
89% supportive, 7% neutral, 2% not supportive
- Are there any priorities you think are missing?
See Appendix I for full list of comments (20 comments)
- Do you have any great ideas for actions to achieve these priorities?
See Appendix I for full list of comments (17 comments)

Security and safety priorities

- Identify and support initiatives that grow connections with our town centres to build community pride and sense of place.
88% supportive, 7% neutral, 5% not supportive
- Support initiatives to reduce the impacts of homelessness.
83% supportive, 7% neutral, 7% not supportive.
- Work with communities to build resilience in emergencies.
93% supportive, 5% neutral, 2% not supportive
- Are there any priorities you think are missing?
See Appendix I for full list of comments (19 comments)
- Do you have any great ideas for actions to achieve these priorities?
See Appendix I for full list of comments (14 comments)

Participation and inclusion priorities

- Empower and support young people to participate.
90% supportive, 5% neutral, 5% not supportive
- Develop and improve positive attitudes of the wider community towards people with disability.
81% supportive, 12% neutral, 7% not supportive
- Promote and create opportunities for equity across all abilities, ages, cultures, genders, languages, religions, sexualities, and socio-economic groups.
81% supportive, 12% neutral, 7% not supportive
- Apply best practice principles to encourage diverse input and participation.
88% supportive, 5% neutral, 5% not supportive
- Are there any priorities you think are missing?
See Appendix I for full list of comments (17 comments)
- Do you have any great ideas for actions to achieve these priorities?
See Appendix I for full list of comments (11 comments)

Resilience priorities

- Create opportunities for our community to connect with each other.
88% supportive, 5% neutral, 7% not supportive
- Support our most vulnerable residents to grow their capacity.
78% supportive, 10% neutral, 10% not supportive
- Support our community networks to work together on key community priorities.
93% supportive, 2.5% neutral, 2.5% not supportive
- Are there any priorities you think are missing?
See Appendix I for full list of comments (16 comments)
- Do you have any great ideas for actions to achieve these priorities?
See Appendix I for full list of comments (9 comments)

Workshop and community drop-in sessions

Engagement activities included two stakeholder workshops and three community drop-in sessions. The workshops and drop-in sessions were facilitated by Kate Baartz and Ash Soanes of Baartz & Co.

Workshop: Port Stephens Interagency

Attendees (18 participants):

- Alesco Senior College
- One Door Mental Health (Family & carer mental health program)
- Community Disability Alliance Hunter (CDAH)
- Jupiter Youth Mental Health Councillor
- Hume Community Housing (community cohesion officer)
- NSW Trustee & Guardian
- PSFANS
- PPSFANS Student
- PS Council
- The Smith Family
- Arubah Health Dietitians
- Hume Housing
- Hunter Nursing
- Mosaic Multicultural Connections
- Office for Regional Youth
- Workshop 1 included the following:
 - Introduction and welcome – setting the scene and outline of the project to date.
 - Activity 1: Keywords – warm up exercise, provide keywords that need to be considered when developing the strategy.
 - Activity 2: Priorities and ideas – participants were asked what's missing and put forward ideas to address the priorities.

Workshop participants were divided up across three tables. These tables became the basis for the smaller group activities.

Keywords

Participants were asked in small groups to provide keywords that need to be considered for each theme when developing the strategy. The table below shows the keywords received and Figure 2 is the feedback in a word cloud format.

Table 1 Activity 1: Keywords

KEYWORDS			
5 ways to wellbeing	cultural	housing - safe & stable housing	privacy & confidentiality
accessibility/ible	culturally & gender diverse & safe	inclusive/ivity	privileged participation
accessibility does not always equate to disability	dignity	independence	relationships
accessible properties	drug & alcohol	keep learning	respect + trust
age appropriate	economical community	knowing where to turn	school
all voices heard and unheard	education	leisure	sense of community
autonomy facilitation	emotional health	m/h wellbeing	services
be active	engagement	meaningful participation	social health
be aware	environment	mental health	social support
belonging	equitable	needs	someone to turn to
choice limited	evidence based	nutrition	spaces
clean and hygienic facilities	family	options	spiritual
community	finances	options for older persons	support
community facilities	forward thinking	options for youth	sustainability
community guided/centred	friends	person centred	transport
community leaders	health & wellbeing	physical health	unified
connect/ion	help others	places	vulnerable
continued professional development	holistic	pleasant places to be	you belong somewhere
cost of living	home	poverty	youth services

ACCESSIBILITY

Wellbeing can only be achieved in a place that is inclusive and accessible for people of all abilities and backgrounds. Accessibility could include things like community attitudes, access and movement around public places, barriers to employment and addressing barriers to participation.

Priorities

- Provide infrastructure and opportunities to enable people with a disability to fully participate in community life.
- Reduce barriers to employment for people with a disability
- Increase access to Council services through better systems and processes

There was a consensus that the accessibility theme was too heavily focused on those with a disability and should be more inclusive of all people. Transport and the remote location of the area was also raised by all workshop groups.

What's missing:

- References to other members (not just disability) of the community (for example) Youth, Aged, Aboriginal & TSI, CALD, LGBTQIA+SB Other
- Accessible and affordable housing
- Safe and stable housing
- Accessible services - eg. long waiting lists
- Public transport - location/remote/ geographical considerations, affordable
- Footpaths - multiuse, walking, wheelchair, pram, bikes
- Literacy, financial, language, cultural barriers
- Information and education
- Access and knowledge for actual services
- Family life barriers
- Reduce inequity
- Volunteers

Ideas:

- Improved and safer pathways
- Translation services

Security and safety

To find out how the themes and priorities are shaping up the groups were given the following information and asked what's missing and what ideas they had to address the priorities.

SECURITY AND SAFETY

Safety and even a perception of safety can affect how we go about our lives. Safety applies to our public space (safer design, cleanliness, activity and lighting) and also to our personal safety (family violence, child safety). Food and housing safety are also crucial aspects that underpin our wellbeing. The following questions relate to the priorities and actions for security and safety.

Priorities

- Identify and support initiatives that grow connections with our town centres to build community pride and sense of place.
- Support initiatives to reduce the impacts of homelessness.
- Work with communities to build resilience in emergencies.

When discussing security and safety it was back to basics with the group, stating that the vulnerable community members need something to eat, somewhere to sleep and water that is safe.

What's missing:

- Ensuring adequate services and funding to support security and safety.
- Safe and stable housing
- Basic safeties eg. Food, shelter, water
- Young veterans needing access to services

Ideas:

- Build stakeholder group for homelessness and vulnerable
- Review policy on community gardens
- Fences around playgrounds
- Positive opportunity to engage in community
- Support and develop specific community led programs and services to address barriers to basic needs which allows autonomy and agency
- Ensuring adequate services and funding to support security and safety
- Provide education and/or resources to the community to reduce systemic issues eg doa and violence
- Build fences around playgrounds

Participation and inclusion

To find out how the themes and priorities are shaping up groups were given the following information and asked what's missing and what ideas they had to address the priorities.

PARTICIPATION AND INCLUSION

Inclusion means all of our members feel welcome and able to fully participate and contribute regardless of their age, gender, religion, cultural background, sexual orientation, disability, income or geographical location. Inclusive participation is about recognising differences between individuals/groups.

Priorities

- Empower and support young people to participate.
- Develop and improve positive attitudes of the wider community towards people with disability.
- Promote and create opportunities for equity across all abilities, ages, cultures, genders, languages, religions, sexualities and socio-economic groups.
- Apply best practice principles to encourage diverse input and participation.

Transport was raised as a barrier to participation, the group asked how can you participate if you can't get places. Finances and affordability of activities and events were raised as an issue, not all can afford to participate.

What's missing:

- Increase knowledge of demographic
- Impact of increased cost of living on people's ability to participate (free and low cost activity)
- Impact of loss of service, eg buses, banks, Centrelink etc.
- Transport
- Finances/ poverty can be an issue for participating in events

Ideas:

- Free or low-cost activities and diverse community events, fun days, better playgrounds, exercise classes.
- Rather than say 'this is what you need & how can we help,' ask 'what do you need & how can we help you'.
- Ensure a preamble establishes whom "community" is / priority groups - eg. disability, seniors.
- Education around participation + inclusion

Resilience

To find out how the themes and priorities are shaping up participants were given the following information and asked what's missing and what ideas they had to address the priorities.

RESILIENCE

Building the skills and networks in the community to ensure our community can adapt, survive and thrive in times of change.

Priorities

- Create opportunities for our community to connect with each other.
- Support our most vulnerable residents to grow their capacity.
- Support our community networks to work together on key community priorities.

There was talk about the theme title 'resilience' it didn't sit well with the group and suggestions were to change to community connections or community empowerment and that resilience was an outdated term that didn't suit current context. The priority above about 'grow their capacity' was deemed as condescending as you can only grow so much without support.

What's missing:

- Supporting providers
- Local emergencies and incidence
- Natural disasters
- Postvention (meaning: interventions for bereaved survivors, community members, caregivers, and health care providers to destigmatise suicide)

Ideas:

- Promotion of community resources
- Advocacy to increase resources

After the theme priorities activity we asked each group to share their feedback with the rest of the groups, the following are notes taken in isolation to the themes.

- Community guided approach – in terms of building relationships leading to trust and to guide autonomy and provide community with dignity
- Person centred approach
- Many living under the poverty line in the area
- Need more communication about services available like a community directory (which PSC does have)
- Need clear outcomes for what is going to be achieved

Community Drop-in Sessions

The community were asked to share what wellbeing means to them and what impacts their wellbeing positively and negatively. The community drop-in session details are below:

- Tilligerry Habitat walk and talk 1 to 2pm 26 July 2023
- Raymond Terrace Festival w/ drop-in weaving session 10am to 2pm 29 July 2023
- Two-hour drop-in session with two 30-minute intro to yoga session 9am to 11am at Apex Park, Nelson Bay 30 July 2023

What does Wellbeing mean to you?

The most frequent answers were:

- being healthy
- having a positive and happy mindset and
- being in nature.

Example comments:

“Wellbeing means being healthy + happy spiritually, mentally + physically”

“Taking in whats around you eg. Sitting on a rock and admiring the sky /trees/ breeze”

“Fresh air, clean environment, trees - green spaces, great outdoor facilities - for all.”

What impacts your Wellbeing positively?

- Family
- Community

What impacts your Wellbeing negatively?

- Poor behaviour from others:
 - racism
 - rude people
 - being judgmental
 - being disrespectful

Key engagement findings – Phase 3

Port Stephens Community Interagency

The Port Stephens Community Interagency came together on 20 February 2024 to discuss the Community Wellbeing Strategy. 12 interagency members were in attendance both online and face to face. Representation included Department of Communities and Justice, Port Stephens Family and Neighbourhood Services, Hume Housing, Jupiter, Wahroonga. The workshop gave an overview of how the Community Wellbeing Strategy was developed as well as each Strategic Priority with attendees given the opportunity to discuss further and provide feedback. Key feedback received from the session includes:

- Need for a focus on mental health in the strategy
- Inclusion of a paragraph that specific population groups (young people, First Nations people, older person etc) are included in the 'inclusion for all' concept
- Transport is a high-priority issue
- Delivering wellbeing activities across all towns and centres in Port Stephens considering those who do not have transport
- Positive spaces and activities for people who are isolated or have negative circumstances around them
- Considering fencing, lighting and shade in parks and playgrounds for families and children
- GP access and bulk billing remains an issue for residents
- Consistency for outreach services is key
- Need for outreach services to collaborate and partner to deliver in towns and centres with more resources
- Advocate for youth accommodation
- Transitional programs needed for years 6-7 as it's a point of change
- Breakdown of intergenerational cycle
- Children services need to partner with schools for similar working structures with children
- Use existing council spaces to operate in local communities
- Council needs to build relationships with services to ensure they are continuing to meet community need
- Celebrate successes and continue to advocate for services
- Consider free entry to pools at a variety of times for cost effective healthy activity
- Youth drop in centres needed for young people to debrief and connect
- Continue to engage with the community to know and understand them

Submissions

Two email submissions and one verbal submission was received during the public exhibition period.

The submission provided the following feedback and responses from Council:

No.	From	Summary	Response
1	Nelson Bay Branch CWA of NSW	The contribution of specific community organisation should be recognised in the Strategy	A Strategic document does not recognise specific organisations. It recognises key stakeholder groups that assist in the strategies implementation. Page 16 outlines Council's role in wellbeing with partnerships with the community as one specific role outlined. Specific contributions of community organisations are more likely to be recognised as the projects and initiatives from the strategy are implemented.
2	Tomaree Residents and Ratepayers Association	<p>Clearer acknowledgment should be made to the importance of protection of the natural environment and sustainability within the strategy</p> <p>The Strategy should be elevated in the hierarchy of Council documents</p> <p>Easy Read document is a very good initiative</p> <p>A table of content would be beneficial in the length of document</p> <p>The general objective relating to the Local Housing Strategy is made redundant by</p>	<p>An additional key objective has been included under Strategic Priority 2: Safe and secure to read: "Continue to create and maintain opportunities to connect with the natural environment".</p> <p>The document sits below the Council's highest strategic document, the Community Strategic Plan. Its position feeds directly into the 4 year delivery program and annual operation plan to enable the plan's delivery.</p> <p>Noted. Revised Easy Read documents will be developed once Strategy is adopted for inclusion on the website and improve accessibility of the documents to the community.</p> <p>Table of content now included.</p> <p>The Local Housing Strategy focuses on housing supply, housing diversity and affordability. Although other key objectives in</p>

		<p>other specific objectives in the Strategy</p> <p>Measurements of success for improving wellbeing should be more specific in the strategy, similar to the targets in the Disability Inclusion Action Plan (DIAP).</p> <p>The targets in the Wellbeing Strategy are unclear especially the +7 for the Liveability Score Attributes segments.</p>	<p>the Community Wellbeing Strategy relate to housing affordability and homelesses, this is the only objective relating to housing supply and diversity which also impact community wellbeing.</p> <p>The Disability Inclusion Action Plan is action focused in its delivery with specific measures possible for the level of actions identified under each focus area. The Community Wellbeing Strategy outlines higher level objectives making success measures also a higher level. Measurements of success will be more specific as actions or projects to meet these objectives are developed.</p> <p>The image representing the targets has been reworked to enable improved understanding. Additional text content has also been provided.</p>
3	Resident	Signage provided across the Local Government Area advising where dogs are and are not allowed should include that assistance dogs are permitted.	Additional action has been included under Focus Area 'Liveable communities' to include: "Ensure dog compliance signage clearly permits assistance dogs in public areas."

Appendices

Phase 2 – Check in

Community Drop-in Sessions

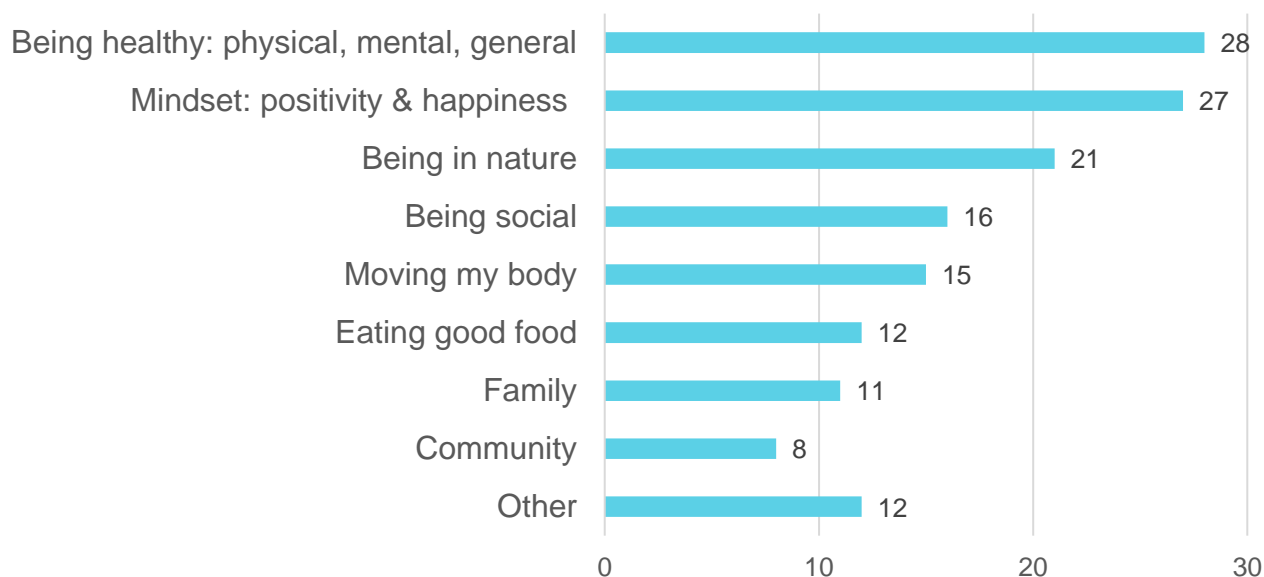
To promote wellbeing and to decrease feedback fatigue we encouraged engagement by having activity-based engagement sessions. Three community sessions took place across the three wards of Port Stephens.

- 26 July 2023 1-2pm walk and talk in Tanilba Bay (Two attendees)
- 29 July 2023 10-2pm learn how to weave session, Raymond Terrace Festival in Raymond Terrace (spoke to 200 people with 53 participants)
- 30 July 2023 9-11am beginner yoga session in Nelsons Bay (spoke to 50 with 20 participants)

What does Wellbeing mean to you?

We asked the community what well-being means to them, the most frequent answers were being healthy (28), having a positive and happy mindset (27) and being in nature (21). See table below for further detail.

Figure 2: What does well-being mean to you?



N= number of participants (73)

Example of comments received:

“Wellbeing means being healthy + happy spiritually, mentally + physically”

“Taking in whats around you eg. Sitting on a rock and admiring the sky /trees/ breeze”

“Fresh air, clean environment, trees - green spaces, great outdoor facilities - for all.”

Figure 3 below shows a word cloud containing keywords from the results.

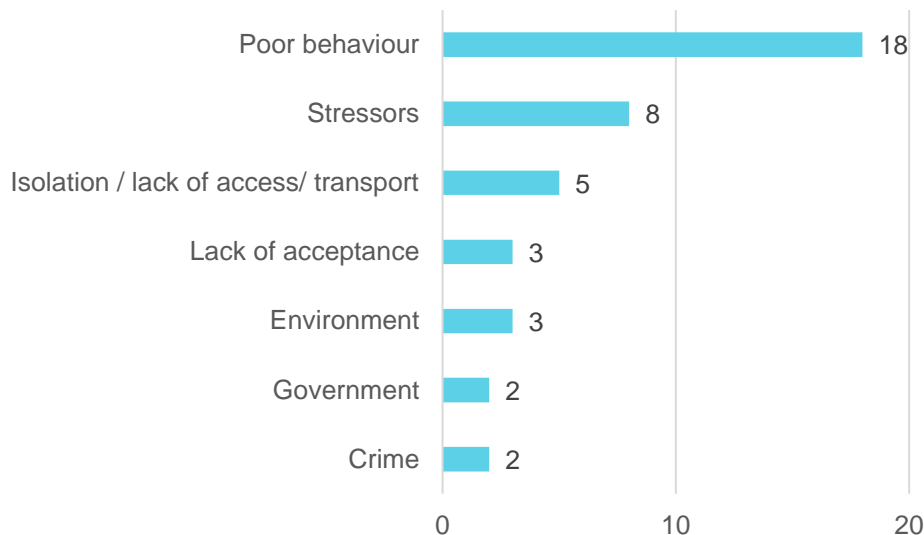
Figure 1 Word cloud: What does Well-being mean to me?



What impacts your Wellbeing negatively?

We asked the question “what impacts your wellbeing negatively?” the most common responses were about poor behaviour from others (racism, rude people, judging, disrespect) and stressors (bills, social media, stress, pressure).

Figure 2: What impacts your well-being negatively?



N= number of participants (42)

Through conversations with community members some ideas were captured, see table below.

Community conversations

We need a wellbeing hub - to get support

Education is needed for late teens about where to get support

Need programs to get old people out after isolation. Senior hub support is needed. Encourages mental stimulation and weekly physio- council need to show up.

Raymond Terrace main street needs to be shut off from traffic and tree planting and gardens and seating. More natural environment. Underplanting under seating in local areas. More tranquillity with all the new buildings and place to catch up with friends

Need to better inform/engage about activities like illuminate Karuah & others. There is poor communication e.g. Summer of music

Need more mental health services at Tiligerry

Drop - in for Jupiter

Need support for localised neighbourhood centre

More walking tracks and big open spaces planted with trees and gardens

Cultural hub - activities and workshops

Start a Farmers market in Nelsons Bay

Limitations to participate based on dietary requirements eg food allergies - leads to exclusion.

Need at least neighbourhood watch to address lack of Police presence.

Invest in community gardens Bush tucker community garden

How to communicate with us - letterbox drops and poster/signage - directional signs and information and we need notice boards

Address transport issues! We could use a mini/shuttle bus to access services

View the 5 ways to wellbeing website <https://www.5waystowellbeing.org.au/>

We need a wellbeing hub - to get support

Education is needed for late teens about where to get support

Need programs to get old people out after isolation. Senior hub support is needed.

Encourages mental stimulation and weekly physio- council need to show up.

Figure 3: Raymond Terrace Festival: Picture of feedback





Figure 6: Yoga in Apex Park community session



Figure 4 Raymond Terrace Festival: Weavers

Appendix II Community Wellbeing Survey Results

Phase 2 consisted of a survey to determine whether the draft themes and priorities were on the right track. Participants were presented with four theme areas Accessibility, Security and Safety, Participation and Inclusion and Resilience. Participants were then asked to provide their level of support for each themes priorities, identify what was missing and suggest any ideas they had to achieve the priorities. Hard copy surveys were available at Council run facilities.

The survey received 46 responses. Due to small sample size caution is advised when interpreting the results.

Overall support

The table below shows the levels of support for each draft themes priorities, overall participants were supportive of the priorities (highlighted in shades of green in table below). See further detail under separate themes.

Table 1 Overall support for theme priorities

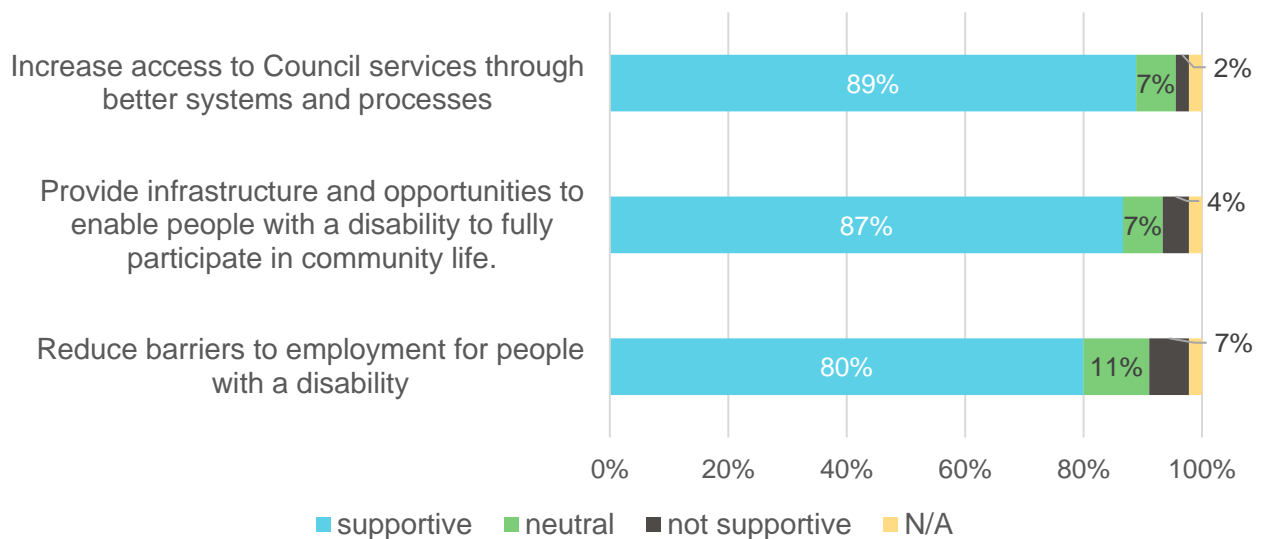
Theme	Priority	Supportive	Neutral	Not supportive	N/A
Accessibility	Increase access to Council services through better systems and processes	89%	7%	2%	2%
	Provide infrastructure and opportunities to enable people with a disability to fully participate in community life.	87%	7%	4%	2%
	Reduce barriers to employment for people with a disability	80%	11%	7%	2%
Security and safety Priorities	Work with communities to build resilience in emergencies.	93%	5%	2%	0%
	Identify and support initiatives that grow connections with our town centres to build community pride and sense of place.	88%	7%	5%	0%
	Support initiatives to reduce the impacts of homelessness.	83%	7%	7%	2%
Participation and inclusion Priorities	Apply best practice principles to encourage diverse input and participation.	88%	5%	5%	2%
	Develop and improve positive attitudes of the wider community towards people with disability.	81%	12%	7%	0%
	Promote and create opportunities for equity across all abilities, ages, cultures, genders, languages, religions, sexualities and socio-economic groups.	81%	12%	7%	0%
Resilience Priorities	Support our community networks to work together on key community priorities.	93%	2%	2%	2%
	Create opportunities for our community to connect with each other.	88%	5%	7%	0%
	Support our most vulnerable residents to grow their capacity.	78%	10%	10%	2%

Accessibility Priorities

Participants were asked how supportive they were of the draft priorities for accessibility. Participants were supportive of all accessibility priorities.

Intro to question: Accessibility - Wellbeing can only be achieved in a place that is inclusive and accessible for people of all abilities and backgrounds. Accessibility could include things like community attitudes, access and movement around public places, barriers to employment and addressing barriers to participation.

Figure 5 Accessibility Priorities



n=45

- Increase access to Council services through better systems and processes. 89% supportive, 7% neutral, 2% not supportive
- Provide infrastructure and opportunities to enable people with a disability to fully participate in community life. 87% supportive, 7% neutral, 4.5% not supportive
- Reduce barriers to employment for people with a disability. 80% supportive, 11% neutral, 7% not supportive

Are there any priorities you think are missing? (20 comments)

The feedback received consisted of the following:

- Public transport - Safe, affordable and accessible
- Disability access - parking, public bathrooms, employment, access to public areas
- Council – improve publication of Council services, focus on core responsibilities
- Facilities – pathways and footpaths (multi use pathways, sidewalks), health and wellbeing venues, open green space.

The verbatim responses are provided below.

Table 2 Accessibility: missing priorities

Are there any accessibility priorities you think we are missing?
Multi use pathways are non existent in many PSC areas e.g. Soldiers Point; Taylor's Beach; Sandy Point Road area. This is a safety issue, and a significant disincentive and for both disabled people, and those wishing to exercise by cycling.
In Magnus Street Nelson Bay we have a 7 metre footpath where about 1 metre is available to pedestrian traffic - this is usually about 1.5 metres from shop fronts and I feel this is bad for the visually impaired
More handicapped access to public areas
A decent indoor aquatic centre with heated hydrotherapy pool ! Have a look at what this town has done for the entire community! https://grac.ymca.org.au/?utm_source=google&utm_medium=organic&utm_campaign=gmb-listing
Yes - accessibility to health and well-being venues (we need more) ie: yoga, meditation, relaxation venues, gyms, open green spaces, parks etc. Less access to alcohol providers.
Many shopfronts have a step that makes access challenging for many people.
Perhaps greater publication of the services Council are providing specifically to those with a disability. Sometimes people are just not aware of what's available.
Sports amenities
Changing Places accessible public bathrooms with adult change table and ceiling hoist, MLAK key access only
Yes, as a person with a disability and employment. It is either low pay or crap job never a good job at higher pay.
Further disabled parking
no
Affordable community transport. More community housing.
Sidewalks. I live in a busy street and you can not access a walkway with a prom, wheelchair or bike. We are close to a school so we should be encouraging kids to ride to school but it's too dangerous
It's not councils job to worry about jobs for the disabled. Someone else gets paid to do that.
more accessible public transport

For the vulnerable and disadvantaged, with the right program have support to guide and teach them how to shop, eat & cook a well balanced meal at least once a day

No

Need to balance priorities so that all the community benefits and doesn't miss out due to a tick box exercise

1) Safe Public transport access remains abysmal across Port Stephens. Many bus stops are difficult or unsafe to get to (e.g where I live in Heatherbrae there's a 'choice' of walking 1.2km up a narrow rocky path I often stumble on, running across the Pacific Highway in full traffic which is particularly hard with reduced mobility, or walking on the side of the HWY for 25 minutes more than 1.5km away on unstable legs in all kind of weather to get to the only crossing. The bus stops in my area are highly inaccessible and it reduces my social and employment participation and wellbeing.

2) There need to be more bus services between parts of Port Stephens. I socialise and spend most of my spare time and money in Newcastle because it's easier to get to. I've felt excluded when I haven't been able to attend events in Nelson Bay because of limited weekend bus service. I've missed out on jobs I'm well qualified for because of the limited bus service. I'm not the only one.

Do you have any great ideas for actions to achieve these priorities?

(17 comments)

Table 3 Accessibility: ideas

Do you have any great ideas for actions to achieve these priorities? Please list them below.
Action as a priority PSC pathways plan of 2015.
Council Staff to do their jobs and carry out compliance checks
Improve pathways along Fingal Bay parkrun so the is less chance of trips.
As mentioned above build a facility like this so the whole community can benefit https://grac.ymca.org.au/?utm_source=google&utm_medium=organic&utm_campaign=gmb-listing
Yes - fund a private provider to open heath and well being venues.
Meet with and talk to people with disabilities to find out their needs.
Open Days, Special Event Days, Have A Go Days. All involving activities suited to people with disabilities but also open to others who can come along and assist / participate as well.
I am looking
Council funds
Is the managers, business owners need to be educated on the benefits.
no
You have increased your rates from the local community so you should be able to fund these initiatives. Start with areas near schools as a priority
transport connectivity, frequency and affordability

Run a program once a month to educate about the importance of eating healthy balanced diet & empower the more vulnerable in our community eg disabled, elderly, unemployed or single mums on how to shop for seasonal ingredients then how to cook a well balanced meal within a tight budget

The health and well being program or lack thereof for the community requires review. The council makes it difficult for ppl to engage with the community to run council supported events eg. Yoga in the park. I moved here 2 years ago, love the area but would love to participate in programs run for all ages etc.
<https://www.goldcoast.qld.gov.au/Things-to-do/Active-Healthy-program/Active-Healthy-calendar>

Fix roads as No.1 priority as this impacts ALL residents, including those with a disability. Be sure to include this in reporting to Council and the community about assisting people with a disability (i.e - roads fixed, therefore better access and transportation experience for those with a disability.)

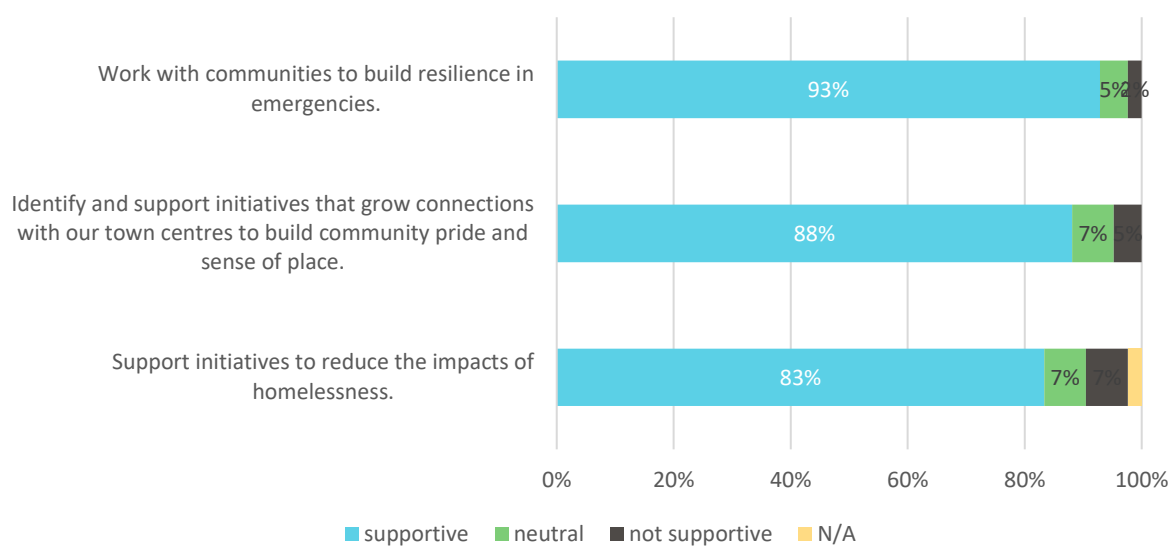
organise sincere not tokenistic focus groups with directly affected people not unaffected disability agency reps. This will help you understand how serious these issues are and the profound impact they have on disabled people particularly those of us who do not have disability funding to support alternative transport. Please listen to and acknowledge people when they tell you about the serious impact these issues have on reducing their participation and independence. Use funds from crossing grants for places where crossings are actually needed by pedestrians including disabled people, and not putting them in areas simply to slow down cars.

Security and Safety priorities

Participants were asked how supportive they were of the draft priorities for security and safety. Participants were supportive of all priorities.

Intro to question: Security and safety - Safety and even a perception of safety can affect how we go about our lives. Safety applies to our public space (safer design, cleanliness, activity and lighting) and also to our personal safety (family violence, child safety). Food and housing safety are also crucial aspects that underpin our wellbeing.

Figure 6 Security and safety priorities



n=42

- Work with communities to build resilience in emergencies.
 - 93% supportive, 5% neutral, 2% not supportive
- Identify and support initiatives that grow connections with our town centres to build community pride and sense of place.
 - 88% supportive, 7% neutral, 5% not supportive
- Support initiatives to reduce the impacts of homelessness.
 - 83% supportive, 7% neutral, 7% not supportive

Are there any priorities you think are missing? (19 comments)

The feedback received consisted of the following:

- Council - focus on core responsibilities, address antisocial behaviours
- Safety - improve safety after dark, lighting, bushfire plans,
- Policing - increase presence of police
- Housing - more housing
- Community - inclusive LGBTQI, First Nations, elderly (social visits)

The verbatim responses are provided below.

Table 4 Security and safety: missing priorities

Are there any security and safety priorities you think we are missing?
Stick with your priorities - roads and infrastructure
Provide more for the youth like high quality pump tracks skate parks mountain bike tracks ! This will get them outdoors and out of trouble
Yes - provide flood and bushfire plans to locals
Lighting in some areas needs improvement.
Safety in places like Apex Park in Nelson Bay after dark.
Policing of car hooks at night.

Help the police to continue to make Port Stephens safe.
None
There needs to be more initiatives for people to invest in housing to be able to supply rental properties. Instead of having two shopping centres, the centro should be a medical and post office area. Market place should be purely a shopping centre. I feel having 2 shopping centres, people walking around create opportunities.
no
More staff at the local hospital. (Doctors) More active police on duty.
Again the lack of access for push bikes near the local schools with adequate lighting. It would also support an active community
Someone else's job to sort out homelessness
LGBTQI inclusivity and First Nations recognition
There's a vacant/abandoned two story housing commission bld on Fingal? That's been empty for at least 3 years. Why aren't two families living in there? Who should fix that up.
I'm hearing far too often the elderly in our community have no one checking up on their well being to see if they need anything including a social visit
Permanent police presence in Nelson Bay
Council working closely with police to deal with anti-social behaviour impacting communities (especially due to slow or non-existent police response).
Poor lighting at night time in areas outside of town centres, poor public transport access, pedestrian crossings required in more strategic places.

Do you have any great ideas for actions to achieve these priorities? (14 comments)

Table 5 Security and safety: ideas

Do you have any great ideas for actions to achieve these priorities? Please list them below.
As above build so simple infrastructure to engage the youth ! Look at https://www.woopimtb.com/ A lot of this was done involving local schools participation and help bring trade to local business similar to what Dungog has experienced
Email or post these to council rate payers
On foot security or police patrols on certain nights, especially Saturday.
Reduce the number of alcohol outlets
Roving well-trained security to rove areas that Police identify as in need.
None
Low investment interest for first time inverters. Simplified tax system. Re-Pay as you go for refunds for emergency repairs. Need cctv for security and police or guards walking around.
no
Solar lighting along pathways Pathways around schools
Create and promote safe spaces e.g. Acons safe spaces program, host First Nations programs

Create a sense of community (like the good old days) where people cared for one another. Create a safe group of people where once a week they pay a visit to an elderly person that just needs someone to talk to or have a cuppa with

Have the police station manned 24/7 in Nelson Bay

More Ranger presence on beaches during peak times and tourist season to reduce impact of unleashed dogs (safety and environmental impacts).

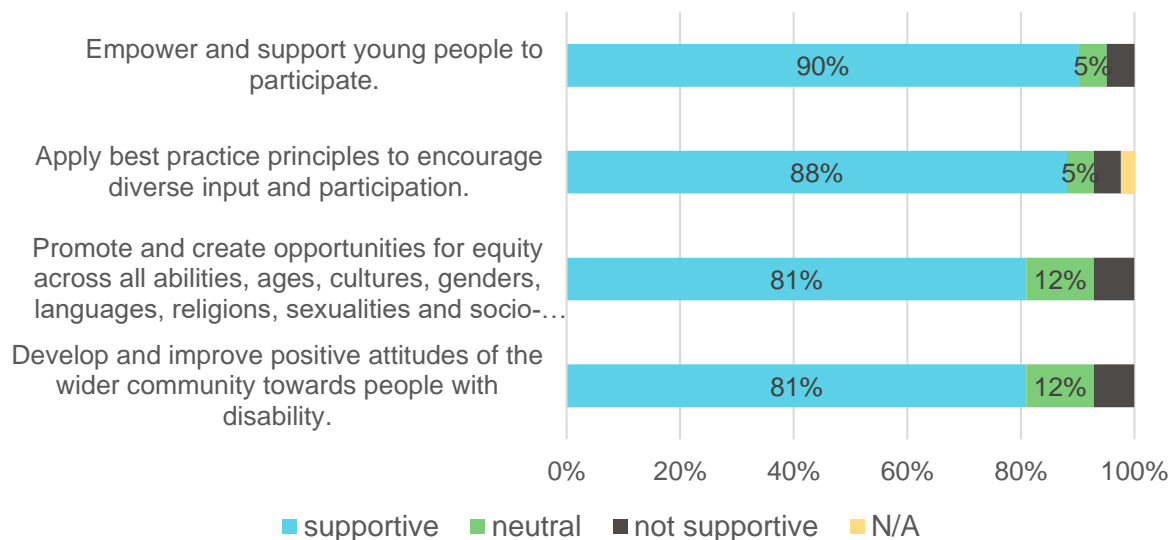
Again focus groups that include the people who are actually affected not just agency reps. E.g. vulnerable people including homeless, elderly, disabled, low income and unemployed people, teenagers.

Participation and Inclusion priorities

Participants were asked how supportive they were of the draft priorities for participation and inclusion. Participants were supportive of all priorities.

Intro to question: Participation and inclusion - Inclusion means all of our members feel welcome and able to fully participate and contribute regardless of their age, gender, religion, cultural background, sexual orientation, disability, income or geographical location. Inclusive participation is about recognising differences between individuals/groups.

Figure 7 Participation and inclusion priorities



n=42

- Empower and support young people to participate.
90% supportive, 5% neutral, 5% not supportive
- Apply best practice principles to encourage diverse input and participation.
88% supportive, 5% neutral, 5% not supportive
- Promote and create opportunities for equity across all abilities, ages, cultures, genders, languages, religions, sexualities and socio-economic groups.
81% supportive, 12% neutral, 7% not supportive
- Develop and improve positive attitudes of the wider community towards people with disability.
81% supportive, 12% neutral, 7% not supportive.

Are there any priorities you think are missing? (17 comments)

The feedback received consisted of the following:

- Council – focus on core responsibilities, Council should be contributors eg. diverse workforce
- Community - more inclusive and affordable, all inclusive - don't separate the community, community events incl- free exercise classes and cooking healthy on a budget
- Nature – community gardens reinstated

The verbatim responses are provided below.

Table 6 Participation and inclusion: missing

Are there any participation and inclusion priorities you think we are missing?
Some of these things are a wider government, not Council, responsibility. PSC should not be wasting resources by doubling up on government initiatives.
Really putting yourself into the supportive and care giving - keep to your basic responsibilities
More participation of Christian organisations in our community consultation and practice.
No
Not at this time.
No. Looks like everything is covered.
More community events, fun days, better playgrounds, free exercise classes
What are your best practices and principles? Money can be an issue for participating in events. Council libraries etc. More diverse events run by council not event holders like homegrown.
n
Single older women - opportunities- loneliness.
We are one- community, people's, etc. no need to separate
Encourage and welcome people to live, work and visit our area from non/Anglo backgrounds. Hire more diverse council staff
I think the COMMUNITY GARDEN should be reinstated asap...
The Bay is social and cultural void. Too much focus on development and not enough on society in general.
Same as my view on the action educating and demonstrating how to cook & eat a well balanced diet on a low budget
Not really Council's responsibility or priority to promote equity, diversity, rather, be one of the contributors, including jobs at Council.
A lot of what you do is well meaning but ultimately tokenistic. You need to involve all community members more by showing them you'll listen. You need to build trust. That won't happen if you keep giving us patronising fob offs like those I've received when raising issues like bus access or providing a community bus to get people to events. It's good to see events being spread around more across the main centres so I'm hopeful things are changing.

Do you have any great ideas for actions to achieve these priorities? (11 comments)

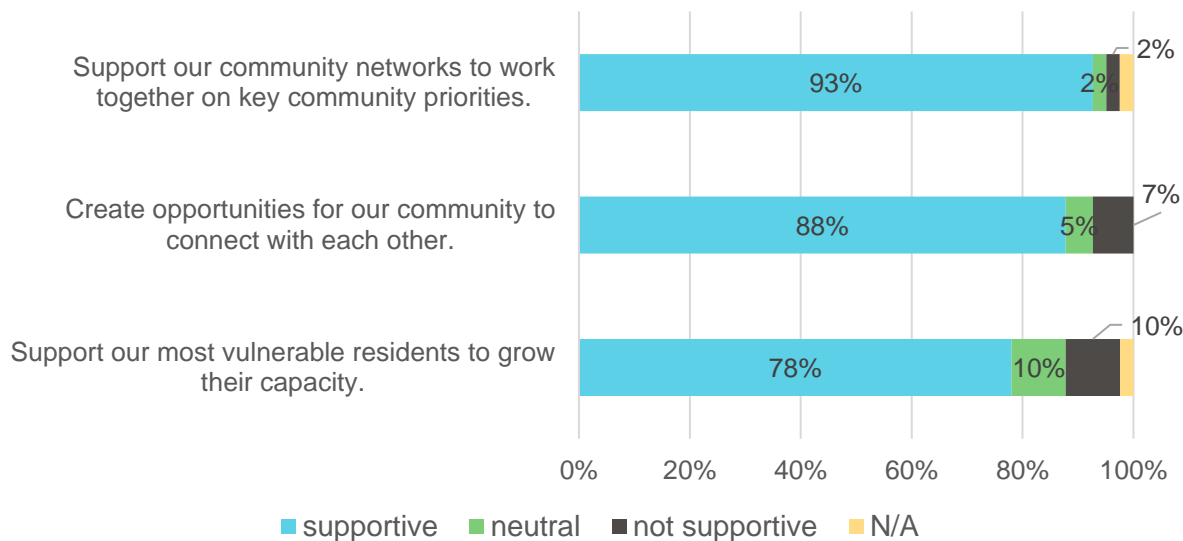
Table 7 Participation and inclusion: ideas

Do you have any great ideas for actions to achieve these priorities? Please list them below.
Not really because it really hard to change peoples perception on races, genders, local status etc people in port Stephens are a so racist and grumpy.
Just get people talking to and listening to each other.
Look at the QLD model for playgrounds. Amazing.
Promote activities online and in the community newspaper and radio
Celebrate all events in area. Look at what Maitland Council events go. They are supportive to the community.
n
More housing Support groups and access to specialists.
Dual naming in town centres and on all tourism /marketing materials. Create a First Nations arts and cultural centre.
I would love to run such a program in our community if the opportunity were to eventuate. I'm a semi retired Food Technologist that would love to give back to our vulnerable in our society
Approve more affordable housing so that young families can enjoy the area. Far to many "Over 55s" for the infrastructure in the bay. There would be more inclusion if young people could find accomodation and work here. This in turn creates the opportunities you state above.
I think you've made a good start by spreading events across centres and increasing community feedback opportunities. Keep going and really listen to individuals who speak up. Everyone's opinion is valid even if it seems it's in the too hard basket.

Resilience priorities

Participants were asked how supportive they were of the draft priorities for resilience. Participants were supportive of all priorities overall, however '*support our most vulnerable residents to grow their capacity*' had the lowest level of support across all themes.

Intro to question: Resilience - Building the skills and networks in the community to ensure our community can adapt, survive and thrive in times of change.



n=41

- Support our community networks to work together on key community priorities. 93% supportive, 2.5% neutral, 2.5% not supportive
- Create opportunities for our community to connect with each other. 88% supportive, 5% neutral, 7% not supportive
- Support our most vulnerable residents to grow their capacity. 78% supportive, 10% neutral, 10% not supportive

Are there any priorities you think are missing? (16 comments)

The feedback received consisted of the following:

- Community – work together, community hubs, community pantry and garden, opportunities to volunteer
- Homelessness – teenagers
- Climate change – manage and adapt to changes
- Public transport – accessible

The verbatim responses are provided below.

Table 8 Resilience: missing priorities

Are there any resilience priorities you think we are missing?
Refer previous comment
More community working together rather than contributing their individual agendas.
Inclusion is great but not at the expense of the grater community rate payers money should always be prioritised towards important improvements not fluff fix the roads first stop the wind turbines
No
Not at this time.
No. Look okay.
Empathy
A community hub, drop in support services, a community pantry or food co op

Community gardens where vegetables and fruit are grown and given away. Amphitheatre for events in boomerang park.
n
Teenagers Homelessness
Opportunity to volunteer
Ability to manage and adapt to climate change.
As per my previous suggestion. I feel all actions somehow link together
? "Grow their capacity"? for what?
No....but you won't get much traction if public transport access isn't improved. If people don't have access they can't contribute can they?

Do you have any great ideas for actions to achieve these priorities? (9 comments)

Table 9 Resilience: ideas

Do you have any great ideas for actions to achieve these priorities? Please list them below.
No
In times of strife like the Covid pandemic more door to door visits from Social Workers etc to as many homes as possible as sometimes less resilient folks hide behind closed doors.
Council funds to go into a community hub with supports
Already put this to council back in 2010 to mayor BM. From Lake Macquarie Council initiatives but not implemented. Instead told give the ferals another skate park???
Post volunteer opportunities on your Facebook posts so people are aware of how they can support
Training programs to educate residents about emergency and health services - what to do, where to get help and how to cope in emergency situations including extreme weather.
Council funded outdoor activities... yoga in the park, tai chi, art classes... more surveys, gather more information.
Monthly program where people have the opportunity to come to a community hall where they can hear & see how easy it is to eat & cook a well balanced & nutritional meal on such a low budget. Ultimately striving to have people achieve a good mind set about their overall wellbeing both mental health and physical...nourishing their soul through good eating... I'm very passionate about this topic as you can see
Broken record time...increase safe and equitable access to public or alternative transport for people who don't drive. You can't grow capacity without equitable access to community facilities, education/training and employment.

*Grammatical errors and typos have been corrected

Table 10 Additional feedback

<p>Is there anything else you would like to share with us regarding Wellbeing in Port Stephens? If so, please use space provided below.</p>
<p>On the whole, PSC does a good job for the community. No matter what is put in place people feel compelled to whinge. I have suggested a water park in Nelson Bay (similar to that in Townsville). ironically, there is even a council water park in Haywards Heath UK. Infrastructure is always at the forefront of people’s displeasure. It is a shame that more communication is not disseminated to explain reasoning for decisions made e.g that the consistent level of rain played a huge factor in the pothole situation, and that using a more expensive aggregate has recouping money spent such as an impact on rates etc. I believe there are a few areas that require speed humps - along Salamander Way, Shoal Bay Road and Port Stephens Drive. Roundabouts would be useful at the intersection of Gan Gan Road and Nelson Bay Road, at the sporting complex on Nelson Bay Road and into Tomaree High.</p>
<p>This survey should be emailed to every rate payer ! I should have to stumble across it on social media ! You are talking about inclusion and involvement but something as simple as emailing this out you haven’t done ??????????</p>
<p>Yes, teach old people not to be so racist and grumpy and not to judge the people who weren’t born and bred in the bay</p>
<p>My own well-being is currently impacted by the closure of the Tilligerry Aquatic Centre at Mallabula for 3 months. This is too long! To swim at the other centres means a 2.5 hour hole in my day, which is difficult with caring responsibilities.</p>
<p>Checking on each other is obviously the key ingredient.</p>
<p>Wellbeing also includes how beautiful and well maintained an area is. I see that Nelson Bay has become less attractive as litter builds up around car parks, side streets, parks etc. The steps from Apex Park down to the marina are very untidy and often littered and weedy. Also the foreshore area at the Dolphin Watch Cafe has been unattractively fenced for years and really needs to be fixed permanently and attractively. The lights on the trees around the town centre are mostly not working. The pots on the covered area on Stockton Street are waterlogged. Carpark behind McGrath real estate is a disgusting mess.</p>
<p>Well being is much greater than these strategies. What about meaning and spirituality</p>
<p>We need to focus on the adolescents in our area. Schools, especially High Schools need support.</p>
<p>Please provide free exercise to all in the the community at different times throughout the day, great organisation called Live Life Get Active is an example of what could benefit community</p>
<p>Spend money on basics like roads. Stop wasting money on bullshit things leading to rate rises.</p>
<p>It's about time Port Stephens council recognized it has rural areas and communities.</p>
<p>Love the new coastal walking tracks and would like to see more. Would like more cafes / restaurants overlooking the water - Crest at Birubi is brilliant.</p>

Doctor shortage/ bulk billing. Activity centres. Mental health support in the local area. Housing properties/ community/FACS Child services. More council workers employed to empty bins, lawns, toilet facilities, etc

Bike lanes and wide footpaths that promote accessibility, well being outcomes and a healthy lifestyle are a fantastic starting point.

& then you'll want to raise the rates again. Seriously- supposed to be able to afford to live here. The hard working as well as those who choose not to work.

Raymond Terrace town centre lacks any sense of community. There's no urban design cohesion and is rapidly looking unwelcoming and outdated. Council need to engage a urban design team with fresh minds to create a place people want to visit. Why isn't First Nations culture promoted and celebrated with an art gallery or cultural centre?

I hope this helps and I look forward to seeing the action plan.

I would love to participate in some of your future programs if an opportunity was to arise

Wellbeing goes hand in hand with safe affordable housing, good infrastructure to support a growing population and supporting small businesses to employ. This empowers the demographic in the questionnaire to live full happy lives. Investment in the bay should with addressing the housing crisis and the lack of GPs. These investments create the well-being you are seeking as the supports required could thrive in the bay. It's the knock on effect.

What about our relationship with the environment and infrastructure that contributes to or impacts our well being? People's wellbeing is impacted directly bad roads, lack of transportation, anti-social behaviour which make people anxious, while clean beaches, bush and tranquility have a positive impact on well-being (and Council can contribute to this).

If you don't sort out transport access you are not going to meet many of your priorities. Too many people are excluded and isolated by this ongoing issue. Many don't have access to education and employment because of it. There is a high level of gambling and alcoholism affecting vulnerable people in Port Stephens. I've done my own observations and a lot of the time it's because many of the clubs have courtesy vans that will drive people to and from their home. People need to socialise and connect with others and clubs are accessible. For already depressed people pokies and drinking are attractive pastimes and often how they connect socially. You should enter reciprocal agreement with clubs to transport their members to community events or other places for them to connect. Also consider that bike and car theft are high in our shire too. How much of that is due to reduced public transport access?

Demographics

Table 11 Demographics: relationship with Port Stephens

Relationship with Port Stephens (select all that apply):	%	n
I live in Port Stephens	92.31	36
I work Port Stephens	33.33	13
I own property in Port Stephens	38.46	15
I own a business in Port Stephens	12.82	5
Prefer not to disclose	2.56	1
Other (please specify)	7.69	3

Other: Community Chaplain, Church and community group participation and membership and visitor.

Table 12 Demographics: age

Which category below includes your age?	%	n
Prefer not to disclose	2.56	1
17 or younger	2.56	1
18-24	0	0
25-34	0	0
35-44	12.82	5
45-54	25.64	10
55-64	25.64	10
65 and over	30.77	12

Table 13 Demographics: gender identity

Please select your gender identity?	%	n
Male	20.51	8
Female	74.36	29
Intersex	2.56	1
Prefer not to disclose	2.56	1
Not listed (please specify)	0	0

Table 14 Demographics: identify as LGBTIQ+

Do you identify as LGBTIQ+?	%	n
Yes	7.89	3
No	81.58	31
Prefer not to disclose	5.26	2
Prefer to provide comment	5.26	2

Provide comment: Does it matter as long as I pay my rates. Stop separating people, I am gender diverse.

Table 15 Demographics: First Nations Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

Are you of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin?	%	n
Yes	12.82	5
No	82.05	32
Prefer not to disclose	5.13	2

Table 16 Demographics: language spoken

Which language is most often spoken at home?	%	n
English	94.87	37
Spanish	0	
Chinese	0	
French	0	
Other	5.13	2

Other: Worimi, Armenian.

Table 17 Demographics: personal disability

Do you live with a disability?	%	n
Yes	17.95	7
No	76.92	30
Prefer not to disclose	5.13	2

Table 18 Demographics: live with someone with disability

Does someone you live with have a disability?	%	n
Yes	28.21	11
No	66.67	26
Prefer not to disclose	5.13	2

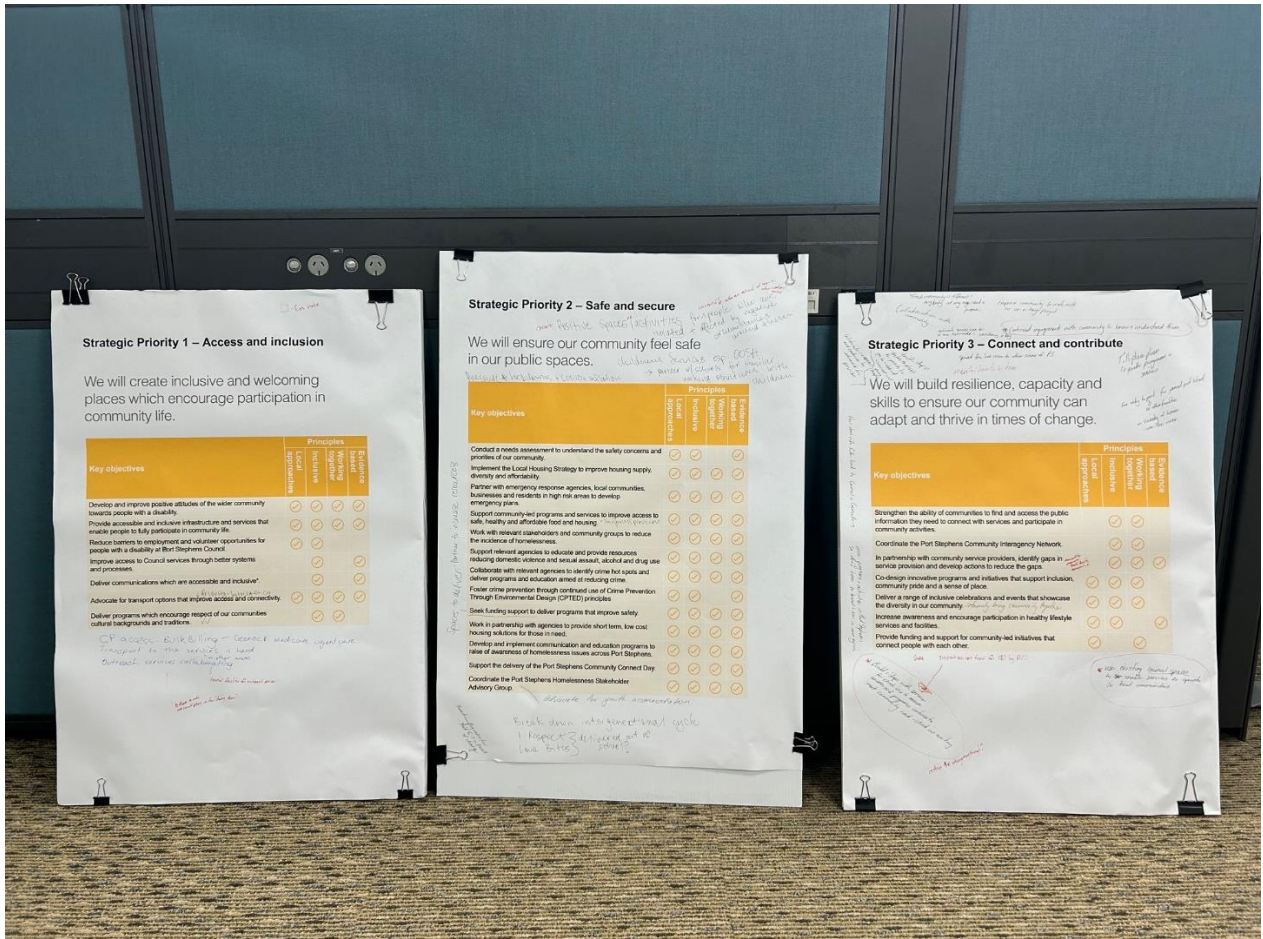
Table 19 Demographics: carer

Do you care for someone with a disability?	%	n
Yes	23.08	9
No	71.79	28
Prefer not to disclose	5.13	2

Phase 3 – Public exhibition

Port Stephens Interagency workshop

Face to face feedback



Online feedback using Miro

1 We will create inclusive and welcoming places which encourage participation in community life.

Strategic Priority 1 - Access and inclusion

Key objectives	Principles			
	Local approaches	Inclusive	Working together	Evidence based
Develop and improve positive attitudes of the wider community towards people with a disability.	✓	✓	✓	✓
Provide accessible and inclusive infrastructure and services that enable people to fully participate in community life.	✓	✓	✓	✓
Reduce barriers to employment and volunteer opportunities for people with a disability at Port Stephens Council.	✓	✓		
Improve access to Council services through better systems and processes.		✓		✓
Deliver communications which are accessible and inclusive*.		✓		✓
Advocate for transport options that improve access and connectivity.	✓	✓	✓	✓
Deliver programs which encourage respect of our communities cultural backgrounds and traditions.		✓	✓	

Transport consideration when planning new developments to be big enough for the bus network?

Delivering wellbeing activities in all communities across PSC, with consideration of communities who do not have access to transport.



PORT STEPHENS
COUNCIL