

# MINUTES

## **ECONOMIC AND SMART COMMUNITIES STRATEGIC REFERENCE GROUP**

held on

**WEDNESDAY 20 MAY 2020**

**Minutes of the Economic and Smart Communities  
Strategic Reference Group  
held on Wednesday 20 May 2020  
Commencing at 6:01pm**

**ATTENDANCE:**

**Committee Members**

Mayor Michael Regan (Chair)

Cr David Walton

Cr Sue Heins

Cr Stuart Sprott

Saul Carroll

Andy West

Stuart White                      Microsoft Australia

Drew Johnson                      Manly Business Chamber

Ngaire Young                      Northern Beaches Campus, TAFE NSW

Gordon Lang

Alexander Coxon

Stephen Pirovic                      International College of Management

Matthew Aderton

Chris Wilcocks

**Council Officer Contacts**

Jeff Smith                      Director Corporate & Legal

Kath McKenzie                      Executive Manager, Community Engagement & Communications

Katie Kirwan                      Governance Officer

Deb Kempe                      Team Leader Economic Development & Tourism

Nikki Griffith                      Manager Place & Economic Development

## 1.0 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

---

As a sign of respect, Northern Beaches Council acknowledges the traditional custodians of these lands on which we gather and pays respect to Elders past and present.

---

## 2.0 APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Peter Middleton and Geri Moorman.

## 3.0 DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of pecuniary or non-pecuniary conflicts of interest.

## 4.0 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

### 4.1 MINUTES OF ECONOMIC AND SMART COMMUNITIES STRATEGIC REFERENCE GROUP MEETING HELD 19 FEBRUARY 2020

#### **CONFIRMED**

That the Minutes of the Economic and Smart Communities Strategic Reference Group meeting held 19 February 2020, copies of which were previously circulated to all Members, are hereby confirmed as a true and correct record of the proceedings of that meeting.

*Note: With approval of members, Mayor Regan amended the order of business so that item 6.3 - 'Overview of the Draft Delivery Program' be brought forward and presented first.*

### 6.3 OVERVIEW OF THE DRAFT DELIVERY PROGRAM 2020-2024, OPERATIONAL PLAN AND BUDGET 2020/21 AND FORECAST FINANCIAL IMPACT OF COVID-19 PANDEMIC - JEFF SMITH

#### **DISCUSSION**

Jeff Smith, Director Corporate and Legal introduced himself to members and presented on the Draft Delivery Program 2020 – 2024 (*Attachment 1*).

He provided an overview of the draft budget for 2020/21, and discussed the forecast financial impact COVID-19 which is estimated to be \$21m.

He highlighted the following points:

- Community Support Package approved by Council in March, and;
- proposal to expand this with \$6.1m in financial support – including a subsidy to rate payers equivalent of 50% of the peg increase
- a delay of the first rates notice until September, along with other various fees and charges
- a financial hardship application form online
- a 50% subsidy on the domestic waste levy

J Smith noted that Council are also considering the potential impact of a second wave but

emphasised Council's strong overall financial stability, which can sustain a temporary impact.

There was discussion around the reduction to the Capex program. It was noted that irrespective of a reduction in the original program, Council would not have been able to deliver it due to social distancing requirements and the inability to carry out appropriate community engagement activities.

There was broad discussion and questioning around Council's current financial position and potential avenues that could be explored such as co-funding projects and road closures to allow for the expansion of outdoor dining to facilitate social distancing requirements.

The general sentiment was supportive of the draft budget and operational plan.

#### Question on notice:

Councillor Spratt questioned how much of Council's current capital is not committed for other projects.

J Smith noted advised that there is a fact sheet on Council's website called [How Your Dollars Work](#), and he invited members to make submissions via [Your Say](#).

*Note: J Smith left the meeting at 6:44pm*

### **ACTION**

J Smith to provide a response to a question on notice 'how much of Council's current capital is not already committed to other projects?'.

## **5.0 UPDATE ON ACTIONS FROM LAST MEETING**

Item	Action	Update
6.3	A workshop be organised for group members to provide feedback and input on Smart Beaches Next Steps.	A workshop was held on 12 March 2020

## **6.0 AGENDA ITEMS**

### **6.1 IMPACTS OF COVID-19 ON THE LOCAL ECONOMY AND BUSINESSES - DISCUSSION AND FEEDBACK – DEB KEMPE**

#### **DISCUSSION**

Deb Kempe, Team Leader Economic Development and Tourism presented data of the impacts of COVID-19 on local businesses and economies (*Attachment 2*). She noted, that as expected, the tourism, hospitality and the arts industries have been particularly affected, as well as the many other industries that support them. She noted that whilst there is some data available by way of town centre audits, pedestrian counts and Wi-Fi use, this data is limited and doesn't provide an accurate enough picture for Council to properly assess the real affect and the future impact.

Members discussed and provided feedback on the following two questions:

1. How does the data reflect your expectations or observations of the impact of COVID-19 on

local businesses?

Members raised the following points:

- Are Council communicating with local businesses that are temporarily closed to ascertain the length of time they can sustain themselves before having to permanently close?
- Does Council have a plan to communicate and promote shop local initiatives and is there budget to extend this to the whole of the LGA, not just individual sites?
- All members commended the library click and collect service and suggested this continue
- Changes to consumer patterns across town centres

2. What other data can Council use to monitor economic impact and recovery?

There was broad discussion about potential data sources, including:

- Retail spend for bank data
- Smart Beaches data
- Business survey to understand changing confidence/sentiment
- Opal card data

D Kempe welcomed members to provide any further feedback by email.

## **6.2 NORTHERN BEACHES BUSINESS SUPPORT PLAN - OVERVIEW AND FEEDBACK ON IMPLEMENTATION TO DATE - KATH MCKENZIE**

### **DISCUSSION**

Kath McKenzie, Executive Manager Community Engagement and Communications presented an overview of the Business Support Plan (*Attachment 3*).

K McKenzie briefly discussed the Business Support plan and actions to date, noting that the main focus has been on sharing information.

Councillor Sue Heins noted that councillors recently participated in a workshop to discuss the path to recovery. She noted that some councillors were nervous about large numbers of people flocking to particular areas.

Members discussed potential events and opportunities once restrictions are relaxed which is expected to be from 1 June 2020.

Members commended Council on its support plan to date and emphasised the need to discuss a more long-term, strategic approach to ensure business sustainability.

### **ACTION**

Coordinate an additional meeting to discuss ideas for Councils' long-term strategic business sustainability.

## **7.0 GENERAL BUSINESS**

K McKenzie discussed a marketing concept Matthew Adderton had shared with her recently about

a brand strategy City of Parramatta developed and launched [“Where it’s AT” city brand](#).

M Adderton spoke about the company behind the brand concept and the potential application for the Northern Beaches to create an identity and attract business.

One of the partners of the company has just moved to Freshwater so it could be worth a catch up in regards to the Economic and Smart Communities SRG.

## SUMMARY OF ACTIONS

ITEM NO.	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	DUE DATE
6.2	Coordinate an additional meeting to discuss ideas for Councils’ long-term strategic business sustainability.	K McKenzie D Kempe T Lukic	ASAP
6.3	J Smith to provide a response to a question on notice ‘how much of Council’s current capital is not already committed to other projects?’.	T Lukic	ASAP
7.0	K McKenzie and M Adderton agreed to follow up discuss the concept further	K McKenzie	ASAP

*The meeting concluded at 8:05pm*

This is the final page of the Minutes comprising 6 pages numbered 1 to 6 of the Economic and Smart Communities Strategic Reference Group meeting held on Wednesday 20 May 2020 and confirmed on Wednesday 19 August 2020



## Agenda

- Our budget process
- COVID-19 impact and response
- Budget overview
- Funding summary
- Rate subsidy
- Domestic waste subsidy
- Planned expenditure
- Have your say





## Our budget process



### Financial Objectives

1. Deliver a balanced budget
2. Fund current service levels
3. Fund infrastructure renewal
4. Ensure financial sustainability
5. Budget directed to new community assets



northern  
beaches  
council

Slide 2/10

## COVID-19 Impact and Response

### Net impact from Mar-Sept (\$21m)

#### 2020/21 in focus

- Community Support Package
  - Subsidy on rates and DWM - \$4.3m
  - Deferral of payment of first rate instalment
  - Delay of fee changes - \$0.7m
  - Waiving of fees - \$0.5m
  - Tenant support package - \$1.1m
- Closed and impacted Services - \$5.7m



northern  
beaches  
council

Slide 3/10



## COVID-19 impact and Response - \$21m



	2019/20	2020/21	TOTAL
Closed and impacted services	\$6.7m	\$5.7m	<b>\$12.4m</b>
Community and small business support	\$2.0m	\$1.6m	<b>\$3.6m</b>
2020/21 ratepayer subsidy	-	\$4.3m	<b>\$4.3m</b>
Delay fee changes to 1 Oct 2020	-	\$0.7m	<b>\$0.7m</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$8.7m</b>	<b>\$12.3m</b>	<b>\$21.0m</b>



Slide 3/10

## Budget overview – operational

**\$365.1m**

Income from continuing operations

-

**\$340.4m**

Expenses from continuing operations

-

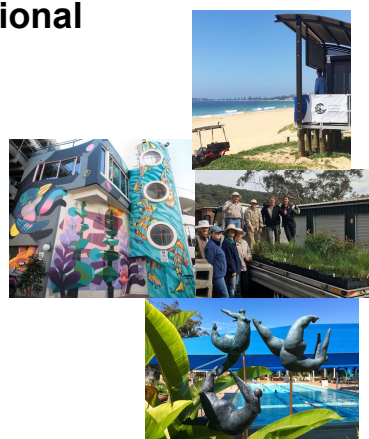
**\$31m**

Capital grant income

=

**(\$6.3m)**

Deficit from continuing operations



Slide 4/10

## Budget overview – capital



**\$50.8m**

New works

+

**\$41.5m**

Renewal works\*

=

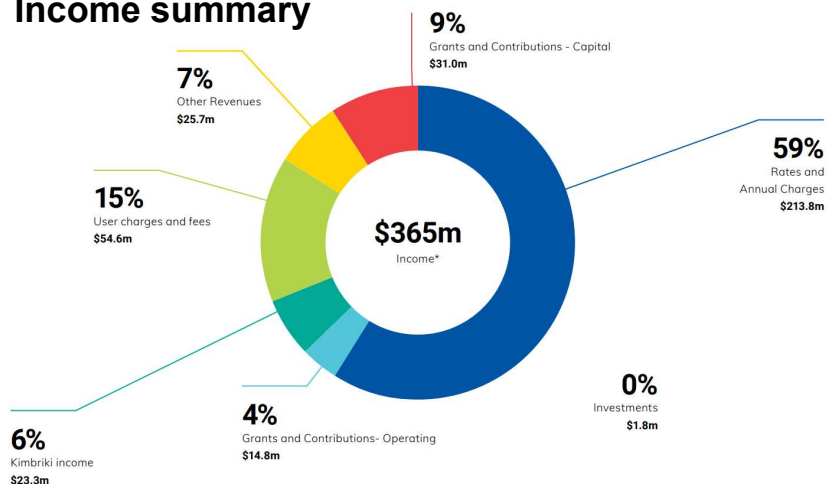
**\$92.3m**

Total works



Slide 5/10

## Income summary



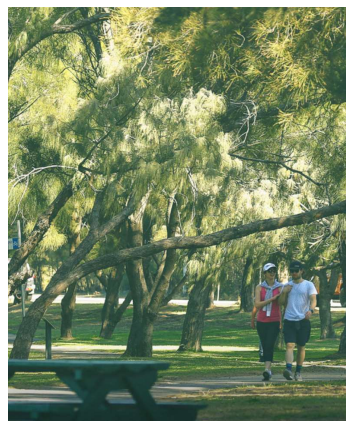
Slide 6/10

## Rate subsidy



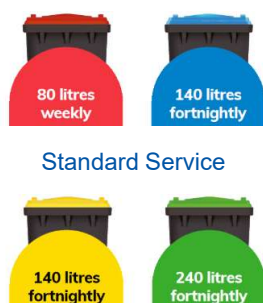
Rate Cap 2.6% ↑  
= \$4.4m

Average Rate	Maximum increase by IPART	50% subsidy of increase	You Pay
\$1,464	+ \$38 (2.6%)	- \$19 (1.3%)	= \$1,483 (1.3% rate)



Slide 7/10

## Domestic waste subsidy



Standard Service

2019/20 Fee	Increase 2020/21*	50% subsidy of increase	You Pay
\$405	+ \$41	- \$20.50	= \$425.50



Slide 8/10

## Planned expenditure

For every **\$100** in our **\$433 million** budget, we're investing...

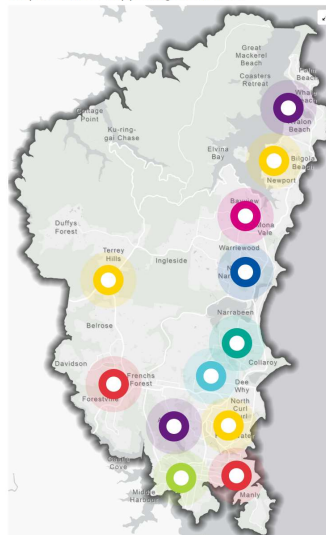


## Have your say

### Feedback as easy as 1, 2, 3

- ★ **Step 1. Read the draft Delivery Program, Operational Plan and Budget**  
Click the buttons below. View the [Council report](#) and [minutes](#).
- ★ **Step 2. See what's happening in your area**  
Click the hotspots on the map below for area snapshots.
- ★ **Step 3. Make a submission using the form below**  
Or email: [council@northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au)  
Or write: Marked 'Budget and Delivery Program 2020-2024', Northern Beaches Council, PO Box 82, Manly NSW 1655.

Step 2. What's happening in my area:



## IMPACTS OF COVID-19 ON THE LOCAL ECONOMY AND BUSINESSES – DISCUSSION AND FEEDBACK

Economic & Smart  
Communities Strategic  
Reference Group

20 May 2020



northern  
beaches  
council

## .ID LGA Job and Economic Outlook

GRP forecast to fall by -11.9% (13.6% NSW).

Local Jobs forecast to fall by -7.6% (8,260 local jobs).

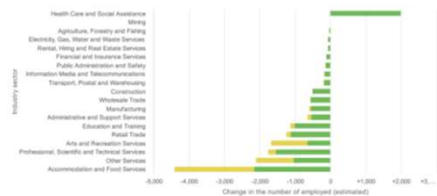
If JobKeeper recipients impacts included increases to -12.2% (13,319 jobs)

The impact on employed residents (-9.3%) was higher than the local job impact.

Employment impact in June Quarter 2020 (compared to 2019/19 quarter average)

Northern Beaches Council area

JobKeeper Component Not on JobKeeper

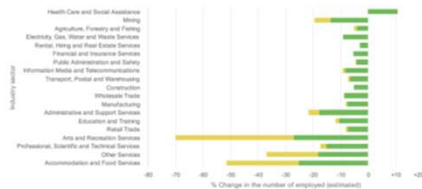


Source: National Institute of Economic and Industry Research (NIEIR) Version 1.1 May 2020. ©2020. Compiled and presented in accordance with the provisions of the Copyright Act 1968. (Data on JobKeeper - component as defined by the ABS) and (2) JobKeeper - performing reduced hours or not working (in 3 hours). Many will not be contributing to economic activity.

Employment impact in June Quarter 2020 (compared to 2019/19 quarter average)

Northern Beaches Council area

JobKeeper Component Not on JobKeeper



Source: National Institute of Economic and Industry Research (NIEIR) Version 1.1 May 2020. ©2020. Compiled and presented in accordance with the provisions of the Copyright Act 1968. (Data on JobKeeper - component as defined by the ABS) and (2) JobKeeper - performing reduced hours or not working (in 3 hours). Many will not be contributing to economic activity.



northern  
beaches  
council

## Pittwater Town Centre audits

### Avalon

- 16 stores have temporarily closed including a number of chain brands
- Cafes are still trading with takeaway options and other businesses are opening with temporary hours.
- Parking is at approximately 40% occupancy.
- 'Click & Collect' 10P parking space installed.

### Newport

- 8 shop vacancies pre COVID with 3 businesses closed permanently due to COVID-19.
- Cafes and restaurants continue to trade with takeaway options.
- Parking is at approximately 40% occupancy.
- 'Click & Collect' 10P parking spaces installed.

### Mona Vale

- 7 vacancies pre COVID, 1 permanently closed due to COVID and 40 businesses closed temporarily
- Cafes and supermarkets continuing to trade well.
- Low foot traffic with WiFi visitor counts falling over one-third between March and April
- Parking is at approximately 30% occupancy.
- 'Click & Collect' 10P sites have been activated with feedback from businesses very favourable.



northern  
beaches  
council

## Narrabeen Town Centre audits

### Narrabeen

- 13 businesses temporarily 1 permanently closed.
- Lack of B-Line commute impacting morning peak trade – WiFi visitor count at Tramshed fell 73% between Feb and April
- Cafes and restaurants and supermarket being a drawcard.
- 3 'Click & Collect' 10P spaces installed

### Collaroy

- 9 businesses have temporarily including the cinema, the Collaroy and the Beach Club.
- Beach goers visiting for exercise.
- High turnover parking Pittwater Road to get their takeaways.
- B-Line commuter carpark is largely empty stop and as expected the commuter car park remains empty.
- 1 'Click & Collect' parking spot installed.



northern  
beaches  
council

## Curl Curl Town Centre audits

### Freshwater

- Existing high ground floor vacancies prior to COVID-19 (approx. 25%).
- 9 temporary closures, three of which are by appointment only.
- The bottle shop, pharmacy and medical practice and weekly fresh produce market continues to operate on Sundays
- End of April and beginning of May cautious reopening of some retail shops.
- 2 'Click & Collect' parking spaces installed.

### Dee Why

- Over 50% of ground floor businesses had temporarily closed or altered their mode/hours of operation.
- 5 businesses have indicated they will close permanently.
- Supermarkets, medical centres and pharmacies are key anchors.
- The Strand significantly impacted, but majority have modified.
- 1 hour parking limits, beach closure, and police surveillance are detracting out-of-area visitors
- 4 'Click & Collect' parking spaces have been implemented in Dee Why.

### Brookvale

- Existing concentration of vacancies on Pittwater Road, Brookvale,
- Since COVID-19, 5 businesses have confirmed permanent closure.
- Home improvement stores continue to attract customers.
- Centrelink is a key attractor currently



northern  
beaches  
council

## Frenchs Forest Town Centre audits

### Forestville

- 11 temporary closures at Forestville.
- Cafes all adapted very quickly to offering takeaways and deliveries, though one café advised 15% of their usual coffee trade and relying on their produce business.
- Increase in foot traffic in the centre as time goes on. Initially only supermarket, chemists and the but increasingly entering other businesses.
- Car parks significant capacity
- 1 'Click & Collect' parking space installed

### Killarney Heights

- Very quiet with visitation increasing during the school holidays.
- Closure of schools having significant impact on trade.
- 2 permanent shopfront closures prior to Covid-19.
- 6 shopfronts temporarily closed due to COVID-19.



northern  
beaches  
council



## Manly ward Town Centre audits

### Balgowlah

- 7 permanent shopfront closures with all up for lease or sale pre COVID-19.
- 15 businesses have closed temporarily because of COVID-19
- Mostly adults and older people (50+) observed, with many using the public domain to wait for appointments or takeaway food.
- Parking is consistently about 40% capacity.
- 1 'Click & Collect' parking space installed.

### Manly Vale

- Manly Vale is operating as usual.
- 11 vacant premises along Condamine Street, several of these are either awaiting development or have been recently completed.
- 1 business – Snowboards and Ski – has closed since the COVID-19 outbreak.
- Large format retail stores strong demand e.g. Woolworths, Aldi, Bunnings etc.
- Parking along Condamine Street has not had a lot of change during this time.

### Seaforth

- 6 vacant premises in Seaforth (pre COVID-19) and a large development is under construction at the centre.
- 15 temporary closures of businesses due to COVID-19.
- Key attractors takeaway cafes and restaurants or hairdressers.
- Parking is around 70% capacity along the main road and the carparks are about 20% capacity.



northern  
beaches  
council

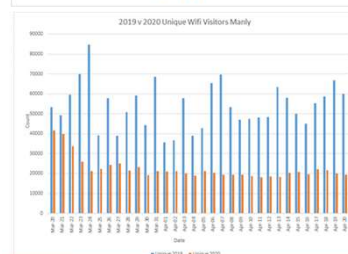
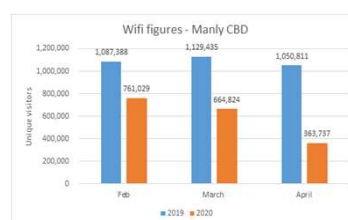
## Manly CBD Town Centre audit

### Reduced business activity

- 90% of retail, hotels, pubs and restaurants were closed initially.
- Pharmacies, news agencies, supermarkets, health food stores, banks and cafes for takeaway, remain open
- Arts and Craft market has been temporarily suspended, the fresh produce market operates on a Sunday.

### Falling visitation

- Wifi visitor count for April 2020 two-thirds lower than April 2019.
- Sharp drop in visitor counts following restrictions imposed 23 March. No Sunday spike.
- NRMA Fast Ferries only 5% in normal patronage
- Sydney Ferries (Manly to Circular Quay) 6% patronage in April 2020 vs April 2019.
- Parking approximately 30% capacity.
- Council car parking March levels only 76% January 2020.
- 5 'Click & Collect' parking spaces installed



northern  
beaches  
council

## Discussion

### Feedback from SRG members

- How does the data reflects your expectations or observations of impact COVID-19 on local businesses?
- What other data can Council use to monitor economic impact & recovery?





## Council Business Support Plan

Adopted by Council 24 March

Package of measures, with cost savings to local businesses of approximately **\$1.2 million**:

- fee waivers for six months on outdoor dining and footpath merchandise
- fee waivers for six months on inspections of food and other health premises and fire safety
- more flexible and pragmatic arrangements for supplier deliveries to supermarkets and parking for take-away pickups, including installing series of Click and Collect parking spaces
- establishing a streamlined dedicated COVID-19 Rates & Annual Charges Hardship application form, applying to both business and resident ratepayers.

## Additional local business support during COVID-19

- Weekly catch-ups with the five business chamber presidents for coordinated response
- Mayor has written letters to businesses and respective landlords, referencing the Mandatory Code of Conduct for commercial leases
- Dedicated fortnightly business e-newsletter (with 20,000 registered businesses) and 'COVID-19 Local Business Support' webpage – linking Government advice and support
- Promoted community and business initiatives to assist local businesses to pivot and promote buy local campaigns
- Conduct weekly town centre audits and address local issues (such as installing 'Click & Collect' parking)
- Establishing B2B Hub to connected impacted businesses with local expertise and business support
- Host a series of webinars to assist businesses as they adapt and survive:
  - How to access NSW Small business grants (Service NSW);
  - How to stay connected with your customers (Hullabaloo); and
  - Food safety for home food businesses (Council's Environmental Health team)
- Continue to develop 'bite-size' live webinars or pre-recorded interviews
  - 'Stay focused and calm during COVID-19' small business wellness webinar (The Greate Group)
- Interviews with inspiring local businesses to share their stories on how they are adjusting during COVID-19



## Delivery Program Projects 202/21to Support Local Businesses

- Awaiting



## Discussion

### Feedback from SRG members

- How Council has responded to COVID-19 to date?
- How best council and its partners can help businesses continue to adapt during COVID-19 and onto the road to economic recovery?

