



AGENDA

ECONOMIC AND SMART COMMUNITIES STRATEGIC REFERENCE GROUP

Notice is hereby given that a meeting of the Economic and Smart Communities Strategic Reference Group will be held online

WEDNESDAY 18 NOVEMBER 2020

Beginning at 6:00pm for the purpose of considering matters included in this agenda.

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

Peter Middleton Newport Residents Association

Ngaire Young Northern Beaches Campus, TAFE NSW

Geri Moorman

Gordon Lang

Alexander Coxon

Stephen Pirovic International College of Management

Matthew Aderton

Chris Wilcocks

Council Officer Contacts

Kath McKenzie Executive Manager, Community Engagement & Communications

Katie Kirwan Governance Officer

Quorum

A majority of members including the Chair or one of the elected Councillors.

**Agenda for Economic and Smart Communities
Strategic Reference Group Meeting
to be held on Wednesday 18 November 2020
via Teams
Commencing at 6:00pm**

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NEXT MEETING

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

All members are expected to attend the meetings or otherwise tender their apologies to the Chair and Governance at councilmeetings@northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au.

3.0 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

Members should disclose any "**pecuniary**" or "**non-pecuniary**" interests in matters included in the agenda. The [Northern Beaches Council Code of Conduct](#) (the Code) provides guidance on managing conflicts of interests.

A **pecuniary interest** is defined in Section 4 of the Code as:

A pecuniary interest is an interest that you have in a matter because of a reasonable likelihood or expectation of appreciable financial gain or loss to you or a person referred to in clause 4.3.

A **non-pecuniary conflict of interest** is defined in Section 5 of the Code as:

A non-pecuniary conflict of interest exists where a reasonable and informed person would perceive that you could be influenced by a private interest when carrying out your official functions in relation to a matter.

If you required further information or guidance about disclosing an interest please contact Governance at councilmeetings@northernbeaches.nsw.gov.au.

4.0 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

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

RECOMMENDATION

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

**4.2 MINUTES OF EXTRAORDINARY ECONOMIC AND SMART COMMUNITIES
STRATEGIC REFERENCE GROUP HELD 14 OCTOBER 2020**

RECOMMENDATION

That the Minutes of the Extraordinary Economic and Smart Communities Strategic Reference Group held 14 October 2020, copies of which were previously circulated to all Members, be confirmed as a true and correct record of the proceedings of that meeting.

5.0 UPDATE ON ACTIONS FROM LAST MEETING

ITEM 5.1	ACTION LOG UPDATE - KATH MCKENZIE - 5 MINS
REPORTING OFFICER	EXECUTIVE MANAGER COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATIONS
TRIM FILE REF	2020/701685
ATTACHMENTS	NIL

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PURPOSE

To report the updates on action items of the Economic and Smart Communities Strategic Reference Group.

ITEM NO.	REPORT	ACTION
6.1	Summary of Strategic Reference Group Mid-term Review	Arrange an extraordinary meeting specifically on the topic of Smart Cities.
6.2	Glen Street Theatre – Future Use of Former Restaurant Site	Arrange for site visit for interested members.
6.4	Economic Recovery Post COVID-19 and Development Plan for the Region	Arrange an extraordinary session to workshop the economic development plan (including the employment study re-visit).
6.4	Economic Recovery Post COVID-19 and Development Plan for the Region	Summarise Council's support to businesses to date including the media campaigns that support tourism.

RECOMMENDATION

That the members of the Economic and Smart Communities Strategic Reference Group receive and note the updates and outstanding items of the Action Log.

6.0 AGENDA ITEMS

ITEM 6.1	SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT - RUSSELL PEAKE - 30 MINS
REPORTING OFFICER	SOCIAL PLANNING & STRATEGY COORDINATOR
TRIM FILE REF	2020/645026
ATTACHMENTS	1 ↓ Social Sustainability Strategy Presentation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PURPOSE

To provide an update on the status and approach to develop a Social Sustainability Strategy and gather input from the Economic and Smart Communities Strategic Reference Group.

SUMMARY

Council is in the process of developing Better Together, Social Sustainability Strategy 2041. This strategy will set a long-term social direction for building skills and knowledge in the community that enable wellbeing and resilience.

Stakeholder engagement is critical to the development of the strategy and the Strategic Reference Groups are a priority group identified for consultation and input. This report and the presentation in the meeting will provide a foundation understanding of the project.

The workshop at the meeting will explore some key themes, challenges and opportunities that will inform the development of the strategy.

RECOMMENDATION OF SOCIAL PLANNING & STRATEGY COORDINATOR

That the Economic and Smart Communities Strategic Reference Group:

1. Note the Social Sustainability Strategy presentation.
 2. Provide feedback on:
 - A. Draft strategic framework
 - B. Strengths, challenges and opportunity mapping
 - C. Contribution of economic development in building social sustainability.
 3. Note the next Strategic Reference Group Engagement activity proposed for February 2021.
-

REPORT

BACKGROUND

A project is underway to develop a Social Sustainability Strategy (the Strategy) for Northern Beaches over a 20- year horizon, *Better Together, Social Sustainability Strategy 2041*.

The Strategy will be a key mechanism for Northern Beaches Council to achieve its commitment to the community in delivering the *Shape 2028* community vision “**A safe, inclusive and connected community that lives in balance with our extraordinary coastal and bushland environment.**”

The Strategy will identify opportunities to enhance and support every member of the community to experience a safe, inclusive and connected community.

The proposed approach to developing the Strategy will provide Council and the community with:

- A **long-term social direction** that builds upon existing services, social resources and skills in the community
- A framework for **building the skills and knowledge of the community** to respond to social challenges through strong partnerships
- **Strengthen the ability of the community recover** from unexpected social, political, environmental and financial impacts.

The positioning of this Strategy has been mapped within the broader suite of Council strategies and plans. This is important to ensure that the interaction with other key documents such as *Shape 2028*, *Towards 2040*, *Protect Create Live 2040*, and *Move 2030* is complimentary in scope and strategic direction.

Developing the strategy with the community is crucial to ensure that what is developed represents a shared resource that capture the breadth of strengths, challenges and opportunities for all people living and working on the Northern Beaches.

This approach includes a detailed stakeholder engagement plan that seeks to maximise opportunities to incorporate collaboration and build partnerships with key stakeholders inside and outside of Council. This collaboration and partnerships is a critical delivery objective of the Strategy and is integral to its long-term success.

WORK TO DATE

Engagement has occurred with internal stakeholders through two internal Working Groups, one across Council and one from the Community, Arts and Culture Business Unit.

Feedback and input was gathered from a workshop with the Community and Belonging Strategic Reference Group in August.

This preliminary work has produced:

- Draft visions each of the three pillars (Safe, Inclusive and Connected) and a draft strategic framework;
- Detailed stakeholder identification;
- Strengths and opportunities mapping focusing on wellbeing, resilience and capacity building;
- Commencement of a draft issues/discussion paper documenting current state, population forecasts and key challenges facing the Northern Beaches in terms of Social Sustainability; and

- Identification of priority populations.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

In developing a Stakeholder Engagement approach, the following key objectives were identified:

- Deliver an educative piece for internal and external sector stakeholders around the benefits of the Social Sustainability Strategy and how it is relevant to them; including other Council strategies (internal) and helping build community capacity by supporting the sector (external);
- Develop a community endorsed vision of the three key pillars - safety, inclusion and connectedness and capture the areas of strength relating to wellbeing, resilience and capacity building in the community which will inform action plans flowing from the Social Sustainability Strategy;
- Gather targeted feedback on key community issues and the experience of priority groups; and
- Leverage the rapport built in genuine engagement to achieve buy-in from key stakeholders for the ongoing delivery and collaboration with Council to address each priority area over the life of the strategy.

To achieve these objectives a four-phased approach to engagement is proposed.

CONSULTATION WITH THE STRATEGIC REFERENCE GROUPS

To create meaningful opportunities to contribute to the direction and content of the Strategy, we will engage with the Strategic Reference Groups in Phases 1 to 3.

Phase 1 - The Community and Belonging SRG was consulted at the August 2020

Phase 2 - All Strategic Reference Groups will be engaged individually at the November meetings.

Phase 3 - A dedicated workshop in February 2021, inviting participation from all members of all Strategic Reference Groups.

TIMING

The timeframe for delivery of a Social Sustainability Strategy is June 2021.

COVID19 PANDEMIC RESPONSE

Consideration has been given to the impact of Covid19 on both the ability to meaningfully engage, and the context of any medium to long-term impacts of the pandemic on the community.

Given we are still in the midst of the pandemic response, it makes it difficult to fully comprehend or forecast what the primary and lasting impact of the pandemic will be on the community. To date the data and analysis coming from the research sector about the evolving impact on the community indicate it is primarily exacerbating existing social issues. Examples include an increase in domestic violence, household financial stress and an increase in mental health concerns.

Within the context of the Social Sustainability Strategy, this indicates that we can move forward with a long-term outlook and be confident that these issues will be captured within the proposed engagement process. More consideration will be made as the project progresses around the prioritisation of issues, as this is likely to be where we see changes in community need rather than the creation of new areas of focus. For example, the reduction and loss of income and employment experienced disproportionately by women and younger workers may affect the prioritisation of this priority group higher now than pre covid19.

WORKSHOP

The workshop will explore the evidence collected internally for discussion with the community.

Consider the presentation on the following elements:

- Draft Strategic framework – themes
- Suggested approach to phase 2 engagement
- Strengths
- Challenges
- Opportunities.

Items for discussion:

- Discuss benefits and challenges in achieving inclusive growth opportunities within the LGA
- Build on opportunities for interaction between Economic Development and Social Sustainability.

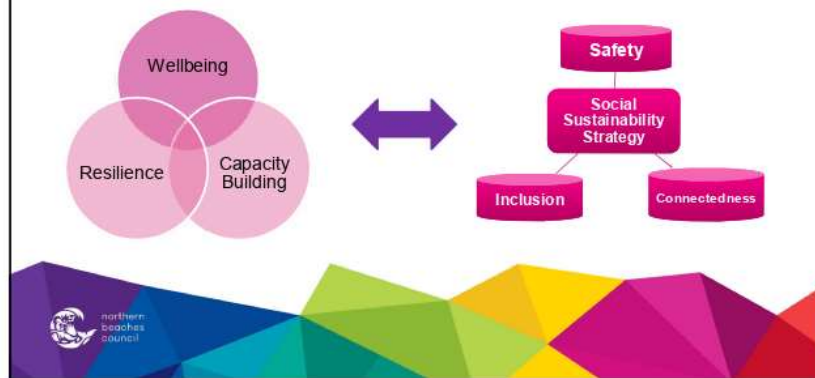
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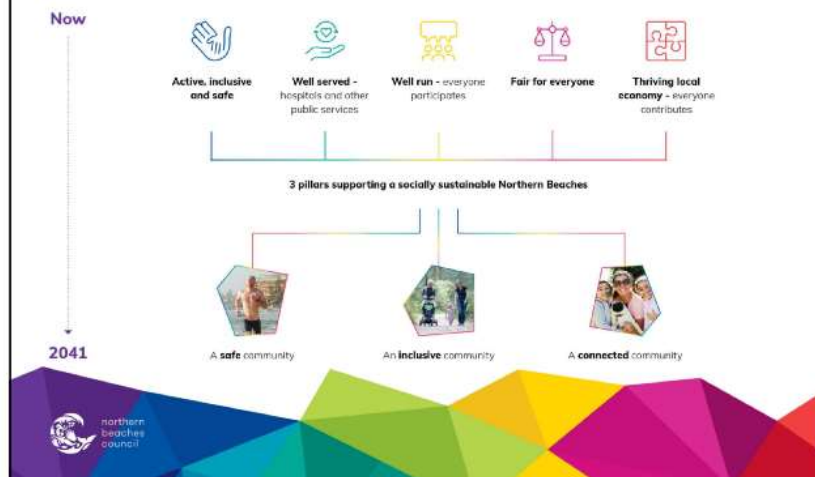
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Where are we headed?

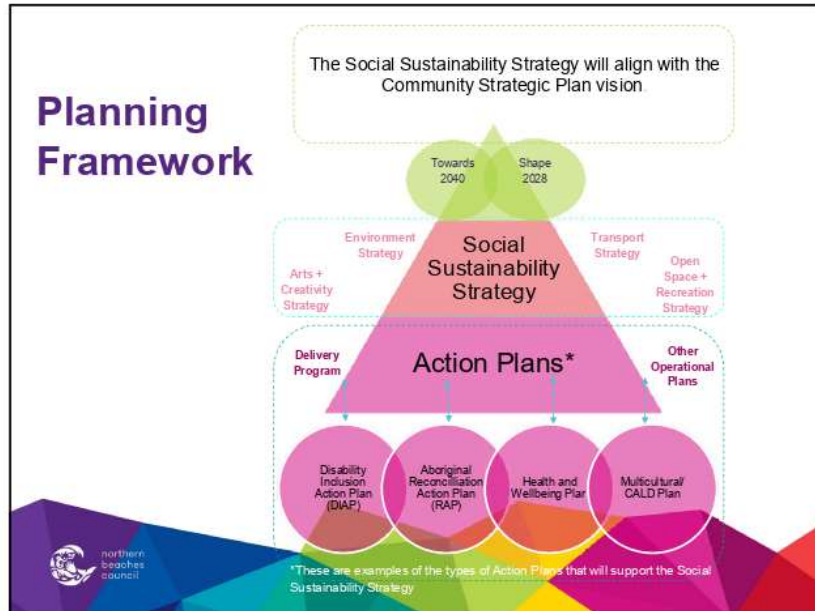
Collaborating with our community ensures we develop a shared resource that represents the strengths, challenges and opportunities for all on the Northern Beaches



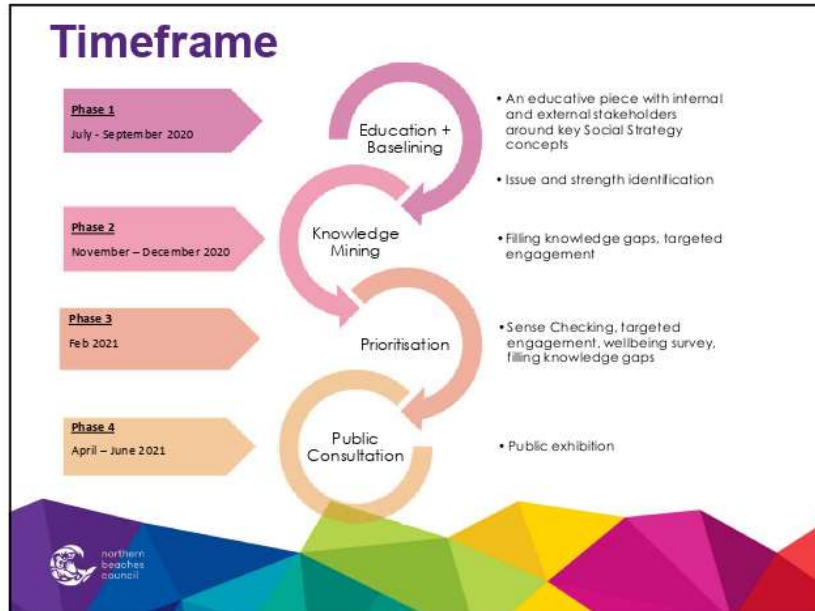
What does Social Sustainability mean for the Northern Beaches?



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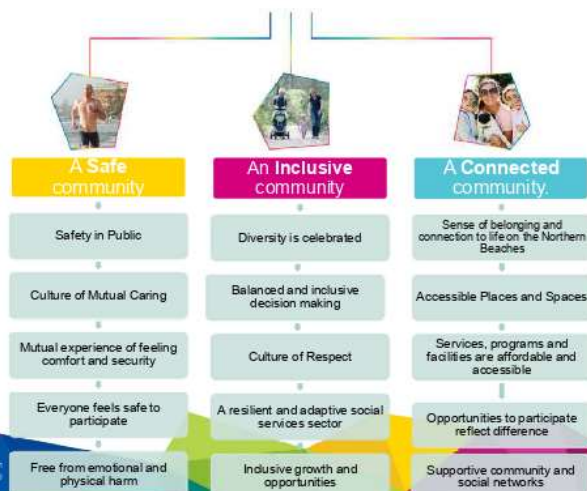
Workshop

Exploring the relationship between
a strong local economy and being
socially sustainable



Draft Strategic Framework

3 pillars supporting a socially sustainable Northern Beaches



11/11/2020

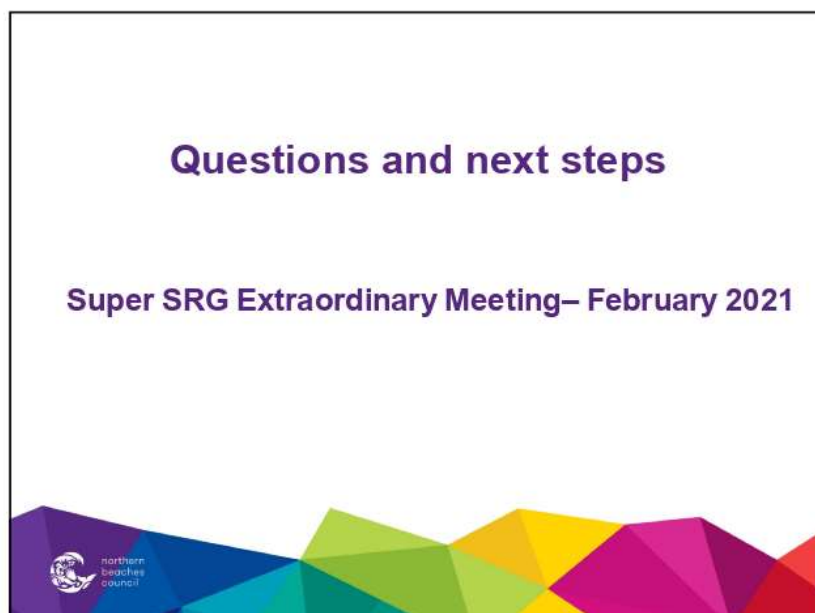
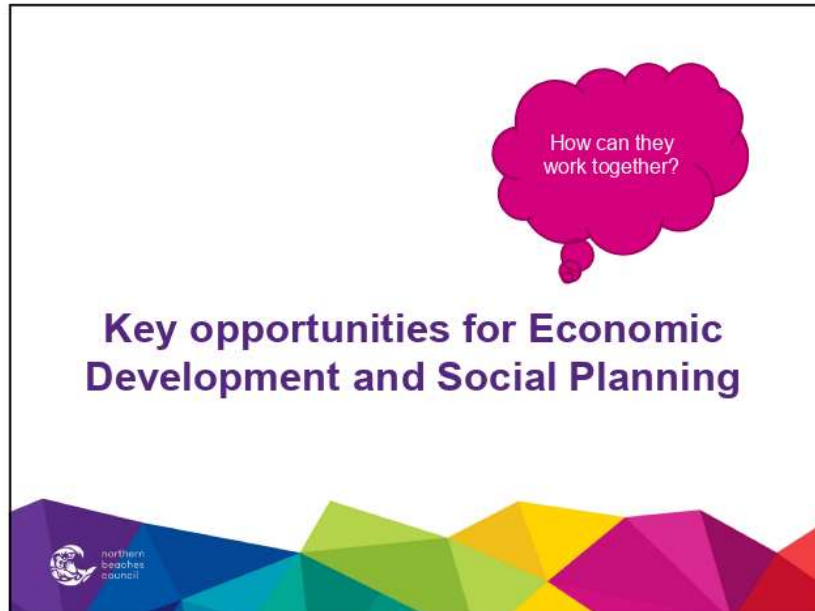
Economic strengths supporting social sustainability



Key issues intersecting Economics + Social Sustainability



11/11/2020



ITEM 6.2	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN - OUTCOME OF SRG WORKSHOP - DEB KEMPE - 30 MINS
REPORTING OFFICER	TEAM LEADER, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM
TRIM FILE REF	2020/690637
ATTACHMENTS	1 ↓ SRG and Chamber workshops outcome paper

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PURPOSE

The purpose of this item is to present back to the Economic and Smart Communities SRG the findings from the extraordinary Economic and Smart Communities SRG workshop to inform preparation of a new Economic Development Plan for the Northern Beaches

REPORT

Members of the Economic and Smart Communities SRG were engaged in a facilitated workshop at an extraordinary meeting of the SRG on 14 October 2020 to discuss preparation of a new Economic Development Plan for the Northern Beaches region.

The workshop was structured around four key questions:

1. What can be done to support business recovery from COVID-19 in the short-term?
2. What do you see as key barriers to business growth on the Northern Beaches?
3. What are the longer-term aspirations for the Northern Beaches as a place to do business?
4. What are your ideas on how these aspirations will be realised?

Following this workshop, the four other Chambers not represented on the SRG (Warringah, Mona Vale, Newport and Avalon/Palm Beach) asked to workshop the same questions to seek further insights from the business community across the Northern Beaches. A similar workshop session was run with the Partnership and Participation SRG on 4 November 2020.

Attached is a short paper which highlights the insights and ideas from all of the above workshops. In addition, new data on current and forecast business and local economic outlook has been included in the paper, as this was identified as a key starting point to consider how to plan for local economic recovery and growth.

RECOMMENDATION OF TEAM LEADER, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

That members of the Economic and Smart Communities Strategic Reference Group note the attached paper and provide any further insights or ideas to aid development of the Economic Development Plan.

Economic Development Plan Workshops Feedback

9 November 2020

Contents

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4. What are your ideas on how these aspirations will be realised?	6
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Background

As part of the process of preparing an Economic Development Plan (EDP) for the Northern Beaches, Council staff have sought the insights and ideas of the representatives of the business community to identify priorities to support economic recovery during COVID-19 and the longer-term aspirations and barriers to growing the region's economy.

For this purpose, four questions were workshopped with the Economic and Smart Communities SRG, the Participation and Partnership SRG and presidents of the five local business chambers.

Below is a short report summarising this feedback. Available data on economic outlook, has also been attached to inform further discussion.

Workshop feedback

1. What can be done to support business recovery from COVID-19 in the short-term?

1.1. Better understanding business impacts/needs

As an important starting point in planning for recovery, it was raised that we need to fully understand how businesses are being impacted (including industry specific data) and what support they actually need.

Attached is some recently available data that Council has to date on economic impacts. This includes data on recent changes to local jobs (March to September 2020) and economic outlook for specific industries to June 2022, provided by consultants .ID The Population Experts.

Further qualitative research into the needs of local businesses (including discussion with larger employers and real estate agents) was also raised.

1.2. Support hospitality

There was considered to be a clear gap in Federal and State Government support for the arts, entertainment and tourism sectors, which have been most impacted to date (see attached data on job losses by industry between March and September 2020).

Council was identified as having a role in supporting these sectors through encouraging open air venues and use of public spaces for expanded outdoor dining or music events. This requires careful management of crowds and social distancing during peak periods in accordance with Public Health Orders and Council's COVID-19 Summer Action Plan for Outdoor Public Spaces.

Relaxing overly complex red tape for the hospitality sector, including liquor licenses, outdoor dining permits and development applications, was also raised as an opportunity to support this sector to adjust to COVID Safe conditions.

1.3. Buy local initiatives

There was considered to be a real opportunity to leverage off the increasing number of home-based workers to support local businesses, through initiatives such as 'take-a-break to buy local' campaign. Other ideas to support buy local initiatives included "Business of the week" shop local campaigns and advertising to encourage people to spend local and 'keeping it local'. Council was identified as having to lead by example here in pursuing local procurement opportunities wherever possible.

1.4. Town centre re-activation

In addition to Buy Local campaigns, there was an opportunity to encourage more locals back into town centres to support businesses re-opening. Running COVID Safe events, such as the pilot Streets as Shared Spaces program at Dee Why, Mona Vale and Newport, could support businesses and it was suggested that street shutdowns could be extend to other centres, such as Freshwater and Brookvale. Further opportunities to activate precincts, such as a night time event in Brookvale incorporating the micro-breweries, could be explored.

It was noted that Council needed to be quicker in approving applications for activations and look at funding and marketing activities for each suburb to attract customers back.

To create more vibrant town centres, it was also suggested Council could negotiate with landlords for temporary use vacant shops, which were becoming more prevalent in some centres.

1.5. Skills and training

For many businesses and workers, COVID-19 presented an opportunity to allocate time to invest in their business or upskill/reskill. TAFE noted there is range of services to support business recovery including provision of free career counselling and training opportunities to the local community and businesses wishing to upskill and reskill, as well as provision of fully subsidised relevant courses, such as Statement of Attainment in Infection Control and Registered Service of Alcohol.

Targeted programs such as Mature Aged Workers Scholarships and Women in Business courses are also available to support recovery.

1.6. Financial support

While the State Government has provided rounds of grants (see below), further cash grants for businesses still impacted were considered to be needed.

Information from Service NSW identifies that 2,357 Northern Beaches businesses had applied for the Small Business COVID-19 Support Grant (up to \$10,000) of which 2,216 were granted to the value of \$23.3 million. The main recipients were Professional, Scientific and Technical businesses, followed by Accommodation and Food. For the second round the grants (Small Business COVID-19 Business Recovery Grants of up to \$3,000), there were 1,520 applications across the Northern Beaches, of which 1,492 were approved to value of \$4.43 million. 'Accommodation and Food' and 'Other Services' (such as hairdressers) were the main recipients.

It was suggested that Council could have a role in negotiating reduced rate small business loans with banks

1.7. Business support

During COVID-19 there was considered to be strong support from the community to support local businesses and within the business community itself, and it was felt that now is the time to build on this momentum. For example, some groups have come together where it is beneficial for all involved in starting up a business and utilising each other's skills as a form of barter. With the easing of some restrictions, now was also felt to be a time to plan for more networking opportunities – particularly face to face, in a COVID Safe way.

Mentor programs that link local businesses to other local support services that can help would build on this. It was suggested that Council could it expand upon the B2B Business Support Hub Council established at the start of the pandemic, by having a physical location or website that funnels data for businesses to try to fast track information for their business needs.

Support to link local coaches/support services to access government opportunities would also support professional services on the Northern Beaches. This could include having a mini expo showcasing businesses in connection to an event/topic that is being promoted. Another idea is for dedicated 'in person coffee catch-ups' by selecting a local business and encouraging members and locals to pop in for 60 minutes of connection and collaboration with other like-minded local business owners.

2. What do you see as key barriers to business growth on the Northern Beaches?

2.1. Business mix

There was identified to be a lack of diversity of businesses on the Northern Beaches in terms of both size and industry sector, which may impact economic growth. Whilst a very entrepreneurial area (second highest number registered businesses after City of Sydney) there is a dependency on non-employing and micro-businesses. To quickly grow jobs there is a need to attract larger employers too. Lack of a commercial core was felt to compound this issue and supporting a new commercial core could be an aspiration, see below.

Lack of diversity was also considered to be resulting in over concentration of similar type businesses in particular centres i.e. cafes. Whilst clustering and competition can be beneficial for some sectors, there was concern that lack of business due diligence and planning was resulting in a lot of small businesses closing due to oversaturation of demand for good/services (see data on business entries and exits attached).

2.2. Transport and infrastructure

Inadequate transport infrastructure was identified as one of the top barriers to business growth on the Northern Beaches. In the past this has been a driver of relocation of major businesses out of the area due to a lack of public transport for staff. Distance from City has traditionally been negatively perceived by business investors, but this may become a COVID normal strength as employers and workers seek lifestyle locations.

Remote working, at least part of the week, has become more mainstream following lockdown. However poor NBN coverage in parts of Northern Beaches will be a significant impediment to continued working from home, if not addressed.

2.3. Business space

Lack of affordable and appropriate business space was considered another barrier to attracting businesses or encouraging new businesses. Whilst there was considered to be significant available office and industrial space, much of this is out of date and the wrong size or location to support emerging industries.

Affordable office space for start-ups, especially those wanting to move out from home but not ready to take on a long-term lease, was identified as a missing piece of the local office market offering. The cost of leasing, as well as fit out of commercial space, in centres was considered prohibitive to many businesses.

2.4. Affordable housing

Alongside transport access, the lack of affordable housing, was impacting capacity to attract new business. It was noted that there was a lot of concern from local employers on how to access entry level workers on the Northern Beaches including migrants and young people, as they cannot afford to live and work locally.

2.5. Availability and cost of workforce

Compounding the above concerns around housing affordability, the introduction of travel restrictions has led to many of the hospitality providers finding it tough to find staff (traditionally travellers filled the roles). During COVID-19, with loss of working visas, this has become more prevalent, especially in the hospitality sector to recruit key roles, such as baristas and cleaning staff.

Some Government support programs, such as Job Keeper, do not extend to new hires or support current workers on specific visas. Businesses want to grow but taking the next step to get staff is a barrier.

2.6. Lack of the region's business profile

There was felt to be not enough opportunities for businesses to showcase their products and services and to promote the region as a destination for business.

2.7. Limited tourist accommodation

Tourism (see below) was identified as one of the defining features of the Northern Beaches' local economy. However, capacity to grow the visitor economy is considered to be limited by the lack of various levels of tourist accommodation, and in particular certified tourist accommodation.

2.8. Government red tape/processes

The costs, time and complexity of Council and other tiers of Government red tape, is seen as an unnecessary burden for businesses, especially minor changes to business operations. There is also considered to be a lack of coordination of processes for businesses across Government, including liquor licensing.

There were also perceptions of a lack of transparency in Council processes, including expenditure, which could be better communicated to the community.

2.9. Uncertain customer demand

Another barrier that has become more prevalent during COVID-19 is uncertain consumer confidence. With Job Keeper and Job Seeker winding down, superannuation money drying up, there is more uncertainty about future local spending, and it was noted that many businesses are seeing a decline.

In the longer-term the relative lack of population growth on the Northern Beaches could be a barrier to increasing local spend and demand for new businesses and jobs.

3. What are the longer-term aspirations for Northern Beaches as a place to do business?

3.1. Identify comparative advantages

It was identified that there is a need to be pragmatic and informed about what businesses will be attracted to the Northern Beaches. Given limited transport access, constrained supply of industrial land and housing affordability, large scale manufacturing investment is unlikely to be a focus of growth. Similarly, the lack of a significant CBD was also felt to limit demand for large scale offices.

There were discussions about what some of our comparative advantages could be. Healthcare, specifically aged-care or wellness, was considered an advantage given our aging population, as well as natural environment assets. As shown in the data attached. HealthCare has been driving recent job growth on the Northern Beaches and is forecast to continue to do so, and future focus may be on becoming renowned for specific sub-sectors.

Linked to natural environment, another strength may be tapping into the Circular Economy that is emerging globally as a new area of economic growth, including renewable energies, recycling and urban farms. Identifying and helping to enable the attraction of vocations and businesses which best fit our northern beaches natural environment results in a win-win.

3.2. Tourism

There is great opportunity to promote the Northern Beaches as the number one tourist destination of NSW, building on its unique culture and famous beaches. It was discussed that focus would be on high end tourism with the objectives to attract greater visitor dollars, not necessarily crowds.

3.3. Start-ups/remote working

There was considered to be enormous potential to build the Northern Beaches reputation as a technology and innovation region for start-ups. COVID-19 had fuelled demand to work remotely and the Northern Beaches was considered well placed to take advantage of this trend and especially attract virtual businesses that can operate remotely.

Recognising the local benefits of working from home since the onset of COVID-19, namely reducing traffic congestion and increasing local trade, is seen as a key aspiration for future economic development of the region.

3.4. Inclusive community

For healthy communities, it was noted we need to have all of the requirements to allow community members to spend an entire lifespan inside the community. Therefore, we need appropriately affordable permanent accommodation for all of the skills required to support the community. The ambulance driver, nurse, teacher, fireman, and apprentice should all be able to afford a comfortable life in our community. A diverse community, including a range of ages, skills and background, is also needed to support a diverse and strong local economy.

4. What are your ideas on how these aspirations will be realised?

4.1. Targeted investment

An Investment Attraction Strategy linked to Land Use controls, to determine who we are targeting and how we accommodate them, was identified as a priority to achieving the above aspirations. This includes promoting ourselves to overseas investors/start-ups and making sure the Northern Beaches is 'top of mind' for any footloose company.

4.2. Education

Encouraging partnerships with Universities to bring them to the area, to attract and retain the younger population, would add to the aspiration for a more diverse and inclusive community. Whilst this sector is impacted by COVID-19, across Sydney satellite campuses are establishing, such as UWS campus Bankstown, and an opportunity for Northern Beaches should be explored.

4.3. Streamlining Council process

To reduce complexity of Council processes, it was suggested that Council could have a dedicated business Development Assessment (DA) specialist within Council to process commercial/industrial DAs and provide advice.

To improve perceptions of the Northern Beaches as a good 'place to do businesses', it was recommended to establish a clear and accessible Small Business Advisory information section on Council's website. This would be a one-stop-shop to provide existing and potential businesses with information on all Council local economic data and processes and signposts to State and Federal Government information.

4.4. Local supply chains

Building on the local business community spirit during COVID-19, we could look at creating business hubs to support one another, as well as explore incentives for developers and other contractors to hire and buy local.

4.5. Tourism

There is scope for greater social media promotion of the Northern Beaches as a premier tourist destination (i.e. 10 things to do on the Northern Beaches) to target high-end visitors. To attract these visitors, opportunities to establish boutique accommodation linked to a natural setting should be explored.

4.6. Affordable housing

Provision of affordable housing to attract/retain key workers was strongly supported as a key initiative to supporting a diverse and sustainable local economy.

4.7. Innovation/technology

Promoting and extending projects, such as Smart Beaches, would help gain a reputation as a technology region. We could look at ways to enable investment in start-ups through local residents, such as a raising venture capital (i.e. a Northern Beaches Investment Club).

4.8. Events

As COVID-19 restrictions ease, we can plan for and promote key events and bring back local markets and art exhibitions to encourage visitation. Hosting large scale sporting events (such as cycle rides) could encourage visitors to stay longer and showcase natural assets.

4.9. Transport

Alongside affordable housing, investment in infrastructure was identified as key step to growing the local economy. We can investigate the potential to leverage the new Chatswood bus link to improve staff access to Northern Beaches businesses and also promote midweek visits from local tourists. In the longer-term, we could explore opportunities for the Northern Beaches Tunnel to stimulate economic activity.

4.10. Planning

We need to protect existing employment spaces and modernise to fit the needs of emerging businesses. We will continue to undertake strategic planning of Brookvale and Frenchs Forest industrial lands. Council should also consider what the post COVID-19 demand may be for new commercial development in precincts such as Brookvale and Frenchs Forest.

4.11. Remote working/start-up

To continue to support businesses which have pivoted to online servicing or remote working overnight, Council should facilitate more professional co-working centres across the Northern Beaches. This includes initiatives such as networks of co-worker spaces and Business Hubs where local businesses can meet, understand each other's services and work together enable this. These could be specific Hubs e.g. Tech, Industry specific, Innovation, etc.

Council could explore a range of approaches to create spaces for businesses to collaborate such as Business Hubs. These could be established through partnerships where potentially Government/ Council provides the venue (funds), Chamber facilitates, and local businesses are given the opportunity to deliver.

4.12. Disseminate information about the local economy

The primary role for Council in supporting local economic development was identified as being the central point for the provision of information on the local economy to help guide investment. This involves collating and sharing the best available information on the local economy and to paint a clear picture of where it is going.

It will be important to have a high-level strategic plan for businesses on the Northern Beaches that is well documented and marketed so everyone can get behind it. To be implementable, it needs to be supported with staffing, funds and focus.

Data Appendix

.ID Economic Performance and Outlook data

Northern Beaches Council annually subscribes to .ID The Population Experts to provide a range of socio-economic data that is publicly available on our [website](#). This includes a wealth of statistics on current [business profile](#) from the Australian Business Register for the Northern Beaches including: industry split, location of registered businesses, entries and exists, and number of employees.

In addition, .ID was commissioned to provide some additional economic insights in relation to the impact and recovery from the economic shock associated with the global pandemic. This is a tailored [Economic Output](#), including benchmarking impact on local jobs, resident workforce and GRP over the last six months (March to September 2020), as well as providing an outlook (forecasts) on ongoing impact and recovery over the next 2 years to June 2022.

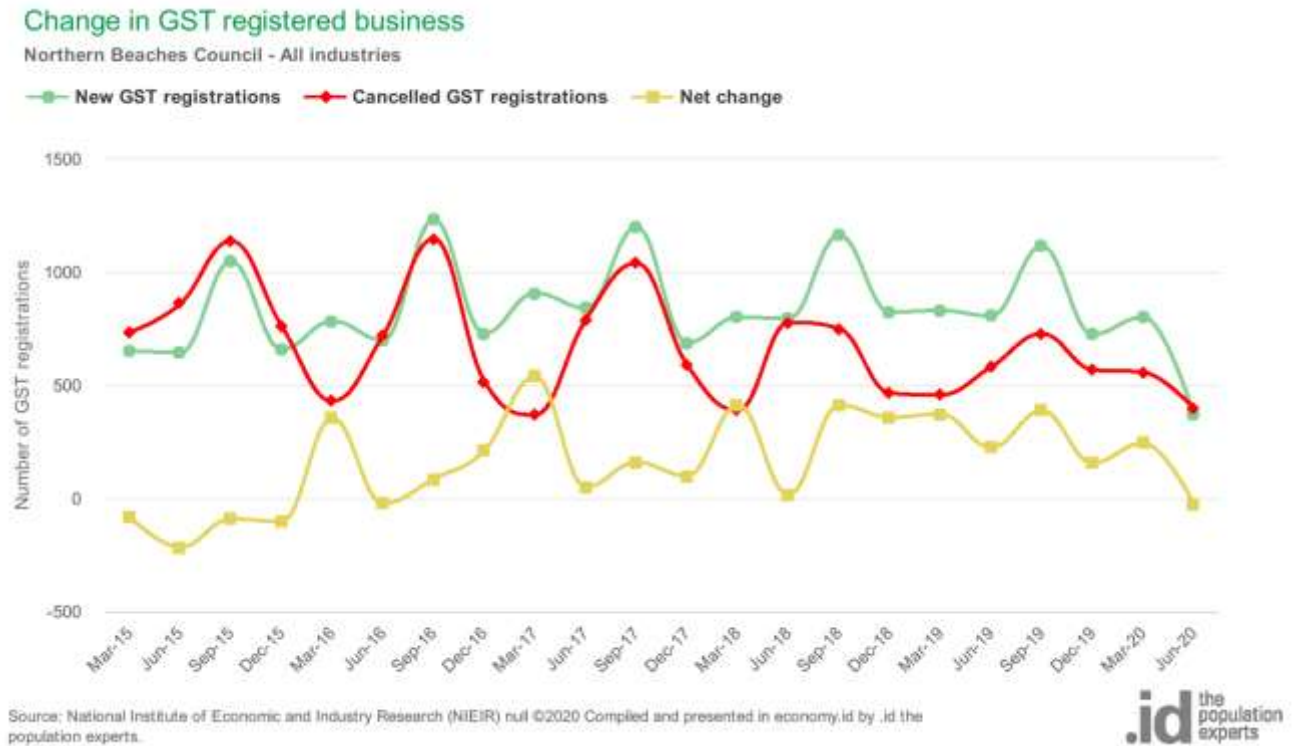
Below is a snapshot of the some of the local job data publicly available from .ID to inform further discussion on the impact of COVID-19 on local businesses to date and which sectors are most impacted. Some of this referred to in the discussion section above.

Fig. 1: Impact to date (local jobs)



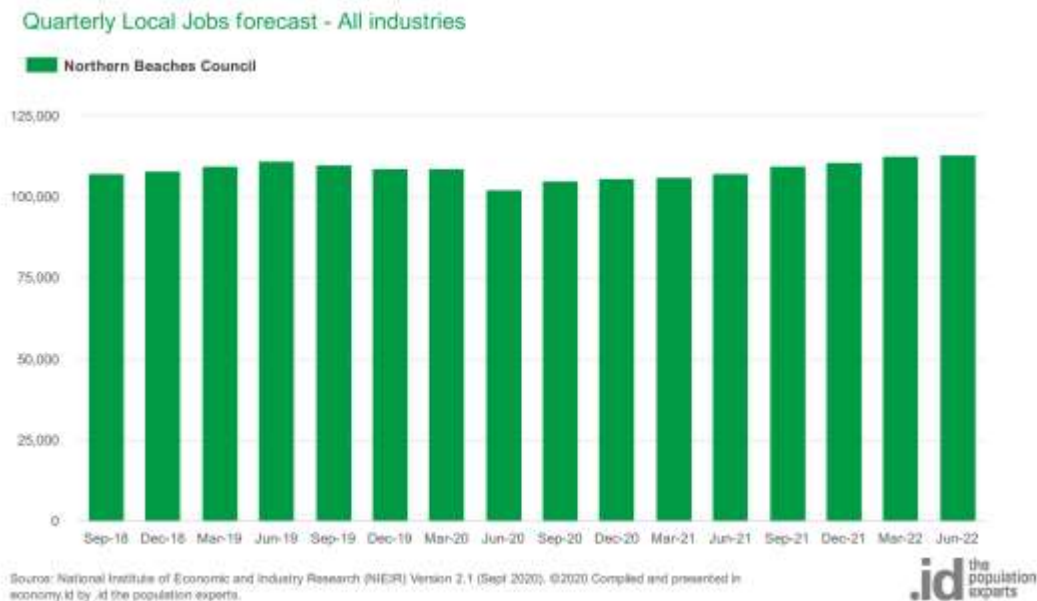
To date the 'Accommodation and Food' sector, which largely reflects tourism and hospitality, has been the most impacted in terms of job losses (-3,000 jobs). This is followed by Arts and Recreation (entertainment) and Other Services (hairdressers and range of personal services). These sectors have been most significantly affected by social distancing measures and travel bans to date.

Fig. 2: Change in Business GST registrations (entries and exists) to June 2020



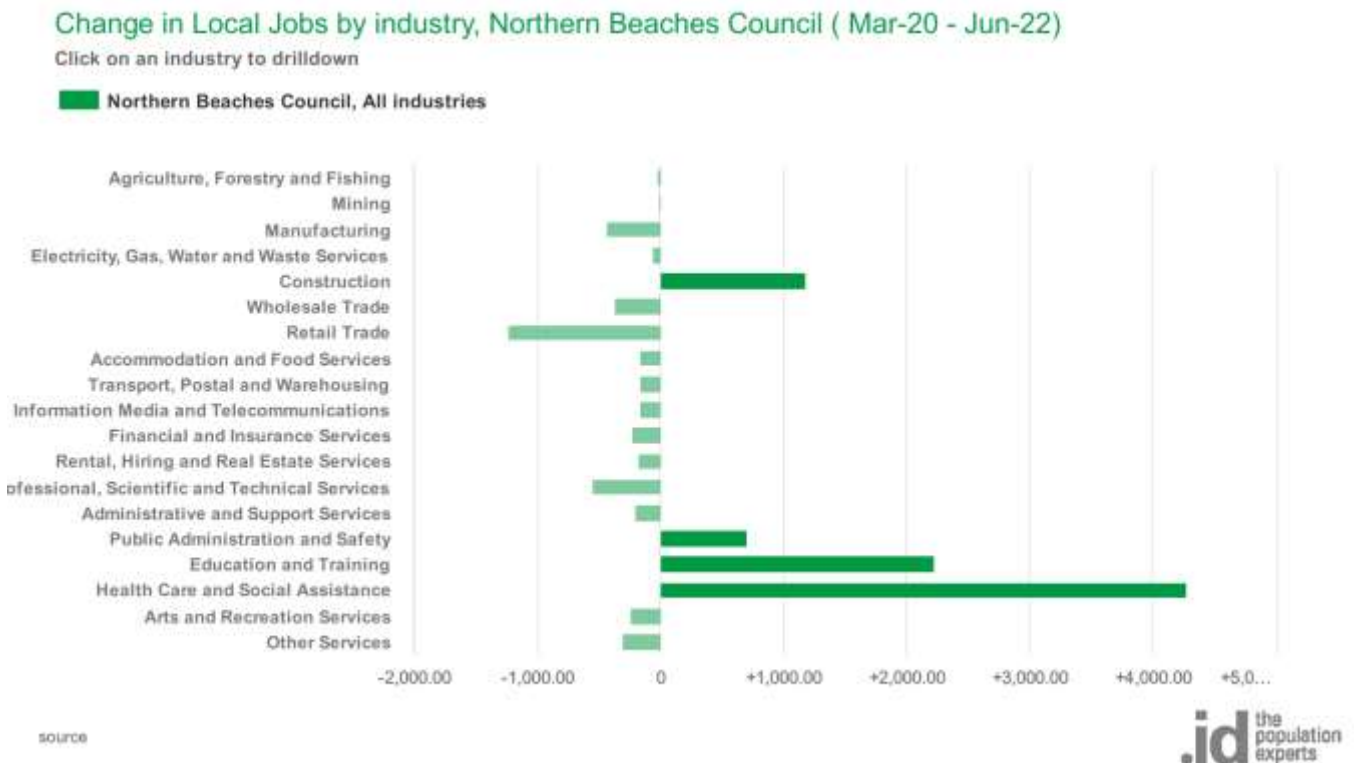
While there has always been high volatility in business registrations (new entries and exists/closures), the 2020 June quarter saw the first negative net change in business registrations on the Northern Beaches since June 2016. The largest number of exists (closures) was in the Professional, Scientific and Technical sector.

Fig. 3: Historic and forecast total local jobs September 2018-June 2020



In total, the Northern Beaches was estimated to have lost 6,380 jobs in the June 2020 quarter. However, the September 2020 quarter saw some recovery in total jobs numbers, although still below pre-COVID-19 levels from March 2020 of 108,844. Based on economic forecasts, total local jobs are not expected to recover to pre-COVID-19 levels until September 2021 where they will reach 109,762 local jobs.

Fig. 4: Forecast outlook for local jobs March 2020- June 2022 (local jobs)



However, the forecast recovery rate is expected to be very different for specific industries. Over the longer-term to June 2022, there is forecast to be lower jobs losses in 'Accommodation and Food' and 'Arts and Recreation', as these sectors recover over the period with the easing of restrictions. On the other hand, sectors such as 'Retail Trade' and 'Professional, Scientific and Technical' services, are forecast to continue to experience sizeable job losses out to June 2022.

The strong job growth in 'Healthcare and Social Assistance' that occurred during the economic crisis is forecast to continue (+4,200 jobs), and along with Education and Training (+2,200), will offset overall jobs losses from other sectors.

Below are a series of figures which show the different forecast rates of job change for select industries to June 2022, to highlight the uneven rate of economic recovery that is expected. This may inform actions on which industries to provide targeted support through the Economic Development Plan (EDP).

Fig. 5: Local job impact/recovery to June 2020 all industries

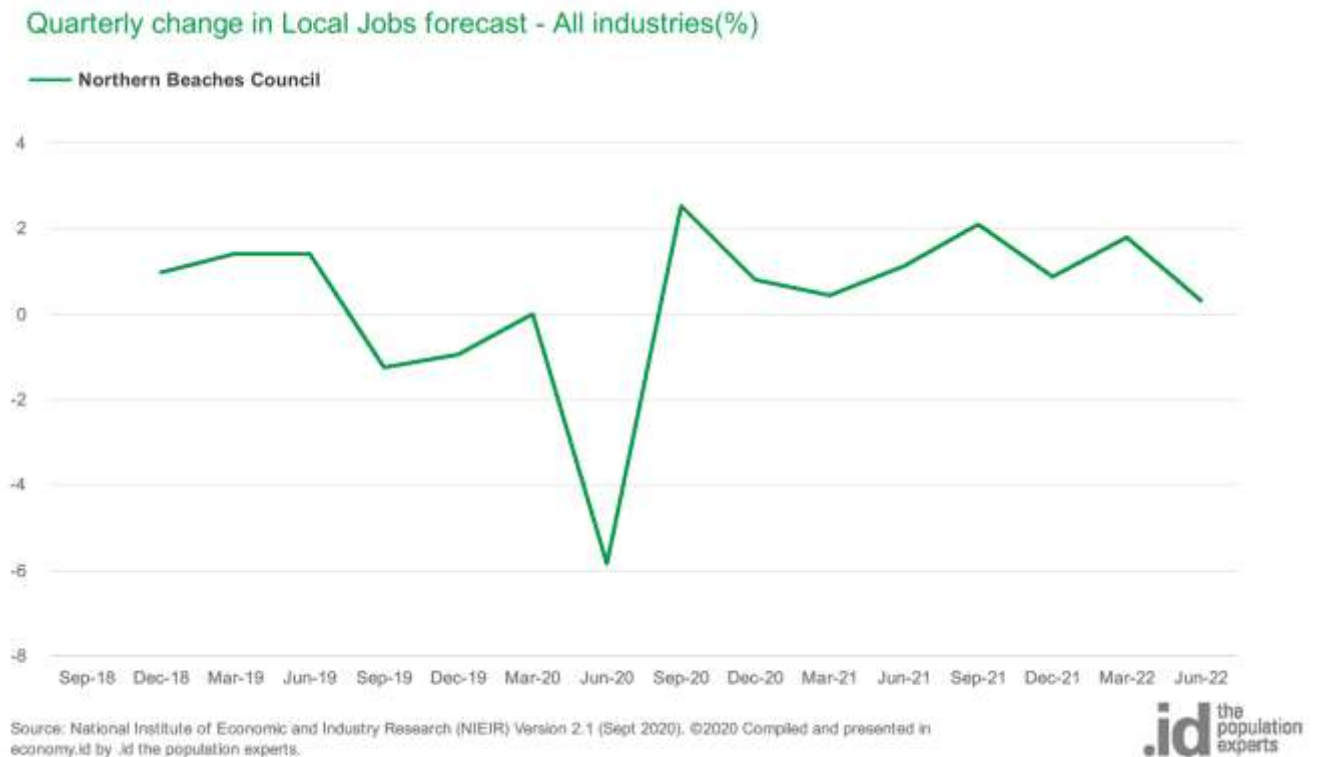


Fig. 6: Local job impact/recovery – food and beverage

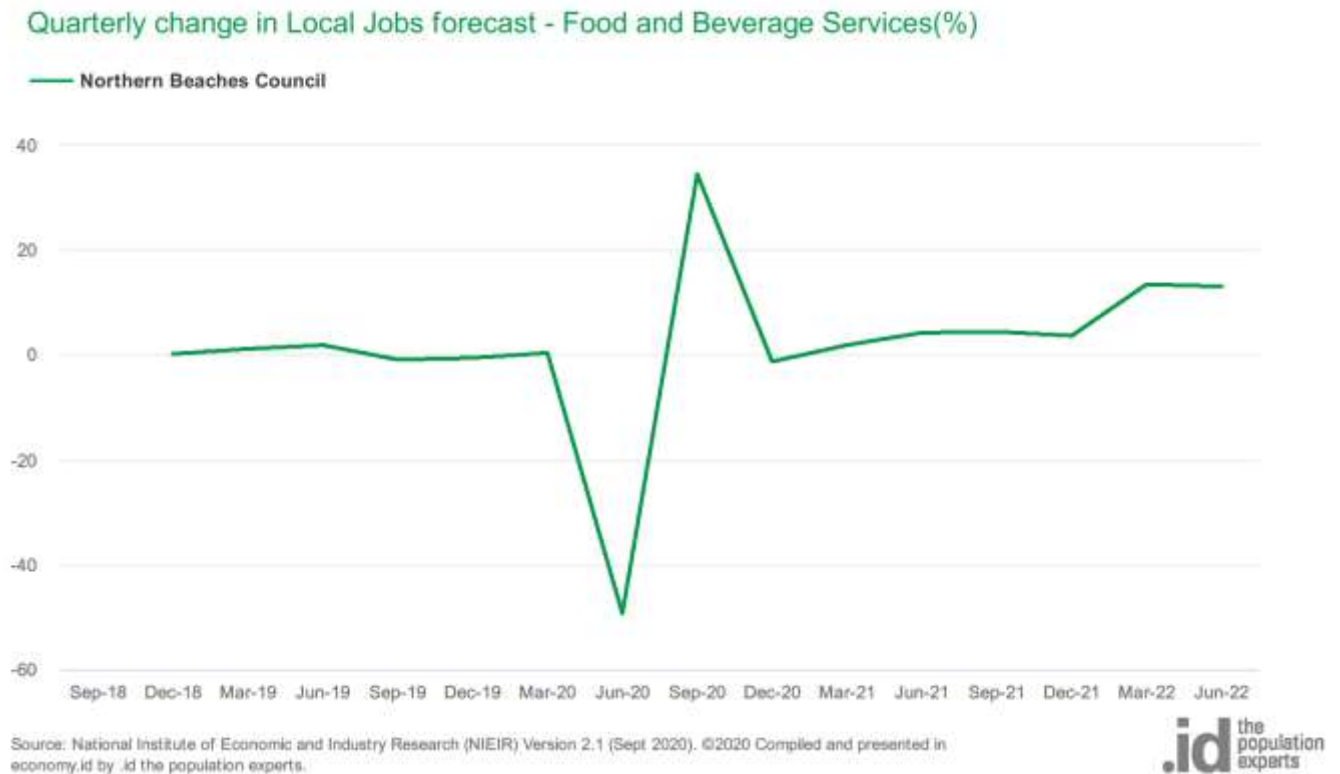


Fig. 7: Local jobs impact/recovery – accommodation

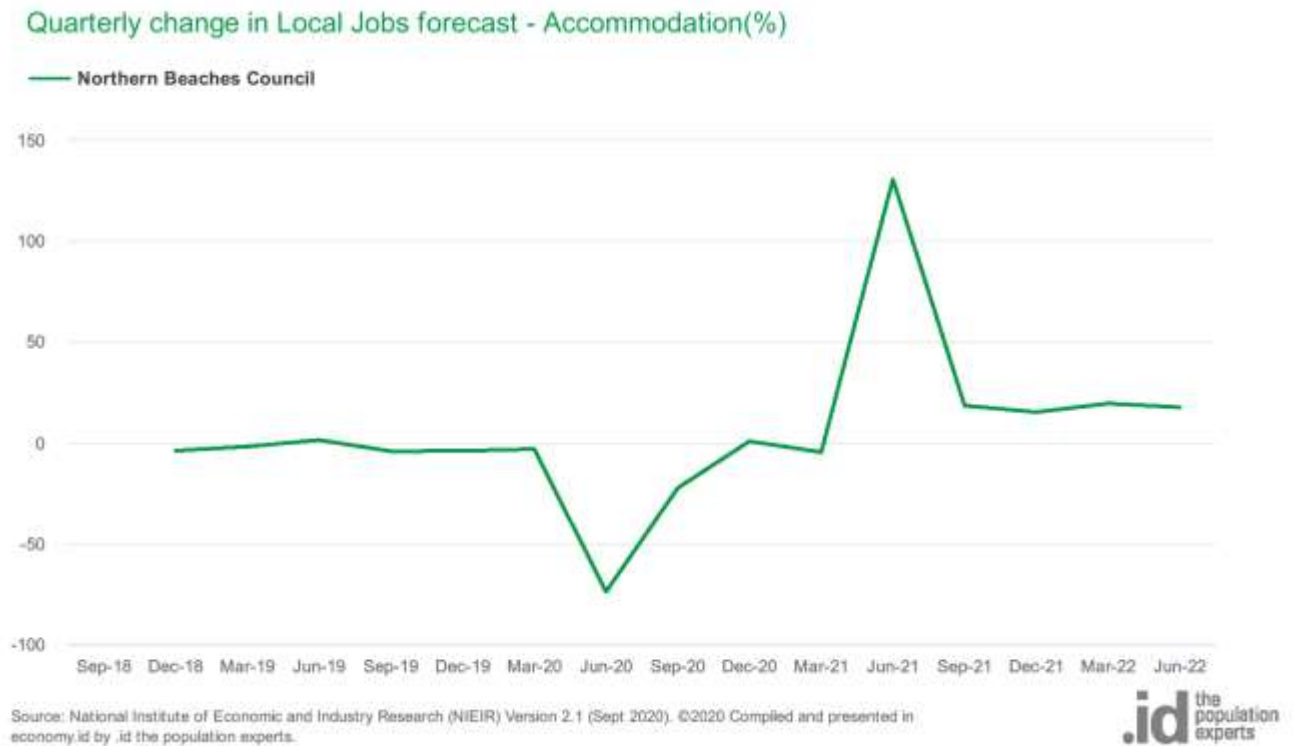


Fig 8: Local jobs impact/recovery – store based retail



Fig. 9: Local jobs impact/recovery – professional, scientific and technical

Quarterly change in Local Jobs forecast - Professional, Scientific and Technical Services(%)



Source: National Institute of Economic and Industry Research (NIEIR) Version 2.1 (Sept 2020). ©2020 Compiled and presented in economy.id by .id the population experts.

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Fig. 10: Local jobs impact/recovery – arts and recreation

Quarterly change in Local Jobs forecast - Arts and Recreation Services(%)



Source: National Institute of Economic and Industry Research (NIEIR) Version 2.1 (Sept 2020). ©2020 Compiled and presented in economy.id by .id the population experts.

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experts

ITEM 6.3	UPDATE DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN - DEB KEMPE - 30 MINS
REPORTING OFFICER	TEAM LEADER, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM
TRIM FILE REF	2020/690655
ATTACHMENTS	NIL

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to update the Economic and Smart Communities SRG on the draft Destination Management Plan, including proposed Two Year Visitor Economy Recovery Plan.

REPORT

Over the last 18 months, Council has developed a draft Destination Management Plan (*Destination Northern Beaches: Creating a Sustainable Visitor Economy*) that sets the strategic directions to guide the sustainability and vibrancy of the visitor economy over the next five plus years. The draft DMP addresses high-level objectives to attract higher yield visitors, increase their length of stay and encourage visitation to spread across the seasons and throughout the region. The Economic and Smart Communities SRG has workshopped and been briefed on the progress of this strategy over the last 18 months.

In light of the devastating impact of the global pandemic on the tourism sector, the draft DMP has been updated and a two year recovery plan has been prepared (*A Plan for the Recovery of Destination Northern Beaches Visitor Economy 2020-2022*). Both these documents are proposed to go to the Council Meeting on 24 November 2020 for endorsement for public exhibition.

Since March 2020, the Northern Beaches has seen substantial job losses, especially in the tourism and hospitality sectors, as a result of travel restrictions and social distancing measures. Today there are 5,000 fewer jobs on the Northern Beaches than this time last year (-4.5%), the majority lost from the 'Accommodation and Food' sector (-3,000 jobs).

This data is reflected in the findings of a local tourism operator survey conducted in September 2020. This found COVID-19 was having a significant impact on their business viability. Of those operators surveyed, 84% stated that their businesses overall were 'majorly' or 'severely' impacted by COVID-19, and 33% noted sales revenue was down 50-75%, with a further 31% citing sales revenue down 25-50%.

Identification of new source markets and marketing and promotional assistance to tap into the increasingly important 'local' market, were identified as the key areas of support needed. This is informed the priorities in the Two Year Recovery Plan.

Based on four yearly average 2016-2019, international visitors were the driver of our local visitor economy, accounting for 64% of all visitor nights. Loss of this visitor market, which traditionally made up the majority of overnight stays and contributed most visitor dollars, has taken a hit to the tourism industry and required their quick reorientation to the domestic market and to meet COVID-19 safety requirements.

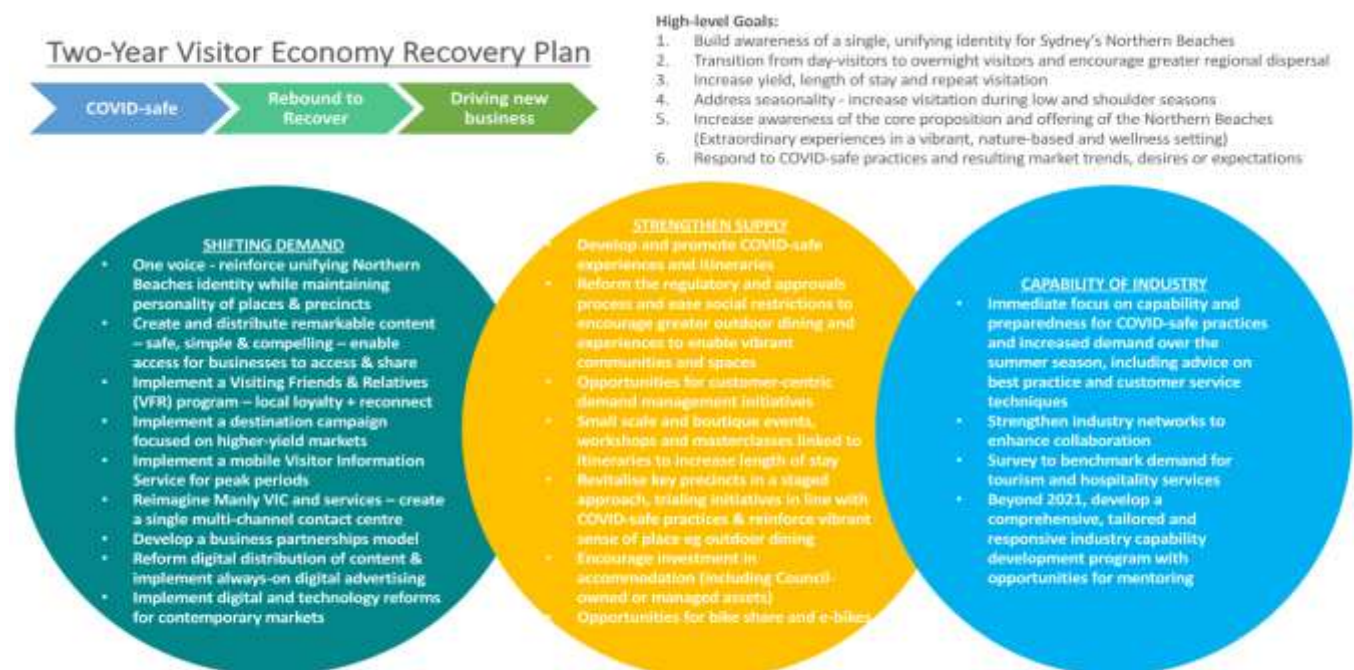
A Plan for the Recovery of Destination Northern Beaches' Visitor Economy 2020-2022

In response to the devastating impact of COVID-19 on the tourism industry, a separate two year visitor economy recovery plan has been developed to identify priority actions to support the local tourism industry.

This recovery plan has three pillars:

1. **Shifting demand** – recognising the increasing importance of digital visitor servicing with more people at home and online planning travel, there is an urgent need to enhance Council's online visitor platforms. Targeted campaigns to encourage a shift in demand from day trippers to overnight visitors, including visitors within two to three hour's drive of the Northern Beaches and attract high-yield markets.
2. **Strengthening supply** – focus on creating COVID-19 safe itineraries and visitor experiences, in line with Council's COVID-19 Summer Action Plan for Outdoor Public Places. Pilot pop-up initiatives, such as glamping, park and ride and mobile visitor information servicing, to encourage visitors to stay longer and disperse across the region.
3. **Industry capacity building** – COVID-19 highlighted the need for resilience and capacity building within the tourism industry to adapt to COVID-19 safe requirements and tap into new markets. Empower tourism operators with information and support to enhance customer services, adopt COVID-19 safe measures, improve digital presences and identify new markets.

At the Economic and Smart Community SRG on 18 November, Council staff will outline further the recovery plan and draft DMP and seek member feedback.



RECOMMENDATION OF TEAM LEADER, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM

The members of Economic and Smart Communities Strategic Reference Group note the update on the status of the draft Destination Management Plan, including the proposed Two Year Visitor Economy Recovery Plan.