

Community Safety

Strategic Reference Group Directions Paper

version 2.0
Draft 29 June 2017

Executive Summary

Purpose of this paper

Northern Beaches Council is a new entity created by the merging of three former local government areas; Manly, Warringah and Pittwater.

The former councils each had relevant strategies and policies relating to the crime prevention and community safety. Under the Northern Beaches Council, the emerging Community Strategic Plan also sets out strategic directions to ensure streets and neighbourhoods are safe.

This paper identifies key issues and goals outlined in these documents that will help inform directions for new ideas and outcomes relating to community safety across the Northern Beaches.

Background

1. Importance of Council role in community safety

It is widely accepted that local government plays a significant role in community safety and crime prevention. Research into the most effective forms of local community partnerships suggests that groups such as local authorities are generally best placed to coordinate and facilitate by helping to mobilise local resources; facilitating participation and access to informal networks; helping to establish flexible structures and procedures; providing a closer understanding and emotional commitment to community issues and concerns; and promoting a community-based self-help attitude (Edgar et al. 2006).

Crime prevention is essentially about being able to anticipate emerging problems and being prepared to take action to prevent those problems developing and becoming entrenched. Too often, considering the need for developing and implementing a crime prevention strategy is the result of community concern about existing crime problems. If appropriate preventive action had been taken beforehand, these problems may have been prevented from emerging. This is another argument for local government authorities taking the lead in developing a comprehensive crime prevention strategic plan for their communities as a part of their normal social planning processes. These plans should be regularly updated to reflect changes in the social, demographic, economic and crime characteristics of their communities as well as to accommodate developments in state and national crime prevention priorities.

This is consistent with the finding that the most common and probably the most significant function that local government areas fulfil in their crime prevention and community safety role is to coordinate and facilitate, although it is clear that many also have a significant role in direct service delivery. The coordination and facilitation role is critically important as it provides a focus for local leadership on issues concerning the community, something that has been identified internationally as a vital function for effective and sustainable crime prevention action.

2. Former Council Community Safety Committees and Plans

The former Manly Council Community Safety and Place Management Committee underpins much of the work done in relation to community safety/crime prevention in Manly since it was established in 1993. It has always been chaired by the Mayor of the day. It was originally formed to help tackle late night alcohol related problems in the area. This remained the primary focus but extended to other community safety related issues such as drugs, graffiti, homelessness, public space conflicts, backpackers, cycling safety, suicide etc. The development and implementation of two (3 year) Crime Prevention Plans attracted full project funding from State Government.

Broad and high level Representation was key to this committee's successful operation. It included the Mayor plus five other Councillors, Local Area Police Commander, Local MP, representatives from NSW Health, Corrections NSW, Sydney Buses Brookvale depot, Chamber of Commerce, NGOs including local drug and alcohol service and community centre, Liquor Accord, Late Night Food traders, three community (precinct) representatives and Youth council. Staff included the Community Safety co-ordinator and Compliance Manager.

In analysing the official crime statistics it is clear why Manly has vested, long term, active and operational interest in crime prevention and community safety with 70% of crime on the Northern Beaches occurring in Manly, with approximately 70% of that being alcohol related. The last Manly Crime Prevention Plan was adopted by Council in 2011: <http://www.manly.nsw.gov.au/community-services/community-safety/crime-prevention-plan/> It primarily addressed Alcohol Related Assaults and Anti-Social Behaviour in Manly CBD.

Both Warringah and Pittwater Council previously adopted Crime Prevention Plans which were endorsed and were successful in gaining NSW Attorney General's Grant funding for key crime prevention initiatives. Community safety initiatives were subsequently incorporated into the Community Strategic Plans for both Councils. SHOROC was previously successful in becoming accredited as a World Health Organisation (WHO) Safe Community.

Community Safety Strategic Reference Group - Northern Beaches Council

Following the formation of the new Northern Beaches Council in May 2016, eleven Strategic Reference Groups (SRGs) were formed across key areas of council's operation. The role of the SRGs is to provide a valuable contribution to the directions of the new Council, including input into the development of the Community Strategic Plan (CSP) and future plans and strategies. SRG members were recruited via EOI, represent a cross-section of the community, and bring expertise to their area of appointment. Each group also includes two-three former Councillors as Chair and Deputy Chair.

The Community Safety SRG consists of 19 members, listed in Appendix 1.

The terms of reference of the SRG are to:

- Provide input to the Vision, Priorities and Objectives for the Northern Beaches Draft Community Strategic Plan
- Work in partnership with key agencies, stakeholders and community representatives to ensure community safety representation.
- Lobby and advocate on behalf of the community to support prevention awareness.
- Advise Council on community safety awareness and education.
- Advise Council on infrastructure for safer communities eg. lighting, footpaths, CCTV and Safety by Design frameworks.
- Support night time activation of places and laneways for safer communities linked to a night time economy.

This paper has been prepared to capture the efforts and aspirations of this SRG over a 10 month period from 2016-17.

Community Strategic Plan – Northern Beaches Council

Extensive community engagement in 2016-17 has involved over one thousand community members, including the SRGs, in developing the first Community Strategic Plan (CSP) for the Northern Beaches. While the CSP is not yet finalised, key community feedback has been used to help prepare this SRG Directions Paper.

Below are some of the draft goals and underlying strategies that relate to community safety in the draft CSP which was approved for public exhibition on 27 June 2016. These have arisen from the issues and considerations raised by community members during the first stage of CSP engagement, and are a basis for second stage engagement. The Community Safety SRG meeting of 15 June were presented with the previous goals and strategies from the draft CSP as at that date. The goals and strategies below outline possible outcomes for safer communities, and those which are most relevant to the SRG Directions Paper:

CSP – draft Goals on:

Social: “Places for People”

Goal 8) Our neighbourhoods inspire social interaction, inclusion and support health and wellbeing

- a) Create welcoming villages and neighbourhood centres that are vibrant, accessible and support our quality of life
- b) Develop urban design controls that support the health and wellbeing of our community, particularly seniors and people with a disability
- c) Collaborate with the community in the design of vibrant open spaces and neighbourhoods

Goal 9) Our community is healthy, active and enjoys a broad range of creative, sporting and recreational opportunities

- a) Provide well-maintained and safe spaces that equitably support active and passive recreation

“Community and Belonging”

Goal 10) Our community is stimulated through a diverse range of cultural and creative activities and events

- b) Expand cultural events and creative opportunities, including safe nightlife opportunities
- c) Provide more events and opportunities for young people to socialise

Goal 11) Our community feels safe and supported

- a) Promote social inclusion through neighbourhood programs and quality services
- b) Build stronger communities where neighbours know and support each other
- c) Promote health and wellbeing through fair access to information, health and support services

“Vibrant Local Economy”

Goal 15) Our economy provides a range of employment and education opportunities to match the skills and needs of the population

- c) Facilitate active and safe urban environments through increased economic activity, in keeping with local character

“Transport, Infrastructure and Connectivity”

Goal 16) Our integrated transport networks meet the needs of our community

- a) Advocate for improved transport options and networks
- c) Facilitate and promote safe transport options that reduce car-based commuter travel

Goal 17) Our community can safely and efficiently travel within and beyond Northern Beaches

- a) Improve public transport options and connectivity to better meet our community's travel needs

Goal 18) Our community can easily connect and communicate through reliable communication technologies

- a) Provide public spaces that are connected through communications and technologies

“Partnerships and Participation”

Goal 21) Our community is actively engaged in decision making processes

- b) Enable community members to participate in decision-making by providing a broad range of engagement

Goal 22) Our Council builds and maintains strong partnerships and advocates effectively on behalf of the community

- a) Develop partnerships to deliver facilities and targeted services and programs to meet community needs
- b) Facilitate collaboration between community groups, businesses, government and non-government organisations on projects and programs
- c) Advocate regionally and at NSW and Federal Government levels on behalf of the community

STRUCTURE OF THE SRG Directions Paper

This Directions Paper firstly outlines a Vision that will ensure safer communities on the Northern Beaches. It then outlines a range of goals and related strategic directions to support them:

- The **Vision** is a generic one drawn from the draft CSP for the Northern Beaches Council
- The **Goals** and **issues** are drawn the key themes of community safety, from the SRG's deliberations to date, from previous community safety plans, and from consultation with key stakeholders (e.g. NSW Police) and comprise of key themes.
- The **Ideas** in this document are drawn from the Community Safety SRG to meet the goals and strategies identified from the draft CSP
- The **Priority Issues** as identified by a workshop conducted at the final Community Safety SRG meeting are presented in Appendix 2.

Vision

Northern Beaches – a safe, inclusive and connected community that values its natural and built environment
(Draft vision CSP)

Goals

The three key themes for Community Safety on the Northern Beaches provide a foundation for the goals and issues outlined in the following pages:

1. Public spaces

To create safe public spaces which contribute to social inclusion

2. Late night safety

To actively manage vibrant entertainment precincts which encourage safe, social interactions

3. Community wellbeing and safety

To support the health and wellbeing of community through collaborative partnerships

Goal 1: Public spaces

To create safe public spaces which contribute to social inclusion

Issues

- Ongoing management of late night alcohol related assaults and anti-social behaviour
- Safe youth facilities
- Rough sleepers in public places
- Aggressive begging
- Vehicle mitigation
- Identify hotspots requiring improvements following safety audits
- Clearer regulatory signage and way finding initiatives
- Managing the ever increasing use of our public space – and how to keep them safe
- Management of AFZ and APA's
- Activation of laneway spaces
- Beach safety and security

Goal 2: Late night safety

To actively manage vibrant entertainment precincts which encourage safe, social interactions

Issues

- Ongoing management of late night alcohol related assaults and anti-social behaviour
- Addressing the increase of 'party houses'
- Integrated late night transport options including adequate bus coverage and secure taxi ranks
- Problems emanating from late night drinking culture

- Activation of laneway spaces
- Active management of late night entertainment precincts
- Development of consistent policy on alcohol/ liquor licensing
- High drink driving rates
- Road safety concerns (eg. McCarrs Creek Road)
- CCTV

Goal 3: Community safety and wellbeing

To support the health and wellbeing of community through collaborative partnerships

Issues

- Ongoing management of late night alcohol related assaults and anti-social behaviour
- Underage drinking
- Homelessness
- Limited crisis and short-term housing options to accommodate people in need of housing and shelter
- Increased prevalence of mental health issues among young people
- Drug supply on commercial premises
- Prevalence and hidden nature of domestic violence
- Impacts of drug and alcohol intake on public health and wellbeing, including safety risks in public places
- Need for active collaboration with key stakeholders to address safety issues
- Community education and promotion of preventative and protective behaviours

Community Safety SRG member Ideas to meet Goals and Strategies

The table below summarises 'ideas' from the Community Safety SRG's members for implementing the strategic directions and goals in the draft CSP relating to Community Safety. They are derived from discussions held at the SRG meetings and from key stakeholders (e.g. Police).

CSP – PLACES FOR PEOPLE	CS SRG IDEAS TO SUPPORT STRATEGIES
Goal 8) Our neighbourhoods inspire social interaction, inclusion and support health and wellbeing	
a) Create welcoming villages and neighbourhood centres that are vibrant, accessible and support our quality of life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPTED (Safety by Design) reviews of major new developments and public spaces • Development of Standard Conditions for licensed premises • Clear and consistent regulatory and wayfinding signage • Consideration of vehicle mitigation strategies at identified locations
b) Develop urban design controls that support the health and wellbeing of our community, particularly seniors and people with a disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bi-annual late night community safety audits of hotspot locations • Regular update and review of AFZ and APA's across NB • Develop lighting expertise in Council •
c) Collaborate with the community in the design of vibrant open spaces and neighbourhoods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laneway revitalisation through Safer Communities Grant • Engage local artists and youth in laneway mural development
Goal 9) Our community is healthy, active and enjoys a broad range of creative, sporting and recreational opportunities	
a) Provide well-maintained and safe spaces that equitably support active and passive recreation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify crime hotspots and undertake CPTED audits to improve safety • CPTED reviews of new or renovated public space developments • Syringe disposal protocols and support for community drug education programs • Continuous monitoring and improvement of lighting, signage, public toilets etc. • Maintain public space management tools eg. Alcohol Free Zones • Develop programs to address drug and alcohol, homelessness and other issues as needed and identified through local partnerships eg. CDAT/LDAT • Address alcohol related crime and anti-social behaviour

CSP – COMMUNITY & BELONGING	CS SRG IDEAS TO SUPPORT STRATEGIES
Goal 10) Our community is stimulated through a diverse range of cultural and creative activities and events	
a) Expand cultural events and creative opportunities, including safe nightlife opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laneway revitalisation through Safer Communities Grant • Engage local artists in mural development • Support graffiti management policy • Active management of safety initiatives in late night entertainment precincts eg. late night radio network, CCTV, secure taxi ranks, liquor accord, late night food traders, night rangers, public toilets, carparking, community education etc. • Investigate party house issues • Diversifying the demographics of the night time economy
c) Provide more events and opportunities for young people to socialise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop community education programs to educate young people on late night safety • Shifting the drinking culture by supporting socialising opportunities that do not focus on alcohol
Goal 11) Our community feels safe and supported	
a) Promote social inclusion through neighbourhood programs and quality services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider beach lockers • Investigate car hoon behaviour/remediation at McCarrs Creek Road • Efficient response to direct community complaints or concerns • Support for Council Homelessness Protocol • Development of a 'Party House' Action Plan
b) Build stronger communities where neighbours know and support each other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respond to community concerns as they occur • Ongoing liaison with MCC Homeless Outreach Worker • Attend Homeless interagency meetings to assist with case management of rough sleepers • Encourage 'Meet your Street' programme
c) Promote health and wellbeing through fair access to information, health and support services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community education to reduce break and enters and Other theft • Advocate for crisis and transition accommodation for males at Manly Hospital site • Provision of safety awareness programs for English Language Students • Support for local initiatives to support Domestic Violence prevention and awareness • Support for mental health initiatives

CSP – VIBRANT LOCAL ECONOMY	CS SRG IDEAS TO SUPPORT STRATEGIES
Goal 15) Our economy provides a range of employment and education opportunities to match the skills and needs of the population	
c) Facilitate active and safe urban environments through increased economic activity, in keeping with local character	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish Liquor Licensing Review group • Develop a Northern Beaches liquor licensing/alcohol policy • Mapping of the existing night economy • Review of night time planning controls

CSP – TRANSPORT, INFRASTRUCTURE AND CONNECTIVITY	CS SRG IDEAS TO SUPPORT STRATEGIES
Goal 16) Our integrated transport networks meet the needs of our community	
a) Advocate for improved transport options and networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote integrated late night transport initiatives including safe taxi ranks and late night bus routes
c) Facilitate and promote safe transport options that reduce car-based commuter travel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate on initiatives to reduce drink driving rates • Continue to maintain safe late night taxi ranks
Goal 17) Our community can safely and efficiently travel within and beyond Northern Beaches	
a) Improve public transport options and connectivity to better meet our community’s travel needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate for improved after hours bus service throughout the area
Goal 18) Our community can easily connect and communicate through reliable communication technologies	
a) Provide public spaces that are connected through communications and technologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage appropriate placement and operations of CCTV system • Active management of safety initiatives in late night entertainment precincts eg. late night radio network, CCTV, secure taxi ranks, liquor accord, late night food traders, night rangers, public toilets, carparking, community education etc.

CSP – PARTNERSHIPS AND PARTICIPATION	CS SRG IDEAS TO SUPPORT STRATEGIES
Goal 21) Our community is actively engaged in decision making processes	
b) Enable community members to participate in decision-making by providing a broad range of engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to engage the community and key stakeholders through Community Safety Committee, relevant working groups and NB CDAT
Goal 22) Our Council builds and maintains strong partnerships and advocates effectively on behalf of the community	
a) Develop partnerships to deliver facilities and targeted services and programs to meet community needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of a Northern Beaches Community Safety Plan • Representation on Liquor Accord, Homelessness interagencies, Community Drug Action Team, Manly Needle and Syringe Program and NB Domestic Violence Committee
b) Facilitate collaboration between community groups, businesses, government and non-government organisations on projects and programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly police/council staff meeting to discuss operational issues
c) Advocate regionally and at NSW and Federal Government levels on behalf of the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate regarding liquor licensing applications/ procedure • Advocate to increase crisis accommodation • Advocate to raise awareness of the prevalence and hidden nature of domestic violence

Appendix 1 - Community Safety SRG members

Jean Hay (Chair)	Implementation Advisory Group
Steve Pickering	Local Representative Committee - Social
Sharon Austin	Resident – Narrabeen Ward
Lance Burrow	NSW Liquor Accord
David Darcy	NSW Police - NB LAC
Sidar Demirbag	Late Night Food Traders
Shannon Job	Surf Life Saving Sydney Northern Beaches
Thomas Loomes	The Office of The Hon Mike Baird MP
Raymond Mathieson	Manly Community Forum
Simon Moriarty	Resident – Curl Curl Ward
Michael Olofinsky	Resident – Frenchs Forest Ward
Melissa Palermo	Health Promotion, Northern Sydney Local Health District (Northern Beaches)
Malcolm Pearce	Community Corrections
Jacquilen Smith	Manly community Centre & Services
Robert Tarabay	State Transit Authority
Sarah Turner	Manly Chamber of Commerce
Susan Watson	Sydney Drug Education & Counselling Centre
Margaret White	Zonta Club of Northern Beaches Inc

Appendix 2 - Priority Issues: Workshop outcomes from Community Safety SRG held on 15 June 2017

Goal 1: Public spaces: To create safe public spaces which contribute to social inclusion		Low priority	Medium priority	High priority
Issues	Ongoing management of late night alcohol related assaults and anti-social behaviour		2	6
	Safe youth facilities		7	1
	Rough sleepers in public places	6	1	1
	Aggressive begging	6	1	1
	Vehicle mitigation	3	3	4
	Identify hotspots requiring improvements following safety audits		5	5
	Clearer regulatory signage and way finding initiatives	4	5	
	Managing the ever increasing use of our public space – and how to keep them safe	4	3	2
	Management of AFZ and APA's	5	3	1
	Activation of laneway spaces		4	5
	Beach safety & security		8	1
Goal 2: Late night safety: To actively manage vibrant entertainment precincts which encourage safe, social interactions		Low priority	Medium priority	High priority
Issues	Ongoing management of late night alcohol related assaults and anti-social behaviour		1	8
	Addressing the increase of 'party houses'	3	6	
	Integrated late night transport options including adequate bus coverage & secure taxi ranks		3	6
	Problems emanating from late night drinking culture	2	5	2
	Activation of laneway spaces	1	3	5
	Active management of late night entertainment precincts		4	4
	Development of consistent policy on alcohol/ liquor licensing	2	3	3
	High drink driving rates		2	7
	Road safety concerns (e.g. McCarrs Creek Road)	2	7	
	CCTV		6	1
Goal 3: Community safety & wellbeing: To support the health & wellbeing of community through collaborative partnerships		Low priority	Medium priority	High priority
Issues	Ongoing management of late night alcohol related assaults and anti-social behaviour		1	8
	Underage drinking	1	5	3
	Homelessness	2	3	5
	Limited crisis and short-term housing options to accommodate people in need of housing and shelter	3	3	3
	Increased prevalence of mental health issues among young people	1	3	5
	Drug supply on commercial premises		5	4
	Prevalence and hidden nature of domestic violence		4	5
	Impacts of drug and alcohol intake on public health and wellbeing, including safety risks in public places		8	1
	Need for active collaboration and key stakeholders to address safety issues		3	6
	Community education and promotion of preventative and protective behaviours	2	5	2