

## Community and Stakeholder Engagement Report

### Better Together: Social Sustainability Strategy 2040 and Draft Social Sustainability Policy

Impact level: One

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# 1. Summary<sup>1</sup>

This report outlines the approach and findings for the community and stakeholder engagement conducted as part of the development and public exhibition of the Better Together: Social Sustainability Strategy 2040 and the Draft Social Sustainability Policy.

1000 people contributed to first 3 stages of engagement as part of the development of the draft strategy and policy.

During these stages, we found that the community recognised the importance and role of social sustainability and confirmed that safety, inclusion and connection are intrinsically linked and equally critical to building social sustainability on the Northern Beaches.

Feedback from stage 4 of the engagement was collected as part of a public exhibition process.

27 submissions were received in total across both the policy and strategy consultation which largely indicated that there was majority support for both the draft strategy and policy.

Those who were less supportive, raised questions or concerns about whether social sustainability is a core business function of Council.

There was a high level of interaction on the Have Your Say project webpages during the exhibition as evidenced by the number of visitations to the site and the number of page views. There were approximately 2,500 visits and page views across the two pages.

These figures suggest that the majority of the interested community were likely satisfied with the outcome of the previous three stages of engagement and the draft was a good reflection of the community's aspirations for social sustainability.

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<sup>1</sup> Community and stakeholder views contained in this report do not necessarily reflect the views of the Northern Beaches Council or indicate a commitment to a particular course of action.

## 1.1. Key outcomes from stage 4 engagement



Total submissions received<sup>2</sup>

27\*



Better Together: Social Sustainability Strategy 2040

Contributions: 13

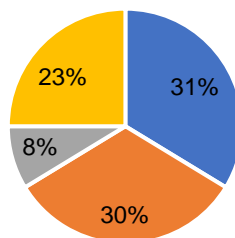
Submission forms

Draft Social Sustainability Policy

Contributions: 14



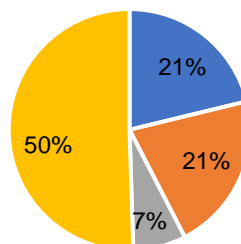
Overall, do you support the draft Better Together Social Sustainability Strategy 2040?



- Yes
- Yes, with changes
- Neutral
- No



Do you support the Draft Social Sustainability Policy?



- Yes
- Yes, with changes
- Neutral
- No
- Prefer not to say



Combined feedback themes

Transport improvements.  
Importance of inclusion.

Support for implementation of policy and strategy.

Youth education for social change.

Balance between feeling safe and being resilient.

Strengthen commitment to First Nations People.







Social Sustainability is not Council core business.

Co-housing and Social Sustainability.

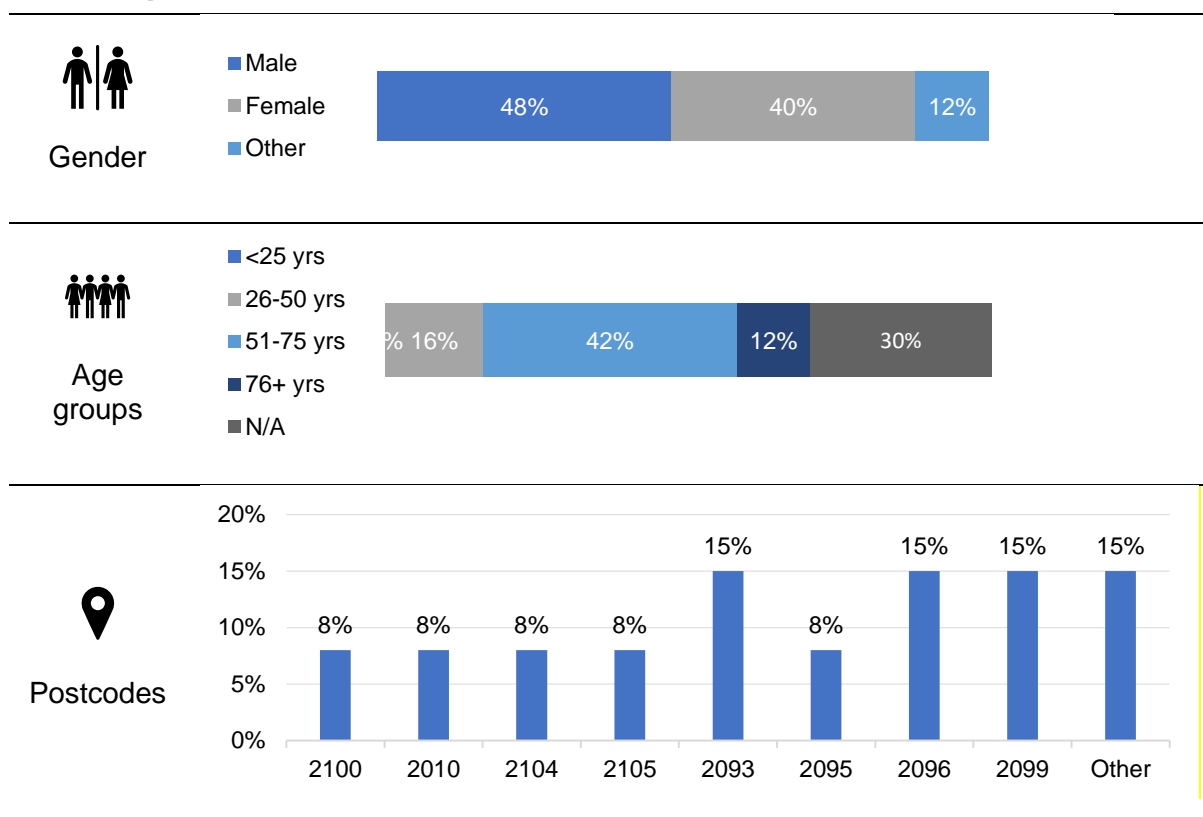
<sup>2</sup> Across both strategy and policy documents

\* Out of the 27 respondents 21 provided comments in addition to responding to the sentiment question

## 1.2. How we engaged in stage 4

 Have Your Say	Visitors: 2,057      Visits: 2,448	Av. time onsite: 1m
 Social media	Post: 9 (7 Facebook and 2 LinkedIn)  Northern Beaches Mums' Facebook posts	Reach: 85,187 Clicks: 4,168 Following: 26,471
 Videos	Better Together video (Facebook, LinkedIn, YouTube)	Views: 16,892
 Print media and collateral	Northern Beaches Review: 1	Readership: 65,000
 Electronic direct mail (EDM)	Community Engagement (fortnightly) newsletter: 8  Council (weekly) e-News: 3  Community services sector stakeholder email: 1	Distribution: 20,000 subscribers  Distribution: 150,000 subscribers  Distribution: 77
 Face-to-face sessions	Online Workshop: 1	Attendance: 1

### 1.3. Who responded<sup>3</sup>



## 2. Background

Better Together is Northern Beaches Council's inaugural Social Sustainability Strategy.

It outlines the roadmap to nurture an inclusive, safer and better-connected community. It represents Council's commitment to working with the community in setting the core principles and strategic direction needed for the next 20 years to achieve "a socially sustainable and inclusive community for all".

The objectives of Better Together are to:

- provide a long-term social direction that builds upon existing services, social resources and skills in the community
- provide 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 to recover from unexpected social, political, environmental and financial impacts.

The strategy identifies five principles of socially sustainable communities for the Northern Beaches community to aspire to and outlines the three strategic directions to guide the way forward.

<sup>3</sup> Demographic data was gathered by request only. The data represented only includes those respondents who provided this detail.

The Draft Social Sustainability Policy provides guidelines for the implementation of the Social Sustainability Strategy and replaces the current Northern Beaches Community Development and Services Policy.

An independent consultancy, RPS Group was engaged to support Northern Beaches Council in the design, implementation and reporting of community and stakeholder engagement as we prepared the draft strategy (engagement stages 1 – 3). Stage 4 engagement was conducted by Council and designed to provide the community with an opportunity to provide feedback during the public exhibition of the draft strategy and policy.

This report outlines the key findings from the community and stakeholder engagement conducted as part of the entire consultation and highlights the outcomes of stage 4.

### **3. Engagement Objectives**

The engagement objectives for the project were to:

- create awareness and investment in the strategy from the community
- engage broadly to maximise reach, so that community awareness of, and interest in, the strategy is achieved, by capturing the lived experience of a wide range of people living, working, and visiting the Northern Beaches to challenge and highlight the need to focus on safety, inclusion, and connectivity
- strengthen opportunities for partnerships and collaboration with key Council, external stakeholders, and service providers to guide effective implementation of the strategy and first five-year Implementation Plan
- intentionally seek out and celebrate the participation of voices of priority groups, those traditionally less able to participate, are both active and heard in the engagement and help shape the strategy and its Action Plans.

### **4. Engagement Approach**

Community and stakeholder engagement for the Better Together Social Sustainability Strategy 2040 and Policy was conducted over a 12-month period from July 2020 to July 2021 and consisted of a series of activities that provided opportunities for community and stakeholders to contribute.

The engagement was planned, implemented and reported in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Matrix (2017).

A four-stage approach was taken to ensure we heard from community and stakeholders prior, during and following the development of the draft strategy and policy.

- Stage 1: Use the existing evidence base to create a foundation for the Discussion Paper and Strategic Framework that would inform the consultation in Stage 2
- Stage 2: Test assumptions with broad and targeted engagement, test the foundation and flesh out the key areas of priorities
- Stage 3: Test findings and capture the lived experience to create a Strategic Framework with strategic intent and human-centred focus. Then come together with

key partners and those with lived experience in a 'Co-Design day' to review and confirm the Strategic Framework and strengthen partnering for implementation.

- Stage 4: Exhibit draft strategy and policy.

A project page was established and regularly updated on our Have Your Say platform with an informative video and dynamic visuals as new content was progressively added. The page was designed to be active and engaging using colourful, creative motifs and the information presented in an accessible and easy to read format.

The project was promoted extensively during the engagement period through:

- electronic direct mail (EDM) newsletters
- social media channels
- media releases
- local magazine articles.

#### **4.1 Engaging with easy to overlook communities**

The engagement included a wide breadth of activities to enable identified priority populations to participate. Youth, multicultural and linguistically diverse people and people living with disability were identified as the most at risk of being overlooked. This was further exacerbated by the constraints of COVID-19 restrictions on face-to-face gatherings in place at the time when some of the engagement took place. During stages 1-3 we undertook the following in order to ensure those in our community that are easy to overlook were able to have their voice included:

- Internal and external briefings
- Workshop in a box
- Online survey
- Community forums
- Strategic Reference Group (SRG) workshops
- Partner and stakeholder workshops
- Co-design workshop.

#### **4.2 Engagement activities (stage 4)**

The following activities were undertaken in stage 4:

- Have Your Say (online)
- Form(s)
- Social Media
- Print media
- Electronic direct mail
- Workshop (online)

During the public exhibition (stage 4), a separate project page was created for the draft policy. Submission forms were embedded into both pages.

The submission forms included a question that directly asked respondents for their level of support for the draft documents and an open-field comments box to provide a space to explain or elaborate on their support, not support or neutral sentiment as well as any other feedback they wished to contribute.

Email and written submissions were also invited.

## 5. Findings<sup>4</sup>

Key themes emerging across all stages of engagement included the following:

- Inclusion and equity - all people want to feel welcome, included and valued within the community, including vulnerable groups such as people who are experiencing mental health or social isolation.
- Safety and wellbeing - these are aspirations for all residents, including priority populations in high risk and vulnerable circumstances.
- Connection - events, programs activities and facilities are essential for connection between priority populations, cultures and generations.
- Diversity - the community is proud of the diversity that exists on the Northern Beaches and wants this to be celebrated more openly.
- Commitment to First Nations people - important to support and celebrate First Nations culture and ensure First Nations people and Indigenous heritage is included in decision making.
- Capacity building - empowering the community through capacity building and strengthening neighbourhoods will build resilience, facilitate connection, inclusion and provide safe spaces for the community.
- Collaboration and partnerships - support from the community and local social service providers to work together to achieve better outcomes for the Northern Beaches
- Safe and connected community - should address mobility, connectivity and transport challenges.

In addition to the above, feedback from stage 4 engagement specifically indicated strong support for the draft strategy and policy, and mostly reflected on the key themes emerging from engagement during the development stages of the strategy.

Respondents who were less supportive raised the question of whether the strategy should be considered Council's core business. Some commented that the policy should include key performance indicators for implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Detailed feedback and Council's response are outlined in Appendix 1.

## 6. Conclusion

Feedback collected through the engagement process identified only a couple of themes which have been used to amend the strategy and policy. The results of the engagement process indicated that the findings are supported by the wider public's views and needs.

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<sup>4</sup> Note: This report represents what Council has heard as accurately and transparently as possible by using consistent quantitative and qualitative analysis techniques.



## Appendix 1: Verbatim comments and Council's response as part of stage 4 public exhibition.

#	Document	What we heard	Council response
1	Draft strategy	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to feedback on Council's draft Better Together Social Sustainability Strategy 2040.</p> <p>The Women's Housing Company broadly welcomes measures set out in the draft document with particular reference to Council advocating to other levels of government to prioritise innovative action on housing affordability and a housing first approach to homelessness</p> <p>We also welcome plans to partner with community organisations to deliver initiatives including events, programs, and activities that strengthen connection between priority populations, cultures and generations.</p>	<p>Thankyou, we have noted your support and will ensure your organisation is included in all relevant future Better Together collaboration.</p> <p>No amendment recommended.</p>
2	Draft strategy	<p>Please have separate cycle and pedestrian paths everywhere wherever possible. I know from experience in Sydney and the Sunshine Coast in Queensland that combining them is unsafe. Unsafe for the very young and for the elderly. Unsafe with more electric bikes and scooters that can't be heard. Please separate the two, and we will have a safer community.</p>	<p>This feedback relates to outcomes in Move 2036 Council's Transport Strategy.</p> <p>Separated cycleways are generally considered the best form of infrastructure for a cycling network. Council considers if separation can or should occur when planning new infrastructure or upgrading existing shared paths. Separation can be difficult to achieve due to the space required and incorporating this space into the existing build or natural environment. Although there is community support for separated cycleways, there is also very strong community opposition to the removal of on-street parking, existing trees, and green space, hence Council must find a balance to be able to provide safe cycling infrastructure.</p>

#	Document	What we heard	Council response
			<p>Shared paths offer our community a safer cycling environment for those not wanting to ride on the road. Shared paths also benefit other users such as pedestrians, wheelchairs, prams, mobility scooters by offering a wider and more prominent path.</p> <p>The issue of safety on shared path has been addressed by the Transport for NSW Centre for Road Safety through a discussion paper on shared paths (2015). The concluding remarks, based on extensive research and evidence, stated that shared paths represent a relatively low safety risk.</p> <p>No amendment recommended.</p>
3	Draft strategy	<p>All aspects are very well covered in this document - with clearer and more appropriate targets than I have seen in many other strategies - so well done! I think "inclusive" is the biggest challenge for the area - there is an emphasis on "born and bred here" in how people in leadership roles describe themselves here that I have not experienced living in other more diverse areas. I think it's fair that Northern Beaches acknowledges it's not that diverse when compared to the rest of Sydney but it becoming more so slowly. So how council and its staff respond to that change within the population make up will be interesting. There appears to be minimal first nations people living here - it's not clear to me if the AHO museum at Freshwater is open/there etc - so some general communication about them to the general residents would be great! Would love to see more news about first nations people living in the Northern Beaches and their connection to country.</p>	<p>Better Together will support the increased visibility and celebration of First Nations culture and ensure First Nations people and Indigenous heritage is included in decision making.</p> <p><b>Change to strategy: additional actions to be included in "inclusion"</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. Improve connection, engagement, and collaboration with First Nations people.</b></li> <li><b>2. Promote First Nations culture past and present on the Northern Beaches and explore opportunities to acknowledge First Nations People, culture, stories, and place throughout the Northern Beaches</b></li> </ol>
4	Draft strategy	<p>We need to be an outward looking community, not an insular one. It's important that we guard against just reinforcing our own views with those who are like-minded and be willing to</p>	<p>As a community we need to continually seek to ensure that a wide variety of voices are represented when undertaking key decision making. Better</p>

#	Document	What we heard	Council response
		objectively look at our community and make decisions that will make a positive difference, not just comfortable and sometimes self-serving decisions.	Together supports this by championing the role of diversity and participation and making a commitment to support those in priority groups who need additional support to do so.  No amendment recommended.
5	Draft strategy	<p>Mobility for non drivers has been greatly undermined by reduced bus services; for the young, the elderly and the disabled particularly.</p> <p>Having to change buses to get to work or even to travel relatively short distances locally has drastically impacted the 3 areas above; you cannot feel included or connected while physically isolated, or safe if having to disembark and reembark several times to get from say, Cromer to Manly.</p> <p>I drive and am way too young to be affected by these issues, but can see the negative impact it has had on the young, elderly and/or disabled family and neighbours. My teenage son had to give up his gym membership in Frenchs Forest as the once 20 minute trip now takes 45, with a bus change at the mall; my neighbour has to order a \$25 Uber to get to the doctor as changing buses is too hard physically ... that's a \$50+ round trip. Not a fun way to spend money for a pensioner.</p> <p>So these 'efficiencies' are having a negative health impact, on the sense of inclusion, connection and safety of these 3 groups.</p> <p>I understand there is local free taxi? But if so, it's not well advertised, and likely only for those who can access it via a concession card.</p>	<p>This feedback relates to outcomes in Move 2036 Council's Transport Strategy.</p> <p>Transport for NSW are responsible for the changes to the timetable with a significant number of bus routes across the LGA affected with those recent changes. These comments will be shared with Transport for NSW for their consideration.</p> <p>No amendment recommended.</p>

#	Document	What we heard	Council response
		Bring back more local bus routes to serve the Community.	
6	Draft strategy	<p>While an inclusive community is important, policies should be designated to support residents and businesses to the greatest extent possible to create a thriving community full of opportunity.</p> <p>Inclusivity can be at odds with safety and it should be very explicit that safety for members of the community in all aspects, particularly children, takes precedent. As examples, drinking on the esplanade is not always enforced after the curfew and public intoxication can be an issue creating an unsafe environment for families and children walking along the esplanade. Friday and Saturday night on the Corso can have large groups of visibly intoxicated and aggressive people that have created the potential for violence and a needed visible police presence as a deterrent to this behaviour and potential for violence is not consistent. There have been some homeless people with mental illness that have harassed families and children around the corso and manly wharf, particularly in the mornings. There should be programs in place that can both be supportive of the individual needs of that person but also ensure the community is safe from harassment or possible violence from someone who may be unwell. Finally, there can be loud vehicles that speed on south steyne and north steyne creating unsafe conditions for beach goers. Clear and explicit standards should be outlined and enforced in the plan. Addressing safety in the community first creates the foundation to have a truly inclusive and vibrant community we all want.</p> <p>Thank you</p>	<p>To support the outcomes for the Safe Strategic Direction, Council has developed a draft Community Safety Plan that provides specific actions for the next 5 years including collaborating with local services to reduce the impact of alcohol and drug use on our community.</p> <p>Council has also established a range of Alcohol-Free Zones and Alcohol Prohibited Areas in the LGA where consumption of alcohol is restricted, and non-compliance can be enforced by Police and Council Rangers.</p> <p>The feedback about loud vehicles relates to outcomes in Move 2036 Council's Transport Strategy.</p> <p>In July 2020 a 30 km/h High Pedestrian Activity Area was introduced in the North and South Steyne areas to provide a more pedestrian friendly environment. Enforcement of any infringements is a police matter.</p> <p>No amendment recommended.</p>

#	Document	What we heard	Council response
7	Draft strategy	<p>A lot of jumbo jumbo with no deadlines. Looks like a lot of money has been spent on this glossy document.</p> <p>We need a Community Centre where people can come and meet fellow residents to undertake activities. Need an extensive Volunteer Portal with lots of opportunities eg bushcare sites all over the NBC.</p>	<p>Council has recently adopted a Community Centre Strategy which will guide planning and management of our community centres over the next 20 years.</p> <p>Better Together recognises the importance of volunteering. Several actions specific to volunteering have been identified to be undertaken in the next 5 years. These actions will investigate a range of options with both organisations and the community to create a shared approach to increasing the role and participation of volunteering.</p> <p>No amendment recommended.</p>
8	Draft strategy	<p>Dog owners who enjoy walking their dogs are being faced with increasingly stringent and exclusive policies being enforced in parts of the Northern Beaches. Recent erection of signs and use of patrolling council rangers, for example, has seen numerous dog owners punished for walking their dogs on the periphery of Freshwater beach this week... where they were amicably enjoying the stunning scenery and hurting no one. It would be wondrous if Northern Beaches council could take a leaf out of North Sydney Council's book, where all park lands are off leash dog areas - making man's best friend and their owners welcome and more included. This also reduces the damage of excited paws on any single park. Furthermore the North Sydney policy has shown this openness to dogs causes no harm to others. Worth perhaps your consideration dare I say? We could even look at having some more off leash dog beaches eg "when the flags are down, dogs can play around" - what a great way to let all residents have access to and enjoy the beaches?</p>	<p>Council is intending to develop a new consolidated Dog Policy for the Northern Beaches. In developing the new policy, and in consultation with residents, we will review the current off-leash areas and potential for new locations as well as quality, size and experience. Council has recently undertaken community consultation regarding the potential to allow dogs off-leash at sections of Mona Vale Beach (south) and Palm Beach (north). In the meantime, we have 29 dog off-leash areas across the Northern Beaches. Details are on the website.</p> <p>No amendment recommended.</p>

#	Document	What we heard	Council response
9	Draft strategy	<p>As far as I can see this is ok PR but not much else. For instance - a connected community! movement by car or as a passenger worsens each year. Our roads are packed with cars, have too many bottleneck places eg Dee Why and poor road surfacing and connectability. The Northern Beaches needs some sort of an underground/surface metro North to South and connecting West and South. Later North too. Instead NBC is backing a white elephant tunnel that no Business Board would consider because it is unviable financially, less needed now and any improvements would last maybe for 2 to 3 years as it encourages even more cars at a huge cost to users.</p> <p>On safety NBC continues to ignore pedestrian safety on dual user footpaths ( many of which are too narrow to sustain other than pedestrian traffic). Cyclists increasingly view the paths as their priority - regardless of the elderly and family users. Use of skate boards and other such mobility examples are also dangerous on roads, the Corso and many other mostly pedestrian malls and other public places.</p> <p>These are but two criticisms. But since I know that they will not be practically heeded I won't submit more. Thank you</p>	<p>There are many components of a connected and safe community. Better Together has been developed to work collaboratively with our other main strategies and plans. For this reason, connectivity and safety issues related to transport challenges are primarily addressed through Move 2036, Council's Transport Strategy.</p> <p>No amendment recommended.</p>
10	Draft strategy	<p>While the strategy is laudable what are the goals to be achieved? The proposal is too vague and lacks a problem statement. Is the Northern Beaches that non-inclusive that it must be fixed?</p>	<p>Better Together has 10 outcomes developed with the community to achieve the vision of a socially sustainable and inclusive community. The Better Together Discussion Paper 2020 outlines the key challenges for social sustainability facing the Northern Beaches community that the strategy seeks to address.</p> <p>Extensive consultation was undertaken and while many experience a high baseline of safety, inclusion</p>

#	Document	What we heard	Council response
			<p>and connection, our community told us there is further work to do in this area, especially for our most vulnerable.</p> <p>No amendment recommended.</p>
11	Draft strategy	Drop this gibberish. The council should return to core values: garbage collection, local roads, libraries etc.	<p>Better Together supports ongoing core service delivery through providing strategic direction to other programs and strategies particularly around equity of access. This includes the Library Strategy and Transport Strategy. Page 15 outlines it's integration with existing Council Strategies and Plans.</p> <p>No amendment recommended.</p>
12	Draft strategy	We need a temporary coffee person at the north end of Mona Vale beach to replace the Bronze Cafe demolished by Councils contractor . By councils notices this could last up to 2 years .	<p>Thank you for your submission. Given the proximity of local cafes a temporary coffee provider is not being considered during the temporary works as the area is adequately serviced by existing businesses.</p> <p>No amendment recommended.</p>
13	Draft policy	Stop being woke lefty warriors and focus on core council activities. Social engineering is NOT the role of council. Also, quoting UN orgs is like quoting marxist globalists. Enough of this woke nonsense. All these woke ██████ talking about inclusion are typically the most exclusive of all...they want to include anyone that shares their opinion. ENOUGH ENOUGH BE A COUNCIL- PICK UP GARBAGE, MAINTAIN INFRASTRUCTURE, ETC....PERIOD!	<p>The Local Government Act requires Council to recognise diverse local community needs and interests and consider social justice principles and the long term and cumulative effects of actions on future generations when making decisions.</p> <p>The Policy provides direction for informed decision making that ensures the community has access to the services and supports they need when they need them.</p> <p>No amendment recommended.</p>

#	Document	What we heard	Council response
14	Draft policy	<p>Why is local council doing the job of NSW State Governments, Dept of Human Services, Police and State Welfare Agencies for which we as tax payers already pay for? Federal Government Agencies provide similar services. How much have you budgeted for this and what will be the cost to ratepayers ?</p> <p>I would suggest that ratepayers would be better off if council kept focus on your core business and that is not to be yet another social services division of federal and state governments .</p>	<p>The Local Government Act requires Council to recognise diverse local community needs and interests and consider social justice principles and the long term and cumulative effects of actions on future generations when making decisions.</p> <p>The Policy provides direction for informed decision making that ensures the community has access to the services and supports they need when they need them.</p> <p>No amendment recommended.</p>
15	Draft policy	<p>It reads like a load on meaningless nonsense. Buzzword bingo if you want to think of it that way.</p>	<p>The Policy provides direction for informed decision making that ensures the community has access to the services and supports they need when they need them.</p> <p>No amendment recommended.</p>
16	Draft policy	<p>This is a good enough policy statement but I'm disappointed to see when you refer to access you preface this with 'fair' - I would say it needs to be 'equitable and fair'. Take a look at the UN Convention on Rights people with disability.</p> <p>I also think you should consider incorporating the following:  1: commitment to coproduction with the community. It's all very well referencing partnerships and consultations but if you want to truly lift your game and deliver to local residents through inclusive practices, codesign and coproduction needs to be integrated into your mindset and DNA. It is patronising and certainly not inclusive to seek views and then not invite folk to support you to design and produce services. This is something state govt has been doing for decades now.  2: there is nothing in the policy to signal your approach to</p>	<p>Equity is an essential principle of this policy, listed as a foundational social justice principle that underpins all the activities and decision making undertaken in community services.</p> <p>The role of the Social Sustainability policy is to identify the set of principles and community development activities that will enable informed decision making when delivering social sustainability initiatives. The draft Better Together Social Sustainability Strategy 2040 provides the specific plan, and associated actions, that will be undertaken to reach our shared goals and objectives in relation to social sustainability. It also provides the framework for ongoing monitoring and evaluation of</p>



#	Document	What we heard	Council response
		<p>implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Policy positions are important in setting your commitment and vision but are hollow without a clear alignment and commitment to implementation, monitoring and most importantly evaluation. It's not good enough to offer a list of related policies etc. this is a lazy policy that says to your audience here is a tick box of related things we are doing. Join it up, speak in plain English and make sure to alert us as to how your actions are going to give life to your words.</p> <p>3: take a look at NSW Premiers Priorities - I'd like to see a clear dashboard of policy commitments and tracking, monitoring of implementation, and evaluation year on year so we can have transparency on what council is doing.</p>	<p>the impact of the strategy.</p> <p>Better Together was developed using a co-design model and articulates Council's ongoing commitment to using this approach throughout the implementation of associated actions.</p> <p>The suggestion in relation to dashboarding and reporting is noted.</p> <p><b>Changes to policy: Update wording to description of Access principle to include the word equitable.</b></p>
17	Draft policy	<p>"Feeling safe" is rarely a desirable long term situation for any human being to be in. Too much safety is often harmful by omission - it doesn't provide opportunity to build resilience. An environment that is "too safe" often does not provide necessary challenges to the individual - challenges that ultimately offer the individual an opportunity to strengthen their mental resilience and grow in the face of challenges to attitudes, preconceptions and perspectives.</p> <p>I'm all for providing TEMPORARY spaces where persons who have experienced trauma can take some (limited) time out to gather themselves, seek counsel and get back on an even keel, but it must be on the understanding that it is not in the best interests of any individual to be coddled and shielded from the real world over the longer term.</p> <p>And I'm all for equality of opportunity. But I strongly oppose any measures promoting the flawed philosophy of "equality of outcome".</p>	<p>Safety has a broad definition for the purposes of this policy and associated draft Better Together Social Sustainability Strategy 2040 It is recognised that a certain baseline of safety is required by everyone to allow them to participate and engage in capacity and resilience building activities that allow them to withstand and respond to unexpected change.</p> <p>Effective social sustainability policy acknowledges that particularly vulnerable groups may need additional support to level the playing field and allow them to participate in the same way as other members of the community. This naturally will lead to better equality for social, health and wellbeing outcomes and a more diverse, inclusive, and socially sustainable community.</p> <p>No amendment recommended.</p>

#	Document	What we heard	Council response
18	Draft policy	<p>1. Show leadership and advocacy by initiating affordable events using the many and varied council facilities whenever they are free. Many people are free on weekdays 9-3.</p> <p>2. Promote inclusive and connected communities by targeting vulnerable members e.g., people living alone, reserved, or shy folk who don't find social chit chat easy Autism Spectrum Disorder</p> <p>3. Improve community capacity building by facilitating people to assist one another - by making a contribution to someone else the volunteer boosts self-esteem and improves their mental health</p> <p>a) walking a dog when owner's incapacity prevents them taking their dog out</p> <p>b) parents with young families without essential grandparents, siblings or school friends nearby NB families with twins or multiple births in the first 5 years. Families who have relocated for work from Interstate.</p> <p>4. Increase and improve referral and information services Affordable or Subsidised Support Groups using Stress Management and Mindfulness Practices to support those suffering social isolation and depression (compounded by unemployment &amp; COVID) according to their GP's recommendations.</p> <p>5. More social infrastructure. Social activities focused on art and creativity (in Libraries or Abbott Rd Curl Curl Venue) or getting out and about in nature. Council has so many stunning locations which can be utilised in good weather like Manly Dam Shelley Beach or Rowland Reserve with indoor venues as back-up if last minute the weather turns bad.</p> <p>7. Regular programs and services throughout the year. Affordable Social Activities for over 55's &amp; empty nesters or retirees with focus on camaraderie (not romance) look at Meet Up Groups for wide range like cycling, bush walks bring-a-</p>	<p>These are important actions to consider in ensuring we are a safe, inclusive, and connected community for all. This policy underpins the draft Better Together Social Sustainability Strategy, where specific actions and outcomes support the delivery of initiatives to support the activities outlined in this submission.</p> <p>The suggestions numbered 1- 5 have been noted in relation to the implementation plan actions in the Better Together Social Sustainability Strategy and will be considered along with other submissions received to finalise the draft Better Together Social Sustainability Strategy 2040.</p> <p>No amendment recommended.</p>

#	Document	What we heard	Council response
		plate shared lunch Environment Clean Up - council to supply equipment and lunch	
19	Draft policy	<p>A key element of the strategy is “fairness”, but this is notoriously difficult to define. How will this policy be operationalised when being “fair” to one group of people may be unfair to another?</p> <p>An example of this was detailed in the SMH, where it was claimed it was unfair for “boomers” to have large houses, preventing families from accessing these properties at affordable prices.</p> <p>One reading of the draft social sustainability policy would be to REQUIRE the council to act to push older people out of their homes, perhaps by direct or indirect discriminatory practices.</p> <p>Even if this was not the intention, in practice this policy could have that effect.</p>	<p>Fairness is important but needs to be understood in the context of equity. Equity is a fundamental social justice and sustainability principle of the Social Sustainability Policy and ensures our planning processes seek to include everyone in decision making, to ensure fair and equitable decisions as made.</p> <p>Council has recently demonstrated this approach to ensuring fairness and equity in tackling complex issues such as housing affordability. Using a process of inclusive consultation council ensures fair and equitable solutions are found and implemented.</p> <p>No amendment recommended.</p>
20	Draft policy	<p>Can the Policy be more specific on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The details of the proposed council actions</li> <li>2. What additional resources the Council may require to implement / administer these actions</li> </ol>	<p>The role of the Social Sustainability policy is to identify the set of principles and community development activities that will enable informed decision making when delivering social sustainability initiatives. The draft Better Together Social Sustainability Strategy 2040 provides the strategic direction and associated actions, that will be undertaken to reach our shared goals and objectives in relation to social sustainability.</p> <p>The commitments in the strategy will be prioritised and included in Council's annual Operational Plan and business plans.</p>

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			No amendment recommended.
21	Draft policy	It is a lot of what we already have, If we are planning for social sustainability we need something more. Such as; working within schools to reduce homelessness were we could create programs that get kids to meals on wheels or to the women's shelter so our youth are educated on problems that aren't sustainable in our society. This allows for ongoing sustainability as the community is doing the work helping and the council are just the ones initiating the program.	<p>It is agreed that to achieve a socially sustainable and inclusive community it must be done in partnership with the community. The draft Better Together Social Sustainability Strategy 2040 builds upon our existing strengths as a community and is supported by a rolling 5-year action plan to ensure the strategy can remain responsive to the changing needs of the community. This will include identification of specific programs, services, and plans.</p> <p>We plan to continue our work with the community through ongoing consultation and establishing the Better Together Leadership Group.</p> <p>No amendment recommended.</p>
22	Draft policy	<p>It is a long list of very new and currently modern wording totally meaningless, hard to understand its purpose. Perhaps the way I understand it, is that now Council will approve of people living in their cars on council beach parking. We look after people in need so let the visitors pay for it or the rate payers!</p> <p>This Council is on the cloud nine. This document has no concrete proposals only academic divagation, which can be used for any purpose. And will be probably used as a base to increase our rates to pay for this dreamland.</p> <p>We worked hard to achieve "sustainability" in our life or as it use to be known comfortable life in retirement only to be told that we have to share it now with people who did not bother. It all smacks on New Marxist Theory. It is not a social agenda but socialist agenda and I would rather vote members of this Council out than let it adopt it.</p>	<p>The Policy provides direction for informed decision making that ensures the community has access to the services and supports they need when they need them.</p> <p>The Northern Beaches is fortunate to have an enviable level of safety, inclusion and connection. Through the implementation of this policy and the Better Together Social Sustainability Strategy, Council is striving to ensure that everyone who lives, works and visits the Northern Beaches can experience safety, inclusion and connection.</p> <p>No amendment recommended.</p>