

1 Service improvements and efficiencies

The formation of Northern Beaches Council is delivering efficiency savings for reinvestment into priority community assets and uplifting services levels.

Service levels

Since amalgamation service levels have been maintained, and in many cases aligned across the Northern Beaches with the highest level of service of the former Councils.

Some of the improvements supported by savings include:

- Expansion of the online 24/7 customer request system
- Extension of hours of the Customer Call Centre - 8am-5:30pm Monday to Thursday and 5pm Fridays
- Ability to transact business at all Customer Services Centres across the Northern Beaches
- Two parking stickers per ratepayer to park free at beach reserve carparks across the Northern Beaches
- Increased expenditure on assets by an average \$14.4 million per annum (22% increase) through savings and attracting grant funding – an additional \$8.7 million for renewing buildings and infrastructure assets (33% increase) and an extra \$5.7 million invested in new assets on average per annum (15% increase and without the use of loans)
- Additional funding for grant programs - events, community, cultural, sporting and environmental activities
- A more generous Pensioner Rates and Charges Concession Policy
- Six libraries accessible with a single library card
- New technologies across the library including a floating collection
- Youth events at the PCYC
- Support for the Avalon Youth and Wellbeing Hub
- Proactive inspection and pruning of trees
- Regional approach to transport planning
- Expansion of the Hop, Skip and Jump Bus service to Manly Vale
- Increased public place cleaning including amenities
- Improved environmental outcomes from the new domestic waste collection service
- Lower domestic waste charge for ratepayers of former Manly and Pittwater area
- Replacement of street lighting with energy efficient LED lighting reducing emissions and delivering cost saving
- New renewable energy electricity supply agreements reducing emissions and delivering savings
- On-line development application lodgement tracking system
- Expansion of Local Planning Panel providing expert and independent decisions on development applications
- A new Design and Sustainability Advisory Panel providing high-level, independent, expert advice on urban design, architecture, landscape architecture and sustainability for significant applications and planning proposals
- Strengthened relationship between Council and local community groups via Community Liaison Officer
- Proactive management of town and village centre via Place Co-ordinators and Public Place team
- Greater capacity and resources to support the community during times of natural disasters and the COVID pandemic
- Improved asset maintenance

2020/21 - One off COVID-19 support

Additional one off support was also provided to the community in 2020/21 including:

- A 50% subsidy on rate increase for ratepayers (2.6% increase with a subsidy of 1.3%) plus one month extension on first instalment
- A 50% subsidy for ratepayers on the increase in the domestic waste charge (\$41 increase with a subsidy of \$20.50)
- Delaying the annual increase in fees from 1 July to 1 October 2020.
- Fee waivers to support business (inspection fees and outdoor dining)

Major projects - new or expanded

Many major projects completed or underway that benefit the entire Northern Beaches community have also been funded from efficiency saving. The savings allowed for early delivery or an expansion of the scope of works.

- Creative art space at Mona Vale and Avalon
- Coast walk art trail
- Community Nursery, Curl Curl
- Expansion of new footpath program
- Youth friendly spaces
- Improving sporting facilities, surf clubs and inclusive playgrounds under the Connecting all Through Play Program

Efficiency savings

\$2.75 million

2021/22 reduced operating costs

\$2.75 million

2020/21 reduced operating costs

\$29.5 million

estimated annual recurring benefit in 2019/20.

Source: [Northern Beaches Council Merger Performance Report](#), includes an independent assurance report of the modelling by Hill Rogers Auditors