

# *Fit for the Future*

## Attachment 1: *Strategic capacity*



WILLOUGHBY CITY COUNCIL



## Attachment 1: Strategic capacity

The table on the following pages describes a wide range of initiatives which demonstrate Willoughby City Council's strategic capacity. It links those initiatives directly to the 10 key elements of strategic capacity identified by the Independent Local Government Review Panel and incorporated by IPART into the *Fit for the Future* assessment methodology. The following matrix provides a summary of the table content.

	More robust revenue base and increased discretionary spending	Scope to undertake new functions and major projects	Ability to employ wider range of skilled staff	Knowledge, creativity and innovation	Advanced skills in strategic planning and policy development	Effective regional collaboration	Credibility for more effective advocacy	Capable partner for State and Federal agencies	Resources to cope with complex and unexpected change	High quality political and managerial leadership
Undertaking revenue generating activities	•	•							•	•
Managing robust cash and investments	•	•							•	
Gaining a Special Rate Variation to address the infrastructure backlog	•	•			•		•		•	•
Restructuring the organisation	•		•	•					•	•
Undertaking the Better Services Review	•		•	•	•				•	
Delivering The Concourse	•	•	•	•	•		•			•
Hosting Vivid Sydney		•		•			•	•	•	•
Planning strategically for Chatswood				•	•	•	•	•		•
Planning strategically for St Leonards				•	•	•	•	•		•
Negotiating significant developer contributions	•			•	•		•			•
Leading sustainability initiatives		•		•	•	•	•	•		•
Providing diverse social, cultural and recreation services		•		•		•				•
Creating the Willoughby Incinerator Art Space		•		•				•		
Employing diverse and highly skilled staff		•	•	•	•					
Leading regional collaboration and advocacy		•			•	•	•	•		•
Collaborating on procurement	•					•			•	
Partnering in the delivery of key infrastructure							•	•		
Expanding community engagement				•			•			
Receiving the A R Bluett Award				•						•

Initiative	Description	Elements of strategic capacity demonstrated
<b>Undertaking revenue generating activities</b>	<p>Willoughby City Council's operations are supported by a variety of revenue streams other than rates. In 2014/15, it is anticipated that Council will generate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• rental income in excess of \$11 million</li> <li>• car parking revenue totalling \$4.7 million</li> <li>• interest on investments of \$2.5 million</li> <li>• bus shelter advertising income in excess of \$1 million.</li> </ul> <p>Willoughby has also shown the ability to deliver core assets to its community which provide annual revenue streams and benefits. For example, Council developed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 99 year lease of the Frederick Street Depot generating \$52 million revenue, enabling \$55 million private development on the site, reducing asset maintenance costs and allowing the Gibbes Street Depot development below.</li> <li>• the site of the Gibbes Street Depot at a cost of \$21 million, providing a new purpose built works depot as well as industrial units which are leased providing an annual revenue stream of \$816,000.</li> <li>• a site at 12 McLachlan Avenue, Artarmon where an industrial development was undertaken at a cost of \$7 million and which has provided both an environmental benefit and a reduced recurrent annual waste service charge/cost for the community.</li> <li>• As discussed below, Council also redeveloped The Concourse, which delivers retail income in excess of \$3.4 million per annum. This figure is included in the \$11million total rental income above.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More robust revenue base and increased discretionary spending</li> <li>• Scope to undertake new functions and major projects</li> <li>• Resources to cope with complex and unexpected change</li> <li>• High quality political and managerial leadership</li> </ul>
<b>Managing robust cash and investments</b>	<p>Council has historically achieved great strength within its balance sheet, in particular the level of cash and investments.</p> <p>At 30 June 2014, Council's audited accounts recorded total cash, cash equivalents and investments at over \$71 million. The investment report to the end of April 2015 records a level of over \$87 million.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More robust revenue base and increased discretionary spending</li> <li>• Scope to undertake new functions and major projects</li> <li>• Resources to cope with complex and unexpected change</li> </ul>

Initiative	Description	Elements of strategic capacity demonstrated
<b>Gaining a Special Rate Variation to address the infrastructure backlog</b>	<p>In May 2015, IPART announced that Willoughby City Council's application for a seven year Special Rate Variation (SRV) under Section 508A of the Local Government Act had been successful. The SRV will allow rate increases of 6.9% in 2015/16 and 4.6% in 2016/17 and the rate peg thereafter to 2021/22 inclusive. The purpose of the SRV is to improve Council's asset management and asset renewal, and reduce the infrastructure backlog.</p> <p>The SRV will provide additional rate revenue of approximately \$20.4 million over seven years. This funding is linked to Council's latest 20 year Asset Management Plans, which were adopted in June 2014. The plans identified an annual funding gap of \$5.4 million to achieve acceptable levels of service over the medium term across the entire infrastructure portfolio.</p> <p>The major areas of capital spending planned are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$12.9 million on buildings renewal</li> <li>• \$10.5 million on sporting fields renewal</li> <li>• \$8.1 million on stormwater assets</li> <li>• \$5.6 million on parks and gardens.</li> </ul> <p>Importantly, during the seven years of the SRV, Willoughby will spend \$40.3 million on its capital works program. This expenditure will be funded partly by the SRV, with the balance funded from unrestricted cash/reserves.</p> <p>IPART stated (2015: 8) that it approved Council's rate variation because:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>The need for the revenue is demonstrated in the council's IP&amp;R documents.</i></li> <li>2. <i>The community was made aware of the need for, and extent of, the rate increases, and that the Council had considered the community's capacity and willingness to pay the proposed increases.</i></li> <li>3. <i>The impact of the proposed rate increases on ratepayers is reasonable, especially given existing rate and income levels relative to neighbouring Council areas.</i></li> <li>4. <i>The Council has exhibited and adopted the relevant IP&amp;R documents.</i></li> <li>5. <i>The Council reported some cost savings in past years, and has indicated its intention to realise further savings during the period of the special variation.</i></li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More robust revenue base and increased discretionary spending</li> <li>• Scope to undertake new functions and major projects</li> <li>• Advanced skills in strategic planning and policy development</li> <li>• Credibility for more effective advocacy</li> <li>• Resources to cope with complex and unexpected change</li> <li>• High quality political and managerial leadership</li> </ul>

Initiative	Description	Elements of strategic capacity demonstrated
<b>Restructuring the organisation</b>	<p>Council is currently completing a review of its organisational structure at the management level. This builds on the extensive work undertaken as part of the Better Services Review (see below) and implements key recommendations of that work. The objectives of the restructure are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide a better foundation for a new direction for Council</li> <li>• produce savings, that can be used to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- provide greater value for money to ratepayers and residents</li> <li>- create the capacity to secure the new skills and expertise required.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>The focus of the restructure is on improving leadership, creating a more accountable culture, finding new ways of delivering services, improving financial reporting and creating better governance processes. The new structure will enhance Council's capacity by recognising and funding enhanced skills in areas such as project management, continuous improvement, regional strategic planning and stakeholder relations.</p> <p>The organisational restructure is anticipated to result in savings to full time equivalent staff costs, salary and associated overheads of \$2 million per annum. The continuing review of positions below Director and Manager level will be undertaken as part of a continuous improvement approach applied to normal business planning and budgetary processes and is expected to continue to yield benefits to the way staff are enabled to work, and to the community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More robust revenue base and increased discretionary spending</li> <li>• Ability to employ wider range of skilled staff</li> <li>• High quality political and managerial leadership</li> <li>• Resources to cope with complex and unexpected change</li> <li>• Knowledge, creativity and innovation</li> </ul>

Initiative	Description	Elements of strategic capacity demonstrated
<b>Undertaking a review of all services</b>	<p>In late 2013 Council commissioned a review of services. The Better Services Review was designed to identify organisational efficiencies, free up resources to improve capacity and performance, and to create cost savings. It had the additional aims of creating a resilient and change ready organisation that can supply quality service outcomes to the greater community.</p> <p>The Review included a detailed analysis of business units in order to redesign and improve workflows and processes. The final stage also identified internal cultural improvements and a change of management framework.</p> <p>An overall transformational program was developed consisting of large organisational projects and smaller discrete projects. The larger projects consisted of structural reform and improved business delivery redesign, changes to procurement, changes to Council's property divestment and commercial management, and identification of new revenue opportunities.</p> <p>A number of projects have been formulated for action over the next two financial years which will provide a minimum saving to Council operations of an estimated \$1.9 million.</p> <p>These projects include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reviews of culture and frameworks regarding decision making, community engagement, community needs analysis, resource planning, customer service and website upgrade.</li> <li>• Development of the next Community Strategic Plan, Strategic Asset Management and Planning and an Economic Development Strategy and Framework.</li> <li>• Detailed finance process improvement processes, corporate systems upgrade and a communications and Marketing Strategy.</li> <li>• Fees and charges and fleet management review.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More robust revenue base and increased discretionary spending</li> <li>• Resources to cope with complex and unexpected change</li> <li>• Ability to employ wider range of skilled staff</li> <li>• Knowledge, creativity and innovation</li> <li>• Advanced skills in strategic planning and policy development</li> </ul>

Initiative	Description	Elements of strategic capacity demonstrated
<b>Delivering The Concourse</b>	<p>The Concourse performing arts precinct project redeveloped 12 500m<sup>2</sup> of public land within the Chatswood CBD. The redevelopment was the result of an extensive master planning and community consultation process, which included a public poll on the proposed development.</p> <p>Opened in 2011, the redevelopment delivered an iconic complex of public facilities serving over 800 000 residents in the Northern Sydney region. The site includes a 1 000 seat concert hall, 500 seat theatre, 800m<sup>2</sup> exhibition hall, rehearsal spaces, art gallery and a 5 000m<sup>2</sup> library. Revenue is generated from the onsite public car park and 3 500m<sup>2</sup> of retail space. In 2013/2014 income generated from these two sources totalled over \$4.1 million. The facility, excluding the library, generated a net profit of \$621 000 (excluding interest earned and principal and interest on associated loans).</p> <p>The Concourse provides a newly replaced and expanded area of public open space surrounded by cafes and restaurants that help create a lively public domain. The project was supported by Council's strategic release of several at-grade car parks in the Chatswood CBD to stimulate economic development of the area which provided income of \$61 million and private redevelopment of approximately \$260 million.</p> <p>Development of The Concourse has enabled the growth of arts and culture in Northern Sydney. Prominent groups featured at The Concourse include the Council-managed Willoughby Symphony Orchestra and Willoughby Symphony Choir. These are regarded as Australia's finest community symphony and choir, as evidenced by multiple years' award of Best Community Orchestra by Orchestra Australia. The Willoughby Symphony Orchestra has developed a regional, state, national and international reputation and has been engaged to perform with some of the world's leading performance groups, such as the English National Ballet. It is led by internationally renowned conductor Nicholas Milton.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scope to undertake new functions and major projects</li> <li>• Knowledge, creativity and innovation</li> <li>• Advanced skills in strategic planning and policy development</li> <li>• More robust revenue base and increased discretionary spending</li> <li>• High quality political and managerial leadership</li> </ul>
<b>Hosting Vivid Sydney</b>	<p>In 2015, Chatswood hosted the first Vivid Sydney installation outside the City of Sydney. Although Chatswood was initially scheduled to host Vivid in 2016, the program was brought forward to 2015 because of the strength of Council's proposal and associated advocacy. Council worked closely with Destination NSW to achieve the Mayor's vision to host Vivid at Chatswood.</p> <p>The installation was active from 6pm nightly for all 18 days of the festival. The theme of the installation was an underwater fantasy experience, stretching from Chatswood Interchange through Chatswood Mall to The Concourse. The Mall became a light-filled 'river' where glowing creatures were brought to life with lighting and projections. The Concourse featured an environmental fantasy titled The Nautilus and the Sea. The installation supported extended trading hours of businesses in Chatswood CBD, including restaurants and retail.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Credibility for more effective advocacy</li> <li>• Scope to undertake new functions and major projects</li> <li>• Knowledge, creativity and innovation</li> <li>• High quality political and managerial leadership</li> <li>• Resources to cope with complex and unexpected change</li> <li>• Capable partner for state and federal agencies</li> </ul>

Initiative	Description	Elements of strategic capacity demonstrated
<b>Planning strategically for Chatswood</b>	<p>Chatswood is a major retail, commercial and cultural centre, which has been recognised as a strategic centre in both the <i>Metropolitan Plan for Sydney to 2036</i> (2010) and <i>A Plan for Growing Sydney</i> (2014). The Willoughby Local Environmental Plan 2012 responded positively to targets set by NSW Government through the <i>Metropolitan Plan for Sydney</i> and associated subregional planning. It enabled the creation of 16 000 new jobs and provision of 6 800 new dwellings by 2031, many of them in and around Chatswood.</p> <p>Council planning has enabled development of Chatswood to proceed in an efficient and coordinated manner. Key achievements that demonstrate Council's advanced skills in strategic planning include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• responding to NSW Government investment in the Epping-Chatswood rail connection by increasing residential and employment density in line with the principles of transit-oriented development</li> <li>• delivering The Concourse, following the identified need for a cultural, entertainment, recreation and community focus for the Northern Sydney region</li> <li>• refurbishing the heavily used Chatswood Mall pedestrian strip, funded by Council at a cost of \$4.5 million</li> <li>• providing a variety of community services and facilities catering for the wide demands of the region, including people with non-English speaking backgrounds, families, the elderly and people with disabilities.</li> </ul> <p>The facilities and services delivered by Council in Chatswood serve a population well beyond the boundaries of the LGA. They demonstrate Council's appreciation of the strategic importance of the centre, and Council's proactive planning for its ongoing development to meet the needs of a growing and changing population.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advanced skills in strategic planning and policy development</li> <li>• Capable partner for state and federal agencies</li> <li>• Knowledge, creativity and innovation</li> <li>• Credibility for more effective advocacy</li> <li>• High quality political and managerial leadership</li> </ul>

Initiative	Description	Elements of strategic capacity demonstrated
<b>Planning strategically for St Leonards</b>	<p>Council has also demonstrated its capacity for strategic planning and policy development in St Leonards. Like Chatswood, St Leonards has been identified as a strategic centre in <i>A Plan for Growing Sydney</i>. However St Leonards lies within the boundaries of three local government areas – Willoughby, Lane Cove and North Sydney. Willoughby worked actively with NSW Government and the two other councils to prepare the St Leonards Strategy, which has guided development of the centre since 2007.</p> <p>St Leonards, however, is currently experiencing growth pressure from a number of large, very high density residential redevelopment proposals which are beyond both the planning scenarios in the St Leonards Strategy and the capacity of existing infrastructure.</p> <p>In May 2015, Willoughby City Council proposed a comprehensive review of the St Leonards Strategy. This proposal was accepted by the NSW Government and partner councils. The need for the review arose from the dated nature of the existing strategy, development pressures, and studies and plans for the Royal North Shore Hospital and the proposed Sydney Rapid Transit. The review will be coordinated by the Department of Planning and Environment in conjunction with the three councils. It will be conducted in concert with the Northern Sydney Subregional Plan process and be undertaken with government stakeholders including Royal North Shore Hospital, Transport for NSW, NSW Health and NSW Department of Education.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective regional collaboration</li> <li>• Advanced skills in strategic planning and policy development</li> <li>• Knowledge, creativity and innovation</li> <li>• Capable partner for state and federal agencies</li> <li>• Credibility for more effective advocacy</li> <li>• High quality political and managerial leadership</li> </ul>
<b>Negotiating significant developer contributions</b>	<p>Council's Section 94 and 94A funds provided income that has delivered considerable outcomes for residents of Willoughby and the broader region. Recent Section 94 and S94A contributions/Voluntary Planning Agreements will realise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- \$16 million for development at 217 Pacific Highway, Artarmon</li> <li>- \$5.6 million for development at 18 Thomas Street, Chatswood</li> <li>- \$3.6 million for development at 38 Albert Avenue, Chatswood</li> <li>- \$2.4 million for development at 88 Archer Street, Chatswood</li> <li>- \$623 000 for development at 1a Frederick Street, Artarmon</li> <li>- \$587 000 for development at 31 Devonshire Street, Chatswood</li> <li>- \$500 000 for development at 73 Albert Avenue, Chatswood</li> <li>- \$130 000 for development at 1 Anderson Street, Chatswood</li> <li>- \$100 000 for development at 65 Albert Avenue, Chatswood.</li> </ul> <p>The infrastructure and services provided with these contributions will include community buildings, open space, streetscape improvements and car parking.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More robust revenue base and increased discretionary spending</li> <li>• Advanced skills in strategic planning and policy development</li> <li>• Credibility for more effective advocacy</li> <li>• High quality political and managerial leadership</li> </ul>

Initiative	Description	Elements of strategic capacity demonstrated
<b>Leading sustainability initiatives</b>	<p>Willoughby City Council is a leader in environmental sustainability. In 2010, Council met its goal of a 50% reduction in its greenhouse gas emissions since 1999, achieved through an Energy Saving Action Plan. As a result, Willoughby was announced the Overall Winner of the Local Sustainability Award at the then Local Government and Shires Association of NSW Local Government Excellence in the Environment Awards. Other sustainability successes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chatswood Solar Farm, which has a 166 kilowatt capacity which continues to increase. In 2013/14 the solar farm produced the equivalent of supplying 100% solar power to 28 Willoughby homes for a year. It saved around 250 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions and \$60 000 in electricity costs.</li> <li>• Installation of more than 30 kilowatts of solar power at numerous other Council buildings.</li> <li>• Installation of a 165 kilowatt cogeneration plant at the Willoughby Leisure Centre. The plant saves Council \$46 000 per annum and reduces greenhouse gas emissions by 430 tonnes.</li> <li>• Installation of rainwater tanks capable of capturing over 20 000 litres for use at several facilities. In addition, the 5 mega litre water recycling system on The Concourse will harvest water for the surrounding CBD for reuse in the buildings and landscaping.</li> <li>• Community sustainability initiatives including the Better Business Partnership and programs such as the ClimateClever campaign. The Better Business Partnership has assisted access to more than \$88 000 in funding for implementation of energy savings, through NSW Office of Environment and Heritage programs.</li> <li>• Reduction of waste going to landfill by 14%.</li> <li>• Provision of sustainable transport options using Council buses, Council cabs, and through the Willoughby Bike Plan.</li> <li>• Delivery of workshops and major events to improve residents' understanding of sustainability.</li> <li>• Providing a facility for Council's Waste contractor within the LGA to reduce vehicle travel and time associated with the disposal of waste.</li> </ul> <p>Council's 'e.restore' program is a major contributor to many of these achievements. E.restore is the product of an Environmental Levy which has been in place since 2000 and was initiated following extensive community consultation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scope to undertake new functions and major projects</li> <li>• Knowledge, creativity and innovation</li> <li>• Advanced skills in strategic planning and policy development</li> <li>• Credibility for more effective advocacy</li> <li>• High quality political and managerial leadership</li> <li>• Capable partner for state and federal agencies</li> </ul>

Initiative	Description	Elements of strategic capacity demonstrated
<b>Providing diverse social, cultural and recreation services</b>	<p>Willoughby undertakes diverse social, cultural and recreation functions beyond those traditionally provided by local government. It also provides services to residents of the Northern Sydney region, well beyond its own boundaries. For example Council provides and runs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Dougherty Community Centre</b>, a multi-purpose venue with 10 different rooms for hire for community and corporate events. Services provided at the Centre include aged care and disability services as well as a café, and commercial catering services and meals-on-wheels.</li> <li>• <b>Chatswood Library</b>, which at 5 000m<sup>2</sup>, is the second largest library in NSW. It accommodates up to 2 000 visitors daily and is a regional hub for learning.</li> <li>• <b>MOSAIC</b>, which is a facility providing programs for culturally specific social groups and community language learning. MOSAIC is supported by 60 volunteers who assist to run 50 programs a week for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds across Northern Sydney.</li> <li>• <b>Chatswood Youth Centre</b>, which is the most well attended youth centre in Northern Sydney, averaging visits from 110 young people per day (or over 30 000 per year).</li> <li>• <b>Willoughby Leisure Centre</b>, which hosts more than 540 000 visitors annually and provides aquatic facilities and services, health club and rehabilitation facilities and sports courts to the local and regional community.</li> <li>• A multi-sport FIFA standard <b>synthetic sports field</b> of 10 000m<sup>2</sup> at Northbridge Oval, the first A-grade synthetic sports field to be installed in the Northern Sydney region. The project optimised the carrying capacity of the field and accommodates increased participation by the community in sporting activities.</li> <li>• A small portfolio of affordable <b>housing units or payment in lieu of provision</b>, generated through an affordable housing requirement in the Local Environmental Plan. Council is therefore one of only a handful of councils in NSW which directly provides affordable housing for people on low to moderate incomes – an initiative which it has been committed to since 1999. The affordable housing fund will also enable Council to develop its own key worker housing project at Elizabeth Street, Artarmon.</li> <li>• Five <b>community gardens</b>, including one on a social housing estate run in partnership with the Department of Families and Community Services.</li> <li>• A pilot project to facilitate the provision of <b>childcare</b>, whereby an aging, costly facility is to be leased to and developed by a private provider, resulting in replacement of an asset, doubling of childcare placements, reduced costs and a recurrent income.</li> <li>• The provision of public community/library facilities within two separate <b>aged care</b> private developments operated by Council.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scope to undertake new functions and major projects</li> <li>• Knowledge, creativity and innovation</li> <li>• High quality political and managerial leadership</li> </ul>

Initiative	Description	Elements of strategic capacity demonstrated
<b>Creating the Willoughby Incinerator Art Space</b>	<p>Council undertook extensive works to the Willoughby Incinerator to adaptively reuse the building and transform it into a public art facility. The impressive sandstone and concrete incinerator was designed by Walter Burley Griffin. It is a unique industrial building with considerable local and regional historic significance. The interior has been sensitively renovated to create a professional gallery space which showcases innovative contemporary visual arts.</p> <p>The restoration of the incinerator has provided Willoughby with a unique public amenity that not only satisfies a demand in the local community but also makes a significant heritage item widely accessible.</p> <p>It is supplemented by income from a commercial cafe.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scope to undertake new functions and major projects</li> <li>• Knowledge, creativity and innovation</li> <li>• Capable partner for state and federal agencies</li> </ul>
<b>Employing diverse and highly skilled staff</b>	<p>Willoughby City Council employs the full range of skilled staff expected of a leading metropolitan council. It currently has teams of five or more full time equivalent staff in areas including building services, development assessment, children and youth services, community development, environmental services, library services, open space, recreation and strategic land use planning.</p> <p>It has particular expertise in the management of performing arts venues, with a team of dedicated staff responsible for The Concourse. Council also employs specialist staff in areas including cultural development, economic development, GIS, heritage, marketing, property management, transport planning, and visual arts curation.</p> <p>Council also has internal communications and other resources which enable it to advocate effectively on behalf of both the local community and the region more broadly. These resources include public relations and communications officers, a digital media officer and graphic designers.</p> <p>Organisational capacity will be further developed as a result of the organisational restructure, with new roles being funded in the areas of project management, continuous improvement, stakeholder relations and regional strategic planning.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to employ wider range of skilled staff</li> <li>• Scope to undertake new functions and major projects</li> <li>• Advanced skills in strategic planning and policy development</li> <li>• Knowledge, creativity and innovation</li> </ul>

Initiative	Description	Elements of strategic capacity demonstrated
<b>Leading regional collaboration and advocacy</b>	<p>Willoughby is one of seven members in the Northern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils (NSROC). NSROC has four main functions, being regional advocacy, project management, procurement, research and information provision. Willoughby has hosted combined NSROC and SHOROC meetings of the 11 councils which comprise the Northern Sub Planning Region. The combined group of Mayors has collaborated to put in a joint submission regarding sub-regional planning governance and to share views and progress regarding <i>Fit for the Future</i>.</p> <p>Willoughby City Council has had a leading role in NSROC over many years. Council's previous Mayor, Cr Pat Reilly, was President of NSROC for a 10 year period from 1999 to 2009.</p> <p>Willoughby also actively participates in numerous Professional Officers' Groups facilitated by NSROC, such as environment and sustainability, community services, finance, transport, and planning. Willoughby has a leadership role in several groups, most notably being the Chair of the waste group which coordinates waste services across NSROC councils.</p> <p>NSROC has identified two regional priorities for 2014-16: Better manage urban growth; and improved service delivery. These priorities, and the associated actions, align closely with the priorities for the Willoughby and neighbouring councils in Northern Sydney as identified in the Independent Local Government Review Panel's report.</p> <p>Through NSROC, Willoughby has worked collaboratively with its neighbours on key environmental initiatives across the region. These initiatives include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better Business Partnership, which is hosted by Willoughby</li> <li>• Community Recycling Centre project</li> <li>• Regional Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Strategy</li> <li>• Renewable Energy Master Plan</li> <li>• Street Lighting Improvement Program.</li> </ul> <p>In addition to its leadership and active participation in NSROC, Willoughby City Council also participates in the Association of Sydney Metropolitan Mayors. This group comprises 22 of the 38 councils in the Sydney metropolitan area and represents more than two million residents. The creation of this group was recommended in the Independent Local Government Review Panel's report.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective regional collaboration</li> <li>• Credibility for more effective advocacy</li> <li>• High quality political and managerial leadership</li> <li>• Scope to undertake new functions and major projects</li> <li>• Advanced skills in strategic planning and policy development</li> <li>• Capable partner for state and federal agencies</li> </ul>

Initiative	Description	Elements of strategic capacity demonstrated
<b>Collaborating on procurement</b>	<p>Willoughby is an active participant in the NSROC Supply Management Group. This is a joint venture which is committed to reducing expenditure by utilising bulk purchasing power for common products. It also enables participation in regional training initiatives aimed at saving significant expenditure by combining Council requirements from a single service provider. Willoughby also jointly procures asphalt through NSROC.</p> <p>To get the best deal for its ratepayers, Willoughby also participates in joint procurement through Shore Regional Organisation of Councils (SHOROC). Councils with which Willoughby collaborates on procurement through SHOROC include Manly, Mosman, Pittwater, Warringah, Hornsby, Ku-ring-gai, Lane Cove, Hunter's Hill and Ryde. Joint tenders managed by SHOROC currently value \$18.8 million annually, representing 20% of the combined regional spend on materials and contracts. Joint tenders in which Willoughby has recently participated include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• supply and delivery of ready mixed concrete</li> <li>• external audit</li> <li>• cash collections.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effective regional collaboration</li> <li>• More robust revenue base and increased discretionary spending</li> <li>• Resources to cope with complex and unexpected change</li> </ul>
<b>Partnering in the delivery of key infrastructure</b>	<p>Council has successfully partnered with NSW Government agencies to assist in delivering a number of key infrastructure projects. For example, during the delivery of the Lane Cove Tunnel, Council worked collaboratively with Roads and Maritime Services, contractors and community representatives. Willoughby installed the only council-owned air monoxide station in Australia to ensure that the Lane Cove Tunnel complied with standards relating to the emission of carbon dioxide, carbon monoxide and particulates. This, in turn, protected public health in the region.</p> <p>Council worked actively with Roads and Maritime Services on the design and delivery of a regional bike path as part of the Lane Cove Tunnel and Gore Hill Freeway project.</p> <p>Council is committed to continuing this approach to partnering with NSW Government agencies as plans for the Sydney Rapid Transit expanding the North West Rail Link from Chatswood to Bankstown progress.</p> <p>The Dougherty Apartments and Retirement Village comprises 150 residential units and makes substantial use of Council's adjoining Dougherty Community Centre. The Dougherty Apartments operations and strategic direction are oversighted by a multi-party board comprising Willoughby City Council, Uniting Aged Care and the Department of Family and Community Services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Capable partner for state and federal agencies</li> <li>• Credibility for more effective advocacy</li> </ul>

Initiative	Description	Elements of strategic capacity demonstrated
<b>Expanding community engagement</b>	<p>In 2011 Council adopted a Community Engagement Strategy which set out the values that it places on community engagement and how those values should translate into practical outcomes. A major outcome of the strategy was the establishment of an online community panel. Originally the Panel ran as a trial for six months. During this time Council actively recruited panel members, many of whom had limited previous experience engaging with Council on non-service delivery issues. Panel members were asked to contribute to an online forum and participate in a series of online surveys. The outcome of the trial was the recruitment of approximately 500 online panel members. The creation of the panel widened Council's engagement network and embedded the practice of internet based consultation and Council now has over 2000 registered users. It also improved response times with officers available online daily.</p> <p>Council has also used a face-to-face Citizens' Panel since 2013 to give the community input into key issues such as long term planning of asset expenditure. Issues deliberated by the Citizens' Panel include standards and expectations for Willoughby's asset base. The Citizens' Panel was also convened to deliberate on merger options as part of community consultation on the Fit for the Future reforms.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knowledge, creativity and innovation</li> <li>• Credibility for more effective advocacy</li> </ul>
<b>Receiving the A R Bluett Award</b>	<p>In 2011 Willoughby City Council was the recipient of the A R Bluett Memorial Award. This award is bestowed by Local Government NSW (and previously the Local Government and Shires Associations of NSW). It is recognised as the highest accolade a council can achieve. The highly contested award is presented annually to the council that has made the greatest relative progress over a financial year.</p> <p>Judges awarded the accolade to Willoughby due to its outstanding initiative, mature forward thinking and sound management in delivering a significant community asset to the area. The judges also acknowledged Willoughby for maintaining a strong focus on asset management, responsible community leadership and improving youth and community services across the LGA.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High quality political and managerial leadership</li> <li>• Knowledge, creativity and innovation</li> </ul>