

Agency Information Guide

Government Information Public Access Act 2009



**About the
Wingecarribee Shire**



**Role of Councillors
and Executive**



**Organisational
Structure**



**Access to
Information**



Council Functions



**Representation and
Participation**



Open Data



Introduction

Wingecarribee Shire Council (Council) has adopted this Agency Information Guide in accordance with section 20 of the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* (GIPA Act).

In order to maintain and advance a system of responsible and representative democratic government that is open, accountable, fair and effective, Council is committed to upholding the objectives of the GIPA Act. Section 3 of the GIPA Act provides that the Act aims to open government information to the public by:

- authorising and encouraging the proactive release of government information;
- giving members of the public an enforceable right to access government information; and
- restricting access to government information only where there is an overriding public interest against disclosure.

By describing Council's organisational structure, functions and responsibilities, this Agency Information Guide aims to promote a better understanding of Council's work in the community and inform members of the public about the ways in which the community can participate in Council's decision-making processes. Further, this Agency Information Guide details the various types of information held by Council and how that information can be accessed by members of the public.

Connecting with Council

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1. About Wingecarribee Shire Council

Wingecarribee Shire (the Shire) covers an area of 2 700 square kilometres and is generally referred to as the Southern Highlands of New South Wales. Major towns include Bowral, Moss Vale, Mittagong and Bundanoon, while smaller villages include Alpine, Avoca, Balaclava, Balmoral, Berrima, Burrawang, Colo Vale, Exeter, Fitzroy Falls, Hill Top, New Berrima, Penrose, Renwick, Robertson, Sutton Forest, Wingello, Willow Vale and Yerrinbool.

A map of the Shire is accessible at [About the Wingecarribee Shire](#).

Wingecarribee Shire Council came into being on 01 January 1981 following the amalgamation of Mittagong Shire Council, Bowral Municipal Council and the former Wingecarribee Shire Council.

Council's [Community Strategic Plan](#) sets out Council's community vision as follows:

In 2031 we will be a healthy and productive community, learning and living in harmony, proud of our heritage and nurturing our environment.

1.1 Role of Councillors and the Mayor

There are nine Councillors who are elected by the residents of the Shire every four years. Under section 232 of the *Local Government Act 1993*, the role of a Councillor is:

- to be an active and contributing member of the governing body;
- to make considered and well-informed decisions as a member of the governing body;
- to participate in the development of Council's integrated planning and reporting framework;
- to represent the collective interests of residents, ratepayers and the local community;
- to facilitate communication between the local community and the governing body;
- to uphold and represent accurately the policies and decisions of the governing body; and
- to make all reasonable efforts to acquire and maintain the skills necessary to perform the role of a Councillor.

Every two years, Councillors elect a Mayor for the ensuing 24 months. Councillors also currently elect from their number a Deputy Mayor for the period of the mayoral term, although Council retains the authority to elect a Deputy Mayor to a shorter term.

Under section 226 of the *Local Government Act 1993*, the Mayor's role is:

- to be the leader of Council and a leader in the local community;
- to advance community cohesion and promote civic awareness;
- to be the principal members and spokesperson of the governing body, including to represent Council's views as to its local priorities;
- to exercise the policy-making functions of the governing body of Council between meetings of Council, when necessary;
- to preside as chair at meetings of Council;

- to ensure that meetings of Council are conducted efficiently, effectively and in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993*;
- to ensure that strategic plans, programs and policies are developed and adopted in a timely manner;
- to promote partnerships between Council and key stakeholders;
- to advise, consult and provide strategic direction to the General Manager in relation to the implementation of Council's strategic plans and policies;
- to ensure adequate opportunities and mechanisms for engagement between Council and the local community (in conjunction with the General Manager);
- to carry out the civic and ceremonial functions of the mayoral office;
- to represent Council on regional organisations and at inter-governmental forums at regional, State and Commonwealth level;
- to lead performance appraisals of the General Manager (in consultation with Councillors); and
- to exercise any other functions of Council that Council determines the Mayor may exercise.

The Deputy Mayor may exercise any function of the Mayor at the Mayor's request or if the Mayor is prevented by illness, absence or otherwise from exercising mayoral functions.

The appointment of Mr Viv May PSM as an Administrator for Wingecarribee Shire Council follows the suspension of the Councillors by the Minister for Local Government, the Hon Shelly Hancock MP on 12 March 2021. On 1 September 2021, the NSW Government announced a Public Inquiry into Wingecarribee Shire Council. On 13 July 2022, the Inquiry Report was tabled in the NSW Parliament and the NSW Governor issued a Proclamation. The Proclamation declared all civic offices in relation to the Wingecarribee Shire Council to be vacant and appointed Mr May as Administrator until a new election is held on 14 September 2024, aligning with the next ordinary council elections across NSW.

The Administrator acts as the Council, effectively replacing the role previously performed by the Mayor and Councillors. Further information can be accessed at [Administrator](#) and [Councillors](#).

1.2 Role of the General Manager

The General Manager is responsible for the efficient operation of Council as an organisation and for ensuring the implementation of Council decisions. The General Manager's functions are set out by section 335 of the *Local Government Act 1993* and include:

- conducting the day-to-day management of Council in accordance with Council's strategic plans, programs, strategies and policies;
- implementing, without undue delay, lawful decisions of Council;
- advising the Mayor and the governing body on the development and implementation of Council's strategic plans, programs, strategies and policies;
- advising the Mayor and the governing body on the appropriate form of community

consultation with respect to Council’s strategic plans, programs, strategies and policies and other matters related to Council;

- preparing, in consultation with the Mayor and the governing body, Council’s community strategic plan, community engagement strategy, resourcing strategy, delivery program, operational plan and annual report;
- ensuring that the Mayor and other Councillors are given timely information and advice and the administrative and professional support required to effectively discharge their functions;
- exercising any functions of Council that are delegated to the General Manager by Council;
- appointing staff in accordance with the organisation structure determined by the *Local Government Act 1993* and the resources approved by Council;
- directing and dismissing staff;
- implementing Council’s workforce management strategy; and
- any other functions conferred or imposed on the General Manager by or under the *Local Government Act 1993* or any other Act.

1.3 Organisational Structure

To support the General Manager in the exercise of the General Manager’s functions, **Figure 1**, below, sets out Council’s organisational structure.

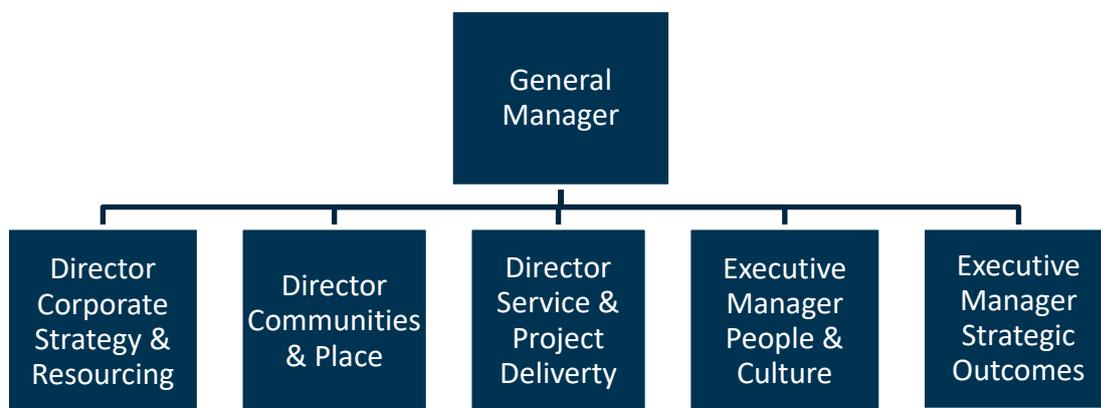


Figure 1: Wingecarribee Shire Council organisational structure as at June 2022

The structure of each of Council’s various divisions is currently under review, and they are further subdivided into various branches and service units which carry out more specific functions.

2. Access to information held by Council

Council holds a vast amount of information relating to its key functions. Whilst the following list is not exhaustive, the following matters provide an indication of the broader areas about which



Council holds information:

- Administration
- Correspondence between Council and members of the public
- Council-owned community facilities
- Development of land
- Environmental management
- Financial management
- Information about employees of Council
- Library services
- Management of Council-owned land
- Rating of land
- Roads and related infrastructure
- Waste management

Council may be required to comply with legislation other than the GIPA Act when dealing with certain types of information. For example, where Council holds personal information about an individual, Council must comply with the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998* (PPIPA). Further, Council may be required to make certain kinds of information publicly available under legislation other than the GIPA Act, such as the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* and the *Local Government Act 1993*.

Information held by Council may be stored in hard copy, electronic format, or both. Most electronic files are stored in Council's electronic document and records management system, although some information is also captured in other information technology software such as Property and Rating (for revenue, billing and regulatory management) and ConQuest (for asset management).

The GIPA Act provides that members of the public have a right to access information held by Council unless there is an overriding public interest against disclosure.

There is an overriding public interest against disclosure of government information if there are public interest considerations against disclosure and, on balance, those considerations outweigh the public interest considerations in favour of disclosure. This test is known as the **public interest test** and is set out at section 13 of the GIPA Act.

There are four main ways in which Council provides access to information, as follows:

1. Mandatory proactive release of open access information
2. Authorised proactive release
3. Informal release
4. Formal access applications

In addition to the above, Council also makes information contained in certain documents available for purchase, such as drainage diagrams and sewer reference sheets. See Council's [Fees and](#)



[Charges](#) for further information.

Any informal request or formal access application for information made under the GIPA Act will be handled in accordance with the requirements of the GIPA Act. In order to enable the release of as much information as possible, Council is authorised to redact (delete) matter from a copy of a record to be released if inclusion of that information would otherwise result in there being an overriding public interest against disclosure.

The form in which Council makes information available varies depending on the nature of the information requested. For example, information that is subject to copyright may be made available for inspection, however, copies of such information may only be provided to a member of the public where the owner of the copyright has provided permission (a licence) or in other limited circumstances as set out in the *Copyright Act 1968* (Cth).

2.1 Mandatory proactive release of open access information

The GIPA Act provides that Council must make information that is **open access information** publicly available unless there is an overriding public interest against disclosure of the information. At least one of the means by which Council makes open access information available to the public must be free of charge.

Open access information is made available via Council's [Proactive Release of Information Register](#) except where there is an overriding public interest against disclosure of the information or if making the information available in this way would impose unreasonable additional costs on Council. In the latter case, the Proactive Release of Information Register provides details about how open access information that is not available via Council's website may be accessed.

Section 18 of the GIPA Act establishes which information is open access information for the purposes of the GIPA Act. Further, Schedule 1 to the *Government Information (Public Access) Regulation 2018* (GIPA Regulation) provides for additional information that is open access information for local authorities such as Council.

Open access information under section 18 of the GIPA Act

Section 18 of the GIPA Act prescribes that the following information is open access information:

- Council's current agency information guide;
- information about Council contained in any document tabled in Parliament by or behalf of Council, other than any document tabled by order of either House of Parliament;
- Council's policy documents (within the meaning of the term **policy documents** provided by section 23 of the GIPA Act);
- Council's disclosure log;
- Council's register of government contracts;
- Council's record of open access information that it does not make publicly available on the basis of an overriding public interest against disclosure; and

- such other information as may be prescribed by the regulations as open access information.

Open access information under Schedule 1 to the GIPA Regulation

Schedule 1 to the GIPA Regulation sets out additional information that is open access information for local authorities, as follows:

Information about Wingecarribee Shire Council

Under clause 1 of Schedule 1 to the GIPA Act, the following information is prescribed as open access information:

- Information contained in the current version and the most recent previous version of the following records:
 - The model code prescribed under section 440(1) of the *Local Government Act 1993* and the code of conduct adopted under section 440(3) of that Act;
 - Code of meeting practice;
 - Annual report;
 - Annual financial reports;
 - Auditor's report;
 - Management plan;
 - EEO management plan;
 - Policy concerning the payment of expenses incurred by, and the provision of facilities to, Councillors;
 - Annual reports of bodies exercising functions delegated by Council; and
 - Any codes referred to in the *Local Government Act 1993*.
- Information contained in the following records (whenever created):
 - Returns of the interests of Councillors, designated persons and delegates;
 - Agendas and business papers for any Council or Council committee meeting (but not including business papers for matters considered when part of a meeting is closed to the public);
 - Minutes of any Council or Council committee meeting, but restricted (in the case of any part of a meeting that is closed to the public) to the resolutions and recommendations of the meeting; and
 - Reports of the Chief Executive of the Office of Local Government presented at a Council meeting in accordance with section 433 of the *Local Government Act 1993*.
- Information contained in the following records:
 - Land register;
 - Register of investments;
 - Register of delegations;
 - Register of graffiti removal work kept in accordance with section 13 of the *Graffiti Control Act 2008*;

- Register of current declarations of disclosures of political donations; and
- Register of voting on planning matters.

Plans and policies

Under clause 2 of Schedule 1 to the GIPA Act, the following information is prescribed as open access information:

- Information contained in the current version and the most recent previous version of the following records:
 - Local policies adopted concerning approvals and orders;
 - Plans of management for community land; and
 - Environmental planning instruments, development control plans and contributions plans made under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.

Information about development applications

Under clause 3 of Schedule 1 to the GIPA Act, the following information is prescribed as open access information:

- Information contained in the following records (whenever created):
 - Development applications, and any associated documents received in relation to a proposed development, including:
 - Home warranty insurance documents;
 - Construction certificates;
 - Occupation certificates;
 - Structural certification documents;
 - Town planner reports;
 - Submissions received on development applications;
 - Heritage consultant reports;
 - Tree inspection consultant reports;
 - Acoustics consultant reports; and
 - Land contamination consultant reports.

Note: Clause 3(2) of Schedule 1 to the GIPA Regulation provides that, with respect to the above, the following is not open access information:

- So much of the information as consists of the plans and specifications for any residential parts of a proposed building (other than plans that merely show its height and its external configuration in relation to the propose site of the building);
 - So much of the information as consists of commercial information (if the information would be likely to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied the information, or to reveal a trade secret); or
 - So much of the information as consists of development applications made before 01 July 2010 and any associated documents received (whether before, on or after that date) in relation to the application.
- Records of decisions made on or after 01 July 2010 on development applications, including decisions made on appeal; and

- A record describing the general nature of the documents that Council decides are excluded on the basis of clause 3(2) of Schedule 1 to the GIPA Regulation.

Approvals, orders and other documents

Under clause 4 of Schedule 1 to the GIPA Act, the following information is prescribed as open access information:

- Information contained in the following records (whenever created):
 - Applications for approvals under Part 1 of Chapter 7 of the *Local Government Act 1993* and any associated documents received in relation to such an application;
 - Applications for approvals under any other Act and any associated documents received in relation to same;
 - Records of approvals granted or refused, any variation from local policies with reasons for the variation, and decisions made on appeals concerning local approvals;
 - Orders given under Part 2 of Chapter 7 of the *Local Government Act 1993*, and any reasons given under section 136 of that Act;
 - Orders given under the authority under any other Act;
 - Records of building information certificates under the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*;
 - Plans of land proposed to be compulsorily acquired by Council;
 - Compulsory acquisition notices;
 - Leases and licences for use of public land classified as community land; and
 - Performance improvement orders issued to Council under Part 6 of Chapter 13 of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

2.2 Authorised proactive release

The GIPA Act authorises Council to go beyond the minimum requirements for the mandatory proactive release of open access information and make any information it holds proactively available to the public unless there is an overriding public interest against disclosure. This is a discretionary power to proactively release information in any appropriate manner, either free of charge or at the lowest reasonable cost.

Council reviews its authorised proactive release program annually by identifying the kinds of information it holds that should be made publicly available and that can be made publicly available without imposing unreasonable additional costs on Council. This information may be information that has been frequently requested by members of the public or information of interest to the broader public that Council has decided to release in response to a formal access application.

Council invites members of the public to contact Council with suggestions for information which Council may consider making available via authorised proactive release.



2.3 Informal release

Access to information which is not available via mandatory or authorised proactive release may be provided by informal release. Council is authorised to release information in response to an informal request unless there is an overriding public interest against disclosure of the information.

An informal request for access to information may be lodged with Council by submitting an Informal Request for Access to Information form, available online at [Access to Information Held by Council](#).

The GIPA Act provides that Council is not required to disclose information in response to an informal request and cannot otherwise be required to consider such a request. Council therefore retains discretion as to whether information will be released in this manner.

2.4 Formal access applications

Formal access applications generally

An access application is an application under the GIPA Act which meets the formal requirements set out under the GIPA Act. The GIPA Act requires that an access application:

- be in writing, posted to or lodged at the Council office;
- specify that it is an access application made under the GIPA Act;
- be accompanied by an application fee of \$30;
- state the applicant's name and a postal or email address as the address for correspondence in relation to the application; and
- include such information as is reasonably necessary to enable Council to identify the government information that is being applied for.

An application that does not meet these formal requirements is invalid.

In certain circumstances, Council may require that an access application be lodged where the information is not available via proactive or informal release and:

- the information is of a sensitive nature requiring a careful consideration of public interest considerations in favour of and against disclosure; or
- the information is personal or confidential information about a third party which may require consultation with the third party; or
- a substantial amount of time and resources may be required to produce and consider the information (for example, where more than four hours of processing time may be required).

An access application may be lodged by submitting a Formal Access to Information Application form, available online at [Access to Information Held by Council](#), and paying the required application fee of \$30.

Processing charges and advance deposits

Additional processing charges of \$30 per hour may apply to time spent dealing with an access application, subject to a 50 per cent discount in certain circumstances as prescribed by sections 65 and 66 of the GIPA Act and clause 10 of the GIPA Regulation. Those provisions provide that an applicant is entitled to a 50 per cent discount in processing charges imposed if Council is satisfied that the applicant is suffering financial hardship, that is, the applicant provides evidence that the applicant is:

- (a) the holder of a Pensioner Concession card issued by the Commonwealth that is in force;
- (b) a full-time student; or
- (c) a non-profit organisation (including a person applying on behalf of a non-profit organisation)

and/or Council is satisfied that the information applied for is of special benefit to the public generally.

Council may request payment of an advance deposit of processing charges based on the lowest reasonable estimate of the total processing time that will be required to deal with an application. Such a request may be made if an access application is likely to require more than five hours of processing time and will be made only in accordance with the applicable provisions of the GIPA Act.

3. Council's engagement with the public

3.1 Council functions and how they affect members of the public

A variety of functions are imposed on Council by the *Local Government Act 1993*.

As a service organisation, the majority of Council's functions and activities impact the public in some way. Council's functions may be broadly categorised as non-regulatory service, regulatory, ancillary, revenue, administrative, enforcement and community planning and development functions.

A number of other Acts confer additional functions on Council.

Some examples of activities related to Council's broad functions and how these functions affect members of the public are provided below.

Non-regulatory service functions

Council provides a wide range of property and "people" services and facilities which have a direct impact upon members of the public, such as:

- waste removal, treatment and disposal services;
- environmental protection and conservation measures;
- civil infrastructure planning, maintenance and construction;
- industry and tourism development and assistance; and

- community and sporting facilities.

Regulatory functions

Council exercises a range of functions to place restrictions on developments, building and other activities to ensure that they meet certain requirements, respect the amenity of the community and do not endanger the safety of the community.

Members of the public should be aware of and comply with such regulations and laws which relate to areas including:

- water supply, sewerage and stormwater drainage work;
- management of waste;
- installation of structures on land.

Ancillary functions

Council's non-regulatory service and regulatory functions are often supplemented by ancillary functions which assist in the exercise of Council's primary functions. Such functions only affect certain members of the public and include:

- powers to compulsorily acquire land; and
- powers authorising Council officers to enter land and buildings to carry out inspections.

Revenue functions

Council's revenue functions relate to Council's ability to raise income through the collection of various kinds of rates and charges. Revenue functions affect the public directly in that revenue from rates and other charges is paid by the public to Council and is used to fund services and facilities provided to the community.

Specifically, revenue functions include:

- levying ordinary and special rates;
- imposing charges in relation to specific services, such as the provision of water and sewerage services or domestic waste collection services;
- generating income from business activities, land or other investments; and
- borrowings and grants.

Administrative functions

Administrative functions relate to the way in which Council carries out its other core functions, makes decisions and how Council is made accountable for its actions.

These functions indirectly impact the community through the efficient and effective provision of services and include functions relating to:

- the employment of staff;
- the implementation of meeting procedures and codes of practice;
- the delegation of functions by the General Manager to other members of Council staff;

- public and professional liability insurance arrangements;
- strategic planning; and
- financial management.

Enforcement functions

Council enforces relevant legislation through the prosecution of offences. These functions only directly affect those members of the public who are in breach of relevant legislation, however the enforcement of relevant legislation may also have an indirect impact on other members of the public.

Enforcement functions of Council include:

- the investigation and prosecution of breaches of the *Local Government Act 1993* and other relevant legislation;
- recovery action for outstanding rates and charges; and
- issuing penalty infringement notices in relation to various matters such as parking offences.

Community planning and development functions

Council engages in a number of cultural development, social planning and community profile initiatives that affect members of the public. Relevant matters include:

- assisting residents to participate in community life through various publications and programs such as the Wingecarribee Seniors Directory, Dhungung (Food) Share, Five Ways to Wellbeing and Connecting to Country;
- coordinating community events such as Senior's Week, NAIDOC Week and Tulip Time;
- promoting arts and culture within the local community through events such as the Southern Highlands Art Studio Trail; and
- the provision of grants and funding opportunities.

Other functions

A number of Acts other than the *Local Government Act 1993* confer additional functions on Council. Table 1, below, provides examples of such Acts and the functions they confer.

Table 1: Functions conferred upon Wingecarribee Shire Council by Acts other than the *Local Government Act 1993*

Title of Act	Functions conferred upon Council
<i>Community Land Development Act 1989</i>	Planning functions as a consent authority
<i>Companion Animals Act 1998</i>	Companion animal registration and control
<i>Conveyancing Act 1919</i>	Placing covenants on Council land
<i>Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979</i>	Environmental planning

Title of Act	Functions conferred upon Council
<i>Fire and Rescue NSW Act 1989</i>	Payment of contributions to fire brigade costs and furnishing of returns
<i>Fluoridation of Public Water Supplies Act 1957</i>	Fluoridation of water supply by Council
<i>Food Act 2003</i>	Inspection of food and food premises
<i>Impounding Act 1993</i>	Impounding of animals and articles
<i>Library Act 1939</i>	Library services
<i>Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997</i>	Pollution control
<i>Public Health Act 2010</i>	Inspection of systems for purposes of microbial control
<i>Recreation Vehicles Act 1983</i>	Restricting use of recreation vehicles
<i>Roads Act 1993</i>	Roads
<i>Rural Fires Act 1997</i>	Issue of permits to light fires during bush fire danger periods Requiring the furnishing of information to the Rural Fire Service Advisory Council and its Co-ordinating Committee
<i>State Emergency Service Act 1989</i>	Recommending appointment of local commander
<i>Strata Schemes Development Act 2015</i>	Approval of strata plans
<i>Swimming Pools Act 1992</i>	Ensuring restriction of access to swimming pools

3.2 Representation

Local government in Australia is based on the principle of representative democracy. This means that people elect representatives to make decisions on their behalf.

Councillors are the elected representatives for a local government area and make decisions on behalf of their constituents.

Members of the community are able to raise issues with and make representations to elected Councillors. Councillors, if they agree with the issue or representation, may pursue the matter on behalf of members of the community thus allowing members of the public to influence the development of policy and the exercise of Council's functions



3.3 Participation in Council decision-making

There are a number of ways in which Council invites members of the public to participate in Council decision-making, as set out in the following sections.

Council meetings

Councillors meet regularly at ordinary meetings of Council to discuss local issues and make decisions on behalf of the community. All ordinary meetings are open to the public who are welcome to attend, unless the meeting is closed to the public for a specific reason under the *Local Government Act 1993*.

Ordinary meetings of Council are also webcast to the public in accordance with Council's [Code of Meeting Practice](#) which allows members of the public to access ordinary meetings even if they cannot physically attend the meeting.

There are a number of other ways in which members of the public may participate in ordinary meetings of Council, such as:

- public forum participation;
- speaking in relation to visitor items; and
- speaking on a proposal to close an ordinary meeting to the public.

Further information about ordinary meetings, including meeting dates, meeting agendas and minutes, and public participation in ordinary meetings, is available at [Council Meetings](#).

Council committees

Committees and working groups support the exercise of Council's functions.

A committee of Council is a committee in which all of the members of the committee are Councillors, however not all Councillors must be members. Meetings of committees of Council are open to the public and, as with ordinary meetings of Council, are webcast to the public.

Council also supports a number of advisory committees, reference groups, working groups and external committees. These committees and groups provide a mechanism through which interested residents and stakeholders can provide input into policy development, direction and practice.

Furthermore, under section 355 of the *Local Government Act 1993*, Council has delegated authority to volunteer committees to manage a number of Council halls and sporting facilities.

Further information may be accessed at [Council Committees](#).

Council commissioned an independent [Community Advisory and Section 355 Committee Review](#), and a number of recommendations are currently being considered for implementation following public exhibition and feedback from stakeholders.



Notifications and public exhibitions

Council maintains a number of policies relating to notifications and public exhibitions, such as its Community Engagement Policy and Notification of Development Proposals Policy, both available online at [Policies](#).

Specifically with respect to development and planning matters, Council notifies members of the public of, and otherwise facilitates awareness about, development applications in a number of ways. This includes notifying affected parties of proposed developments in accordance with Council's Notification of Development Proposals Policy and maintaining an online [Application Tracking](#) facility which provides information about development applications lodged with Council from 1 January 2012 onwards.

Council also publicly exhibits information relating to certain proposed policies, plans, projects or developments under consideration by Council. Public exhibitions are a key way that the community is able to participate in Council's decision-making processes, offering an opportunity for community members to view information and make submissions. Public exhibitions are advertised via Council's e-newsletters and on Council's website at [Current Consultations](#). Information relating to public exhibitions is also generally available to inspect at Council's Civic Centre in Moss Vale and certain other Council facilities, such as Wingecarribee Public Libraries.

Community engagement, media and communications

Council's Community Engagement Policy affirms Council's commitment to community engagement and guides how Council involves the community in its decision-making processes. Community engagement is generally tailored to each specific project, proposal or plan and may include surveys, community workshops, online forums and other participation tools.

Members of the public are encouraged to register at [Your Say Wingecarribee](#) to ensure they are notified about current and upcoming construction projects as well as opportunities to take part in community consultation initiatives.

Community members may register for Council's e-newsletters at [Council Newsletters](#).

Council also maintains a number of webpages and social media accounts in order to provide members of the public with an opportunity to stay up-to-date on news and media releases. For further information, visit us on:

[Facebook](#)

[Twitter](#)

[Wingecarribee Shire Council Media Centre](#)

[YouTube](#)

Feedback and complaints

Council welcomes constructive feedback about the exercise of its functions and its delivery of



services to the community. Feedback may be provided verbally or in writing using any of the contact methods detailed at Part 5 of this Agency Information Guide.

Council's Complaint Handling Policy and Procedure are available at [Policies](#).

4. Promotion of Open Data

Open Data generally refers to information stored digitally by an organisation that should be made freely available such that anyone who accesses the data is free to use, rearrange and publish the information without the limitations of copyright. This concept operates concurrently with the objectives of the GIPA Act as outlined at the introduction to this Agency Information Guide.

As stated at Part 2.2 of this Agency Information Guide, members of the public are encouraged to contact Council with suggestions for information which can be considered for authorised proactive release under the GIPA Act. Council takes a similar position with respect to Open Data and therefore encourages members of the public to make suggestions as to the kinds of data that Council may consider making publicly available in this way.

Further information regarding NSW State Government and local government Open Data initiatives may be found at [Data.NSW](#), while members of the public seeking access to NSW State Government services and information should visit www.nsw.gov.au.

5. Further Information

Should you require any further information or assistance relating to this Agency Information Guide or access to government information held by Council generally, please contact:

Wingecarribee Shire Council

Corporate Strategy and Governance Team

 Civic Centre 68 Elizabeth Street Moss Vale NSW 2577

 PO Box 141 Moss Vale NSW 2577

 mail@wsc.nsw.gov.au

 02 4868 0888 (8:30AM to 4:30PM Monday to Friday, excluding public holidays)

or visit us online at wsc.nsw.gov.au.

To provide further information about Council and its services, functions and obligations, Council has also published the following information on its website:

- [Annual Reports](#);
- [Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework](#), including Council's Community Strategic Plan, Delivery Program and Operational Plan;
- [Policies](#);
- [Privacy Management Plan](#); and
- [Strategies and Plans](#).

Additional information relating to public access to government information and the *Government*



Information (Public Access) Act 2009 is available from:

New South Wales Information and Privacy Commission

📍 Level 15, 2-24 Rawson Place Haymarket NSW 2000

📮 GPO Box 7011 Sydney NSW 2001

✉ ipcinfo@ipc.nsw.gov.au

☎ 1800 472 679 (9:00AM to 5:00PM Monday to Friday, excluding public holidays)

or visit the New South Wales Information and Privacy Commission website at ipc.nsw.gov.au.

Document Control

Version	Date of adoption	Notes
1.0	28 July 2010	Initial adoption of document
1.1	10 August 2011	Minor amendments
1.2	10 August 2012	Minor amendments
1.3	10 October 2014	Minor amendments
2.0	28 June 2017	Substantial revision of structure and content
2.1	11 July 2018	Minor amendments, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • updated hyperlinks; and • amendments to wording to reflect the term of election for the Deputy Mayor.
2.2	26 October 2018	Minor amendment relating to details of open access information to reflect changes to the <i>Government Information (Public Access) Regulation 2018</i>
2.3	03 December 2018	Minor amendment to Part 2.4 to reflect changes to the <i>Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009</i>
2.4	14 August 2019	Revision of document structure and content, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • updated hyperlinks; • requirement of compliance with <i>Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998</i> inserted at Part 2; • inclusion of community planning and development functions at Part 3.1 and Open Data initiatives at Part 4; and • reference to webcasting of ordinary meetings of Council included at Part 3.3.
3.0	24 June 2020	Revision of document structure and content, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • implementation of new corporate style guide; • amendments and additions to wording of document throughout, including references to documents that are available for purchase and requirements to make information available under legislation other than the GIPA Act; • addition of hyperlinks to information about Council and its services, functions and

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		obligations; and <ul style="list-style-type: none"> inclusion of Figure 1.
4.0	10 June 2021	Minor amendments - updated hyperlinks.
5.0		Minor amendments – changes to role of Councillors and Mayor, organisational structure and Council committees

Related policies, plans and procedures

The following policies, plans and procedures are related to this document:

- Code of Meeting Practice
- Community Engagement Policy
- Notification of Development Proposals Policy
- Privacy Management Plan

Responsible branch

Council's Corporate Strategy and Governance team within the Corporate and Community branch is responsible for maintaining this document.

Next review date

This document is due to be reviewed in June 2023.