

PITTWATER COUNCIL IMPROVEMENT PROPOSAL

Appendix 1

2015 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT REPORT

SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The views of the community are critical to determining what is in the best interests of Pittwater and its people.

Council ran a number of engagement activities with the community in order to make an informed decision on the most fitting Fit for the Future (FFTf) recommendations and strategy for Pittwater.

Our broad range of engagement activities ensured that the broadest cross-section of the community could have a say. These included:



Phone survey

Random sample community survey conducted by independent research consultant. For more information - see [full results of the random telephone survey](#)



Online survey

Residents were asked to review and consider the [Your Pittwater, Your say](#) information booklet, Council's position on Fit for the Future and recent [independent analysis](#) on merger options and then complete the online survey.

This survey closed **Friday June 5 2015**.



Displays

A number of informative displays were put up at our customer service centres and libraries. Residents were able to view the information and complete a paper copy of the community survey.



Talk with a councillor

Residents were always welcome and encouraged to make contact with a Councillor to discuss *Fit for the Future* and any other local issues. Contact details:

www.pittwater.nsw.gov.au/councillors



Public Meeting

A public meeting was held on 19 May 2015 at Pittwater RSL 6.30-8.30pm. View the [presentation](#) and the [minutes](#)



Website

View up to date information on this webpage

INFO PACKS

Pittwater Council delivered by post a detailed information pack to all Pittwater residents, businesses and rate payers, detailing relevant information on local government reform and the Fit for the Future process.

The three options for consideration by the community were outlined.

Residents were encouraged to view the info pack and go online to complete the survey to have their say.

Copies of this information pack and paper copies of the surveys were also to be found at Council's customer service centres, libraries and community centres.

There will never be a more critical time to have your say

We are 'Fit for the Future'

Your Pittwater. Your say.

Pittwater Council's response to the NSW Government's reform proposals 'Fit for the Future'

Please take the time to read this information and have your say.

www.pittwater.nsw.gov.au

Frequently Asked Questions

Q Why is Pittwater Council opposed to an amalgamation?

A Pittwater Council was established in 1952 having split from the former Warrigal Shire Council. This was in response to strong community support for a separate council that would better represent the Pittwater community and its unique environment.

Q Under a merger with my rates go up?

A Based on the current rate structure, Pittwater rates are higher than those in other areas. It is important to note that expenditure related to the delivery of local services is not an indicator of the quality of services or of the community's ability to pay for services. The community will ultimately determine the level of service this region is desired from their local government entity.

Q What data was considered by Pittwater Council to make its position?

A Pittwater Council has carefully built an evidence base in relation to its approach to the Fit for the Future process. This includes the following research:

- KNRC (2013) - Independent review of structural options for Manly Council and Pittwater Council
- Professor Brian Dolan (2008) - Mayor is not always better an Assessment of the Independent Local Government Review Recommendation that Pittwater Council be amalgamated

Q Why can't we have information?

A For further details go to: www.pittwater.nsw.gov.au/fitforthefuture

Have Your Say

The views of the community are critical to determining what is in the best interests of Pittwater and its people.

Public Meeting - 10 May 2015
Pittwater 05: 5:30-8:00pm
 Come to the public meeting to hear the information and give us your feedback. Please ring by 15 May at: www.pittwater.nsw.gov.au/fitforthefuture

Website
 View us to date information on Council's website: www.pittwater.nsw.gov.au/fitforthefuture

Online survey
 Complete the online survey at: www.pittwater.nsw.gov.au/fitforthefuture

Display
 Drop in to our display of information at the customer service centres and libraries, view the information and complete a paper copy of the community survey.

Take with a councillor
 Call on a councillor at the Field and Wine Hill on 1 May 2015. Representatives will be available to make contact with representatives from your local Council entities.

Timeline

Initial open for public input	June 2015	October 2015	September 2016
Council seeks community feedback by 5 June.	Council will consider community feedback and make its submission.	A new independent expert panel will make recommendations to NSW Government based on submissions.	Local Government elections.

www.pittwater.nsw.gov.au

Independent Analysis

In preparation for our proposal to the NSW Government, Pittwater Council has engaged an independent expert panel to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the options to be considered by our respective communities.

The panel includes Pittwater Council's Mayor and representatives from the business and community sectors to ensure the analysis reflects the needs of the community.

The key considerations and impacts explored through comprehensive analysis includes:

- Financial and economic: Net financial and economic impacts of each option and projected performance against the fit for the future metrics.
- Service delivery: High level review of how each option may impact on the ability of a council to meet the needs of local communities.
- Community and governance: Local representation and capacity to meet the future service and infrastructure needs of the community.
- Demographic profile: Selected regional and socio-economic characteristics reflected in each option.
- Geography and environment: Management of environmental assets and cultural assets, urban characteristics and development potential.

Key Findings

Pittwater Council

- Is financially fit for the future, and an important local employer.
- Has a reasonable level of coverage and strong protection of the marine estate.
- Is attractive for local interests and the retention of local jobs.
- Has the lowest housing density, highest median age and income.

'Fit for the Future'

NSW Government criteria

In 2012 the NSW Government appointed an independent panel to review local government. The panel recommended that Pittwater was merging with Warrigal and Manly to form one single council.

What does the NSW Government require of Pittwater Council?

We are required to complete a Fit for the Future (FITF) assessment showing how we meet the government's FITF criteria by 2015/16.

All councils are required to submit a proposal for assessment to the independent expert panel by 30 June 2015.

Pittwater Council's position

Pittwater Council is opposed to any proposed merger of Manly, Warrigal and Pittwater into one Council.

- to maintain the status quo, that is to remain as we are without any boundary changes.
- remain committed to a strong independent Pittwater Council providing local representation and delivery of local services to the people of Pittwater on the existing boundaries.

Our analysis confirms that it is completely sustainable and fit for the future in its current form and structure in relation to the current criteria set out in the local government reform proposal - Fit for the Future.

What are the Fit for the Future criteria?

Operating performance ratio	>10%
Operating performance ratio	>10%
Building & infrastructure asset ratio	>100%
Infrastructure backlog ratio	<2%
Debt service ratio	<20%
Asset maintenance ratio	>100%
Real operating expenditure per capita	declining trend

To be 'Fit for the Future' Council must demonstrate that it meets this criteria by 2015/2016.

Pittwater Council meets the NSW Government's criteria

Operating performance ratio	17%
Operating performance ratio	100%
Building & infrastructure asset ratio	103%
Infrastructure backlog ratio	0.5%
Debt service ratio	4.5%
Asset maintenance ratio	126%
Real operating expenditure per capita	\$1,192 (declining)

Pittwater Council is Fit for the Future - Have your say by 5 June 2015.

Option 1

No Mergers - Pittwater Council's Preferred Option

Population 2011	64,000
Population 2015	65,000
Population density per km ²	870
No. of councillors	6
No. of residents per councillor	10,667

This option involves no mergers of Pittwater, Manly and Warrigal. Pittwater Council's position is to maintain the status quo and recommend that Pittwater remains as we are without any boundary changes. Pittwater's vision is to be a vibrant sustainable community of connected villages inspired by bush, beach and water!

KEY CONSIDERATIONS AND IMPACTS

- Pittwater was assessed by Peter Hume's (2008) 'Fit for the Future' study as being 'fit for the future' in its current form and structure in relation to the current criteria set out in the local government reform proposal.
- Pittwater Council has a long history of providing a high quality level of service to its residents and businesses.
- Pittwater Council's community survey conducted in 2014, 81% of Pittwater residents were satisfied with Council's performance.
- Pittwater Council's independent financial audit conducted in 2014, 91% of Pittwater residents were satisfied with Council's performance.
- Pittwater Council's independent financial audit conducted in 2014 and 2015, 91% of Pittwater residents were satisfied with Council's performance.

Option 2

Greater Pittwater Council & Greater Manly Council

Population 2011	109,200
Population 2015	114,000
Population density per km ²	870
No. of councillors	12
No. of residents per councillor	9,100

This option involves boundary changes and splits the existing Warrigal Council and Manly Council respectively to form two new local government entities. The option is required to create two councils of approximately equal population size. The modelling for this option is detailed within the FITF report.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS AND IMPACTS

- Financial analysis indicates the proposed amalgamation would be net cost to the community. The net cost would be approximately \$1.2 million per year over the 10 year period.
- The Greater Pittwater Council would be a viable financially sustainable entity. The net cost would be approximately \$1.2 million per year over the 10 year period.
- The Greater Manly Council would be a viable financially sustainable entity. The net cost would be approximately \$1.2 million per year over the 10 year period.

Option 3

Single Council

Population 2011	238,000
Population 2015	243,000
Population density per km ²	870
No. of councillors	18
No. of residents per councillor	13,222

This option results in a single council combining the current local government areas of Manly, Warrigal and Pittwater.

KEY CONSIDERATIONS AND IMPACTS

- Financial analysis indicates that one council would be net cost to the community. The net cost would be approximately \$1.2 million per year over the 10 year period.
- The single council would be a viable financially sustainable entity. The net cost would be approximately \$1.2 million per year over the 10 year period.
- The single council would be a viable financially sustainable entity. The net cost would be approximately \$1.2 million per year over the 10 year period.

POP-UP DISPLAYS & BANNERS

Pop up displays were set up at Council's customer service centres and libraries, along with paper copies of the community survey. Secure ballot boxes were also provided for residents to lodge their completed paper surveys.

Council's Fit for the Future pop-up displays were also set up at public events such as the Pittwater Food and Wine Fair Winnererremy Bay, the FTF public meeting at Pittwater RSL, and at the various 'coffee catch-ups' – Elanora, Church Point, Mona Vale, and community stalls at Avalon and Palm Beach.

Outdoor banners were placed strategically throughout the LGA directing residents to go online and have their say and/or attend the public meeting.



PUBLIC MEETING

A public meeting was held on Tuesday 19 May for all residents to discuss the Fit for the Future process and how it affects Pittwater. Over 350 people attended this meeting. Residents were invited to speak and have their say.

The Hon. Rob Stokes MP opened the meeting and Pittwater Council's General Manager Mark Ferguson outlined the options available to the residents.

Local resident groups requested the opportunity to speak formally at the meeting which resulted in 6 people briefly addressing the meeting in support of the options. (5 spoke in favour of Option 1 - status quo, and 1 spoke in favour of Option 2 -Greater Pittwater/Greater Manly).

The remainder of the meeting was devoted to an open Q & A and discussion so that those attending had ample opportunity to have a say.

The meeting concluded with a motion passed by the residents for;

Pittwater to remain as we are without any boundary changes without community support, and amended this by calling for reaffirmation of the Government's pledge that there be no forced amalgamations.

Pittwater's Mayor Jacqui Townsend closed the meeting.



INFORMATION STALL Pittwater Food And Wine Fair

Residents were always welcome and encouraged to make contact with a Councillor to discuss Fit for the Future and any other local issues. A Fit for the Future information kiosk was set up at Pittwater's Food and Wine Fair at Winnererremy Bay on 3 May. Over 7000 people were present on this day.

Mayor Jacqui Townsend and General Manager Mark Ferguson along with several Councillors were on hand to discuss the local government reform proposal with residents.

A secure ballot box was provided for completed paper surveys.



COMMUNITY LEADERS MEETING

Two Community Leaders meetings (11 March and 3 June) were held with key community groups in Pittwater (resident groups, environmental groups, surf clubs, chambers of commerce, and special interest groups) to inform and discuss the options for Pittwater. They have taken a keen interest in local government reform over the last two years and are an important conduit for the dissemination of information.

A Community Leaders meeting was held by Pittwater Council at Pittwater RSL Mona Vale Wednesday 3 June. At this meeting of approximately 50 Community Leaders, Council's General Manager Mark Ferguson updated the community leaders about the potential for forced amalgamations and the options that were available to Pittwater.

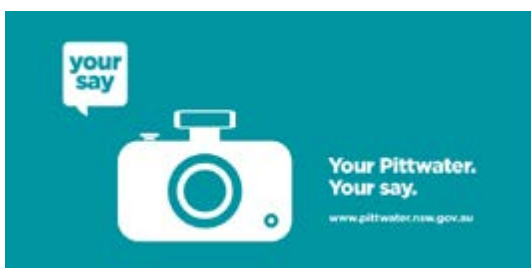
In addition to our Community Leaders meetings, Council has provided ongoing reports and briefings to our four Community Reference Groups on a quarterly basis. The Reference Groups are aligned with the Key Directions and Strategies of the Community Strategic Plan. There are approximately 60 members who are appointed through an Expression of Interest process for a term of two years.

PHOTOBOOTH

A photobooth was conducted at the public meeting. Visual speech bubbles for each option were created:

- Save Pittwater, no merger
- I support Greater Pittwater Council
- I support one Northern Beaches Council

Participants selected their preferred option and had their photo taken to declare their support. These photos were then uploaded to Council's Facebook page



RANDOM SAMPLE PHONE SURVEY

As part of its community engagement process, Pittwater Council commissioned independent research company Micromex Research to undertake a random sample telephone survey with over 400 Pittwater residents. This was a statistically significant sample size reflecting the demographic profile of Pittwater and provided a maximum sampling error of plus or minus 4.9% at 95% confidence.

The survey consisted of a series of questions eliciting demographic data, levels of support for each option and their preferences when it came to deciding on the options before them.

Results again were overwhelming in their support for an independent Pittwater to remain as we are.

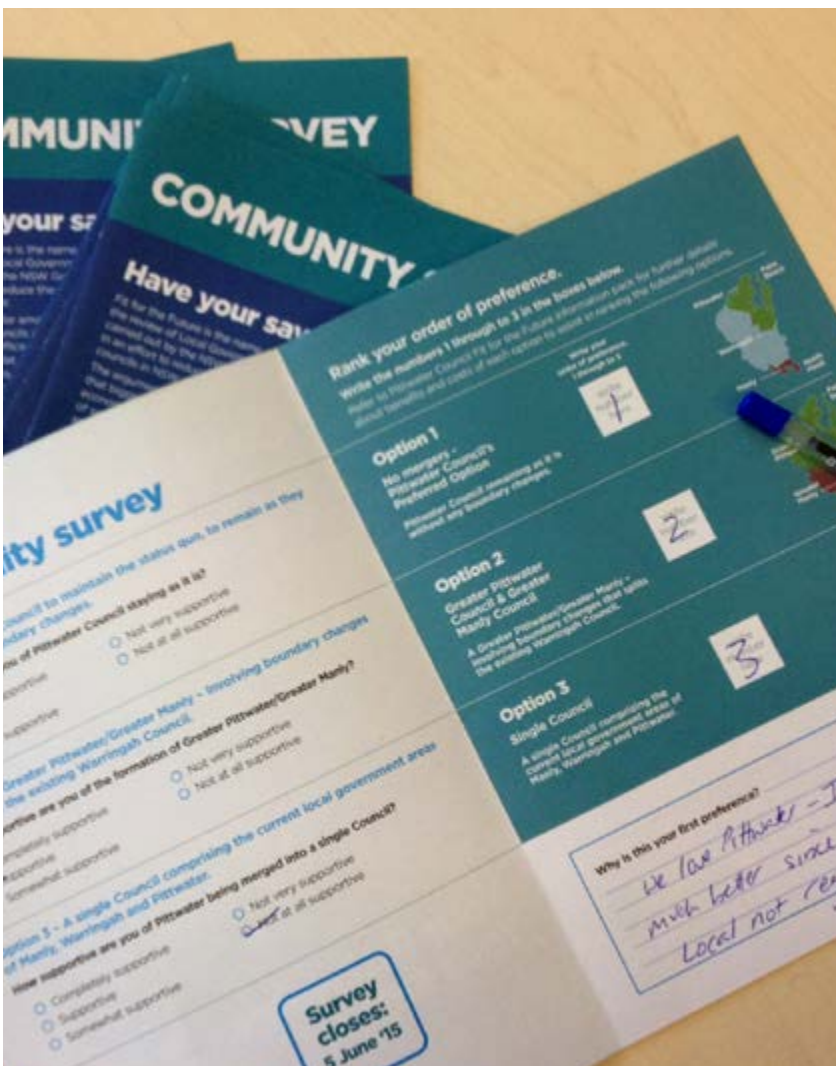


ONLINE & PAPER SURVEY

Residents were asked to review and consider the 'Your Pittwater, Your say' information booklet, Council's position on Fit for the Future and recent independent analysis on merger options - and then complete the online survey, or a paper survey (found at Council's customer service centres, libraries, community centres and other pop-up displays).

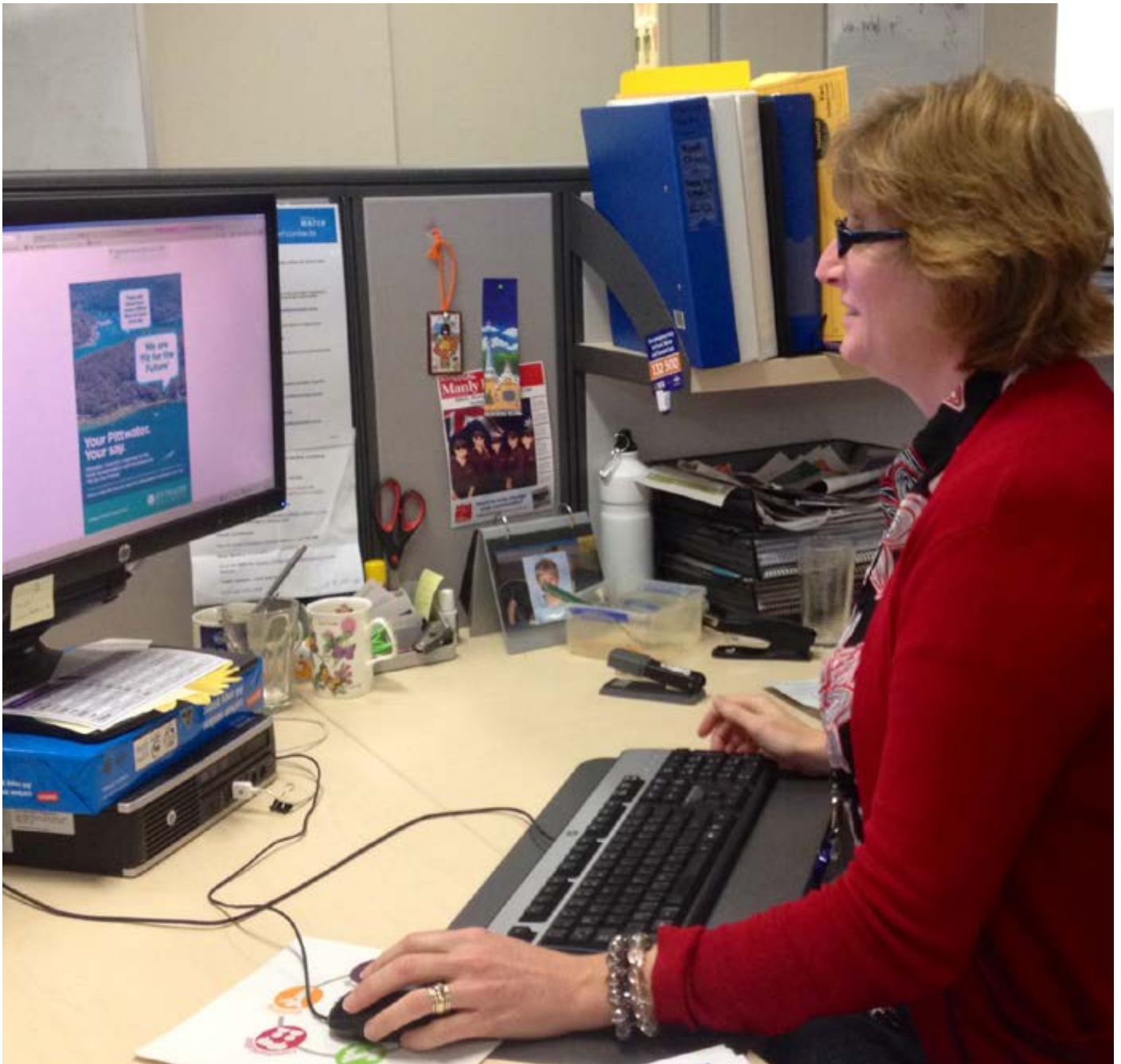
Council's Community and Library Services team also organised visits to the three public high schools in Pittwater to allow SRC students the opportunity to participate in the community survey. On the days that Council staff attended each school numbers attending the SRC meetings varied but over 100 students participated from Narrabeen Sports, Pittwater and Barrenjoey High Schools.

The survey was available from Friday 24 May and closed Friday June 5, 2015. Over 3500 people completed the Online or paper survey.



STAFF SURVEY

Pittwater Council staff were also keen to have a say. In response, an online survey (via survey monkey) was available for all staff to complete if they wished. 197 out of 302 staff members took the opportunity to complete this survey. This included members of staff who did not live in Pittwater.



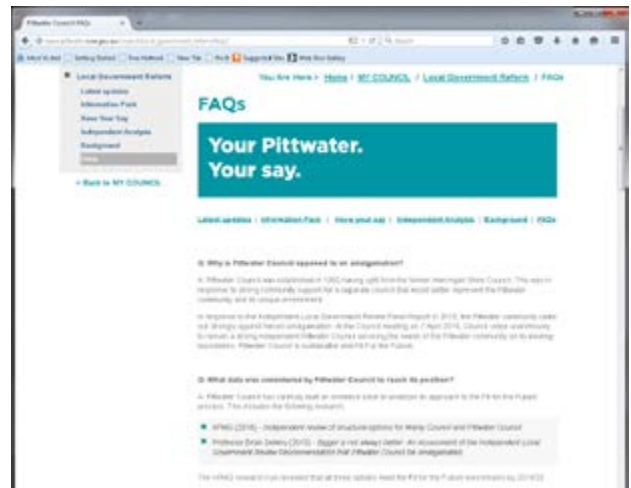
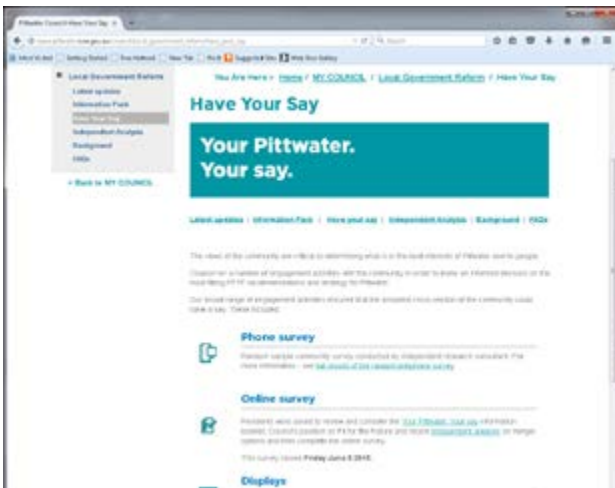
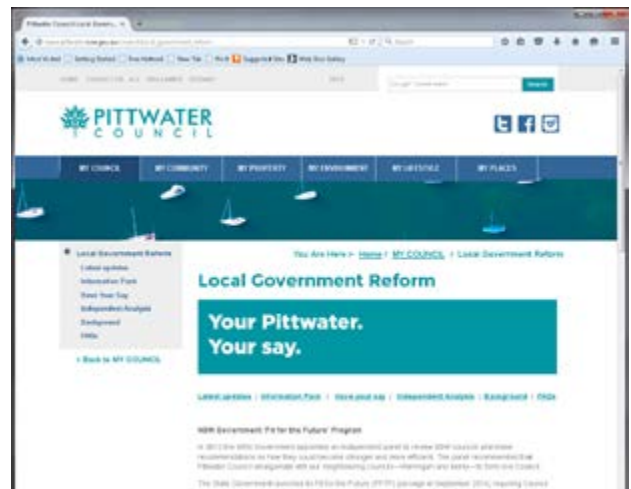
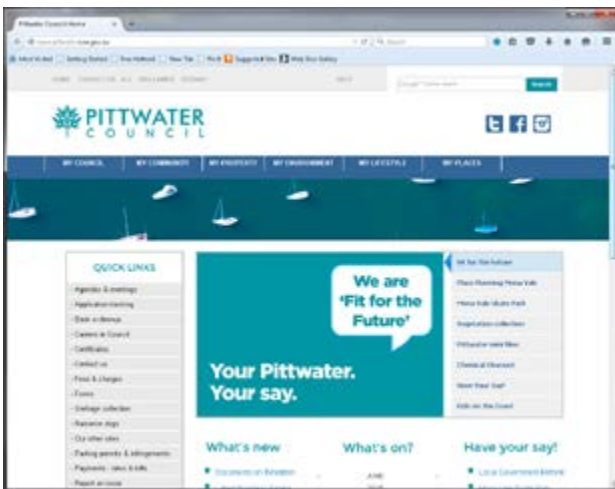
COFFEE CATCHUPS

A more informal and personal part of Pittwater Council's community engagement process involved several 'coffee catch-up' mornings with Mayor Jacqui Townsend and General Manager Mark Ferguson, along with other Councillors who were able to attend. These took place in Elanora Heights, Church Point, and Mona Vale shopping centres. A great opportunity for one-on-one discussions about the Fit for the Future process and its impact on Pittwater. A mobile display was visible with information booklets and a secure ballot box for completed surveys.



WEBSITE DEDICATED FITF PAGES

To keep Pittwater residents informed, Pittwater Council integrated specific Fit for the Future pages onto its website including: Latest updates, Background, Information Pack, Have Your Say, Independent Analysis, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) and Online Survey. This incorporated regular updates of meetings, media releases, Government directives, as well as relevant documents including research papers from KPMG (2015) and Professor Brian Dollery (2013). The Reform pages had 4598 page views from 3 813 unique users.



PRINT MEDIA

Notices, advertisements and articles were placed regularly in The Manly Daily, Pittwater Life, and Peninsular Living print media to keep residents informed of the Fit for the Future process and upcoming deadlines for meetings and opportunities to have their say. Prominent articles also appeared in the independent publication 'Pittwater Online' which has a broad readership throughout Pittwater.

Council continued to provide regular updates by media releases and through its fortnightly Council page in the Manly Daily. The Mayoral Column (published in the fortnightly Council page in the Manly Daily and on Council's website) provided key messaging on the Fit for the Future process and options throughout the entire process.

Each month the community were provided with updates about the Fit for the Future process with feature articles in Council's e-newsletter. Links to dedicated web pages were embedded within the e-newsletter so that readers could access relevant documents.

We are 'fit for the future'

Your Pittwater. Your say.

Pittwater Council is committed to a strong independent Council providing local representation and delivery of local services to the people of Pittwater on the existing boundaries.

PITTWATER COUNCIL
www.pittwater.nsw.gov.au

9970 1111
pittwater_council@pittwater.nsw.gov.au



Your Pittwater. Your say.

Pittwater Council's response to the NSW Government's reform proposals - We are 'Fit for the Future'

To have your say go to www.pittwater.nsw.gov.au/reform

Council is opposed to any proposed merger of Manly, Warringah and Pittwater into one Council.

PITTWATER COUNCIL

PITTWATER COUNCIL

SOCIAL MEDIA

A Fit for the Future specific social media strategy was identified and implemented to inform and engage the Pittwater community and to encourage residents to be informed and have their say. This included Council's Pittwater Council and I Love Pittwater Facebook pages and Twitter and Instagram platforms. Social media apps for Facebook and Twitter were created to ensure interaction with the information booklet and ability to complete the survey without leaving our platforms.

Council has undertaken a targeted strategy with daily messaging, which has resulted in:

- I Love Pittwater increased followers from 4200 to 8089 fans
- Record engagement - 5th most liked council page in NSW

Videos:

Released on 18/5, the first of our Pittwater video stories (mini films) resulted in 2320 views, 59 shares, 8280 reach within the first day.

Total reach for the video series exceeded 96.7K with 10.7 click throughs.

Twitter:

4,260 Followers from 13.9K tweets

Instagram:

591 – 1909 since (since April 2015)

A key focus of the social media campaign was to access a younger section of the community which is notoriously hard to reach.

Pittwater Council - Engagement

Males – 37% (highest percentage 12% 25-34)

Females – 61% (highest percentage 17% 25-34 ages)

I love Pittwater - Engagement

Males – 38% (highest percentage 7% 35-44)

Females – 59% (highest percentage 17% 35-44 ages)

