



North Sydney Precinct System

2010/11

Committee Guidelines



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The Precinct System, whilst under the auspice of North Sydney Council, is independent from the Council in its activities and decision-making. However Council considers the Precinct System one of its primary mechanisms for public participation in decision-making under its commitment to 'open government'.

Precinct Committees encourage resident involvement in Council decisions; enhance community awareness and social interaction; generate consultative information, ideas and opinions; support Council's inter-governmental and related dealings; imbue planning programs and policies with a physical, social and historic insight; and facilitate resident-initiated expenditure on care of public land.

The North Sydney Precinct System Guidelines provide a framework for Precinct Committees operating within the North Sydney local government area. The Guidelines assist individual committees to operate effectively whilst acknowledging that meeting styles and priorities differ amongst Committees. The Guidelines also outline the compulsory conditions requirements of each Committee as per the conditions of funding.

The Guidelines are the key point of reference for all Office Bearers and Committee Members. References to all 'Precinct' related forms are noted throughout the document. All forms are available from the Extranet. The Guidelines should be read in conjunction with Council's Precincts Policy (CL06-OG), Code of Conduct - Precincts (CL03-Code) and Memorandum of Understanding.



Council's Community Engagement Coordinator is the key contact for Precinct Committees

Phone: 9936 8181

Email: precincts@northsydney.nsw.gov.au

Website: www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au/precincts



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Objectives of the Precinct System

- To encourage involvement of residents, workers, students and property owners within the North Sydney area to inform Council of the needs and opinions of its community.
- To provide a point of access to Council in its conduct of public consultations and strategic planning matters in the local area.
- To provide information on the physical and social characteristics and requirements of individual Precinct areas to assist Council in formulating its programs and long term plans.
- To encourage interaction within the community and its environment.
- To liaise with elected representatives.
- To be a means through which information can be supplied to all residents.
- To strengthen the mandate of Council in liaising with bodies outside the Council area such as Federal and State Government, and private organisations.
- To inform Council and other park bodies of community opinion on issues affecting the local area

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Definitions

The following definitions are used throughout this document:

Action arising describes the motion, resolution or request put forth by the Precinct Committee, as derived from a vote of participants present, stating for and against.

Committee describes the gathering of community representatives (including residents, workers, students and property owners) from within a Precinct area who meet formally to discuss local issues and raise them with Council. Students 15 years and over are eligible to vote.

Precinct describes a physical area, within the Council boundaries, with borders defined by factors including physical geography, demographics, build form and land use.

Office Bearers describes the compulsory executive positions of the Precinct Committee including the Chairperson and Secretary. It is optional to also have a Vice Chairperson, Treasurer and or Minutes Secretary etc.

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Relationship between Councillors/ Staff and the Precinct Committees

- Council and its staff have an obligation to give effect to the lawful policies, decisions and practices of Council.
- Councillors, except those who live in the Precinct area, may attend meetings only by invitation. There will be no standing invitations for Councillor attendance.
- Councillors and staff cannot direct or propose motions at a Precinct meeting, in their capacity as a staff member or Councillor.
- Office Bearers must not take advantage (or seek to take advantage) of their status or position with, or functions performed for, Precinct Committees in order to obtain unauthorised or unfair benefit for themselves or for any other person.
- Office Bearers must not take advantage of their position to improperly address or attempt to influence Council, including Councillors and staff, in the performance of their public or professional duties to ensure a private benefit for themselves or any other person.
- For more information refer to the *Code of Conduct of Councillors and Staff* (CL01-Code) and the *Code of Conduct - Precincts* (CL03-Code).



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Committee/Office Bearer Roles and Responsibilities

- Office Bearers must live, work, study or own property within the Precinct.
- Office Bearers should not be from the same family group or de-facto relationship.
- Office Bearers shall hold this position for a maximum of four (4) consecutive years.
- Committees must hold a minimum of four (4) general meetings a year, plus their Annual General Meeting.
- Each Committee requires a Chairperson and a Secretary. A Treasurer and a Vice Chairperson may also be appointed. However, this is at the discretion of each Committee.
- Each Committee determines the level of formality regarding meeting procedures that is appropriate to their needs. However it is recommended that all the items of business are dealt with first, keep the meeting flowing smoothly, record the decisions of the meeting accurately, allow people to have their say and finish the meeting on time.
- No resident, worker, student or property owner is to be excluded from any meeting.
- The Committee may vote at a meeting in accordance with the *Code of Conduct - Precincts (CL03-Code)*. Resolutions made by the Committee and referred to Council must be voted on and carried from a formally advertised meeting.
- All resolutions must be submitted to Council either by inclusion in formal meeting minutes or as a summary of actions arising, and must include voting numbers; providing an account of voting numbers for and against.

5.1 ROLE OF CHAIRPERSON

- The main role of the Chairperson is to preside over the Committee, to facilitate meeting discussion and to be the central point of contact for the Committee. The role of Vice/Deputy Chairperson may be employed to support and lessen the workload of the Chairperson.

5.1.1

ORDER OF BUSINESS

- Ensure the Precinct meeting operates in accordance with the *Precincts Policy (CL06-OG)* and *Code of Conduct - Precincts (CL03-Code)*.
- Ensure an agenda is prepared and circulated for each meeting. Liaise with the Secretary or Vice Chairperson to prepare this. The agenda must set out the items of business to be considered.
- The agenda may be varied at the meeting by prioritising items, calling for general business and/or only guest speakers may be invited to speak at an earlier time.
- At the end of the meeting summarise the actions arising during the meeting and actions arising, so that everyone leaves with a clear idea of what has happened.
- The meeting is closed after all business has been properly addressed.

5.1.2

ACTIONS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

- Review the summary of actions/minutes arising before they are submitted to Council.
- As a standing item on the agenda the Chairperson must put the motion that the previous meeting's actions arising be moved and accepted.

5.1.3

DISCUSSION

- Chair the meeting by working through the agenda, facilitating discussion and general business items.
- Provide adequate opportunities for members who wish to speak, allowing some discussion on any matter prior to a person moving a motion; but limiting discussion where necessary if discussion takes too long so that the meeting is not dominated by a particular item or the meeting runs over time.
- Keep discussion on unimportant items short, group related items for a single discussion and discuss major or important business first.



- Don't allow discussion to jump ahead or back, but keep to simple, problem-solving order. Try to keep to the topic at hand. This will keep the meeting on track.
- Ensure control of the meeting is maintained. Act impartially and ensure discretionary powers are used in the best interest of the members/ participants.
- Encourage attendees to raise maintenance/repair issues directly with Council instead of including in minutes/summary of actions arising; especially urgent or dangerous issues that may cause harm. To avoid delays between submission of minutes/summary of actions arising and ensure the issue is addressed in a timely manner. Refer to details in coloured box about how to contact Council.

ADVISING COUNCIL OF MAINTENANCE ISSUES

Contact either Council's Customer Service Centre on 9936 8100 or log a 'online' Customer Action Request and repair issues or visit www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au/contactus and follow the prompts.

Please include your residential contact details as this will allow us to track your email, our response to you and any further correspondence. If a resident does not wish to leave their details they should advise which Precinct Committee they belong to. All correspondence sent to Council via email will commence processing on the following business day.

5.1.4

DECISIONS

- Ensure each item (motion) requiring a resolution is put to a vote.
- 'Stacking' or actively engaging persons for the purpose of influencing the outcome of decisions is not appropriate conduct at Precinct Committee meetings. The Chairperson must ensure that all relevant declarations of interest have been made by concerned parties prior to bringing a motion to a vote. Refer to the *Code of Conduct - Precincts* (CL03-Code) for more information about conflict of interest.
- Ensure that everyone understands what the decision is, especially the Secretary who records the decisions. It is a good idea to stop and check that the Secretary has taken down the decision correctly, and to clarify the wording for the Secretary if required. Include the number of persons for and against the resolution.
- The Chairperson can vote on all proposed motions and/or can put forward motions; providing that declarations of interest have been made as required. But the Chairperson does not hold the 'casting vote' in order to resolve deadlock in voting. A motion may be forwarded to Council even if the numbers voting for each side are equal, e.g. 16 votes for and 16 votes against.
- Items that require further information or deliberation may be held over until the next meeting. These items should be noted in minutes as 'deferred'.

5.1.5

TALKING WITH THE MEDIA

- Be the spokesperson for the Precinct Committee for all media matters.
- Council is available to assist with media liaison. Refer to *Code of Conduct - Precincts* (CL03-Code) for more information.





5.1.6 DEALING WITH INTOXICATED AND/OR AGGRESSIVE/DIFFICULT PERSONS DURING MEETINGS

The following steps provide a guide to managing intoxicated or aggressive/difficult persons at Committee meetings:

- If a meeting attendee appears intoxicated, exercise caution, putting both your safety and other attendees as the first priority. Where possible refuse to allow the intoxicated person/s on to the meeting premises.
- There may be times when people only attend meetings because they have a specific issue they would like to raise or address. Often the Office Bearers will be contacted prior to the meeting by this person/s and know in advance that they will be attending. If this is the case they can prepare for such situations. Ensure that there is an appropriate place on the agenda for the person to raise their issue. Advise them when it is appropriate to speak and allocate a time limit (e.g. Council meetings offer speakers 3 minutes per item).
- As the Chairperson, if a person becomes irritated or aggressive you must maintain control of the meeting and reinstate order. Remain calm and friendly. Its best not to argue with intoxicated or aggressive/difficult persons. Try to limit discussion and/or refer them onto an appropriate member of staff out of the meeting. If this does not appease them advise that the issue will be deferred or request that they leave the meeting. Most people will accept this approach and leave the meeting.
- If you believe there is any threat or fear of violence, or if your believe that someone could be injured because you have refused entry or requested they leave, then request assistance from the Harbourside Police - phone 9956 3199, or 131 444 (non emergency contact number).
- Inform Council's After Hours Service on 9936 8100 of all incidents within twenty-four (24) hours. Debriefing services can be arranged on request.

For more information refer to the *Code of Conduct - Precincts (CL03-Code)*.

5.1.7 ACTING IN THE ABSENCE OF ELECTED OFFICE BEARERS

- Where the Chairperson will be absent for a meeting/s the Vice/Deputy Chairperson or Secretary may assume the role for the nominated period.
- Where there is, or is expected to be, a vacancy in the office of Chairperson or Secretary, prior to the end of their four (4) year tenure, the Committee may appoint interim or 'acting' Office Bearers who can assume the position until the next AGM.
- Persons 'acting' in Office Bearer roles must familiarise themselves with the *Precinct System Guidelines*.

5.2 ROLE OF SECRETARY

The main role of the Secretary is to prepare and submit to Council a summary of actions arising/ minutes following each meeting, to deal with both incoming and outgoing correspondence, and to assist with preparation of meeting notices. The position of Secretary may also be split, if desired, into a Minutes Secretary and a Correspondence Secretary, so as to lessen the workload.

5.2.1 AGENDA AND NOTICE OF MEETINGS

- Assist the Chairperson devise an agenda for each meeting. Refer to section 5.1.1 for the role of Chairperson for more information about preparing the agenda.
- Ensure that the notice of each meeting is effectively promoted to committee members and local residents within the Precinct area.

5.2.2 RECORDING ACTIONS ARISING/MINUTES

- The Secretary must ensure that all actions arising are recorded, including the number of voting for and against.
- Only issues discussed at a formal committee meeting can be included as a formal action (resolution/motion/request etc).



- In accordance with the *Code of Conduct - Precincts* (CL03-Code) allegations against an individual Council staff member or Councillor must not be recorded in the minutes, but must be made in writing, to the General Manager.
- Ideally comments (feedback/submissions) on development applications should NOT be included

in the summary of actions arising/minutes. Ideally DA feedback should be submitted using the *Precincts DA Submission Form*, including the relevant DA number and the full property address. Use one form per property/development. Refer to section 10.5.3 for more information.

<p>The following examples demonstrate how actions (motions, resolutions, requests etc) should be articulated in minutes/summaries of actions arising. Precincts can not direct Council.</p>	<p>The Precinct requests that Council investigate ... The Precinct requests that Council repair ... The Precinct requests that Council consider ... The Precinct recommends that Council consider ...</p>
<p>The following example demonstrates how repairs or maintenance requests e.g. footpath, kerbside gutters, potholes etc. should be recorded - provide specific location or as much information as possible to assist Council to investigate the request and/or undertake work required in a timely manner.</p>	<p>Poor Example: Tree pruning required in Sydney Street.</p> <p>Good Example: The Precinct requests that Council prune the overhanging trees on Sydney Street, outside No. 4 and 6, as soon as possible, as is a hazard to pedestrians.</p>
<p>The following examples demonstrates how to record recommendations that require consideration by Council (e.g. to be included in Council's annual budget or referred to responsible authority e.g. RTA)</p> <p>Moved: NS Seconded: KA Vote: 12/12</p>	<p>Poor Example 1: Parking is bad in Sydney Street.</p> <p>Good Example 1: The parking in Sydney Street between Orange and Lime Streets has been heavily occupied lately. The Precinct requests that Council review the parking restrictions.</p> <p>Poor Example 2: The traffic lights at the corner of Sydney Street and Apple Street are not working properly.</p> <p>Good Example 2: Traffic signals at the corner of Sydney and Apple Streets - the right turn phase for northbound vehicles turning into Apple St isn't long enough.</p>



5.2.3 COMPULSORY SUBMISSION OF ACTIONS ARISING/MINUTES

- It is important that Council receives the summary of actions arising of each formal Precinct meeting as soon as possible after the meeting.
- Actions arising/minutes must be typed to ensure they are legible. Summaries of actions arising/minutes should be emailed to Council as a MS WORD document and send to **council@northsydney.nsw.gov.au**

This enables them to be registered on Council's document management system.

- Alternatively submissions of actions arising/minutes can be submitted to Council by fax 9936 8177, posted, or delivered to the Council Chambers in person.

5.2.4 COMPULSORY SUBMISSION OF ATTENDANCE RECORDS

- It is compulsory for each Committee to submit a copy of each meeting's Attendance Sheet to Council soon after the each meeting is held, or at the time of submitting the summary of actions arising/minutes.
- Use the supplied *Attendance Sheet (duplicate pad)*, pass pad around at each meeting so that those people present can record their names and addresses. Every person present must record his or her name and contact details for insurance purposes and can advise if they would like their email address used by the Committee to receive correspondence.
- Attendance Sheets can either be faxed to 9936 8177, returned with DA plans, or sent by email to **council@northsydney.nsw.gov.au**
- Council requires this list for insurance purposes; the list confirms who was present in the event of an injury or incident.
- Council will not use contact information supplied on the Attendance Sheets. The individual Committee can only use contact information. Council stores the supplied sheets as restricted (confidential) documents for insurance purposes.

- Each Committee should keep an up-to-date register of committee members' contact details. Alternatively Committees may wish to establish an e-group. E-groups allow users to create their own mailing lists and allows others to sign up for membership on the list and create an archive of messages.

5.2.5 CORRESPONDENCE

- A summary of correspondence 'in' and 'out' should be tabled at each meeting. To do this Committees may want to keep a manila folder containing the correspondence, this can be circulated during the meeting and only key items that require action need to be specifically referred to/noted in minutes.
- Alternatively the Committee could keep a 'register of correspondence' e.g. exercise book listing incoming correspondence at the front, and outgoing correspondence at the back; to assist with tracking mail that requires a response or action.
- The summary of correspondence 'in' and 'out' does not have to be included in your summary of actions arising/minutes.



5.3 GENERAL MEETING PRACTICE

5.3.1 QUORUM

- Previously Council had set a quorum of twelve (12) people as the minimum number of persons to form a Committee meeting and vote on any one (1) item. This number was set so that Precincts would remain representative.
- However, Council has reviewed this requirement and meetings can proceed with less than twelve (12) people present.
- If a person raises an issue on behalf of their street or building and it requires a vote, it will be recorded as (1) person voting.

5.3.2 PUBLICITY

- The most common form of publicity for Precinct meetings is a letterbox drop informing residents of the date, time and venue of the meeting and any items of interest on the agenda and or guest speaker. Ideally letterbox drops should be done three to five (3-5) days prior to the meeting date.
- Email is also a very effective method of advertising Precinct Committee activities and meetings. Committee members' email addresses can be obtained from the meeting attendance sheets. Email addresses supplied on the *Attendance Sheet* are for use by the Precinct only, not Council. Refer to section 5.2.4 for more information.
- For privacy reasons, when sending an email it is recommended that you send any Precinct-related emails as undisclosed recipients or blind copy (BC). Council staff can provide assistance with creating distribution lists.
- Council can print both your AGM and general meeting flyers as requested. Only black and white printing on colour paper is available. Flyer templates are available from the Extranet. Ideal flyer sizes are either A5 (i.e. two per A4 page). Send WORD or PDF doc, set up ready for printing, to precincts@northsydney.nsw.gov.au. All flyers must include meeting date, time and venue. Printing requests must be submitted a minimum of 5 working days before flyers need to be distributed. Advise quantity required. Office Bearers must arrange pick up of printing from Council's Customer Service Centre unless other arrangements have been made with the Community Engagement Coordinator. For more information about AGMs refer to section 8.

5.3.3 SUB COMMITTEES

- Precincts may also create sub-committees to address a specific issue or project. For example some Precincts have Traffic Sub-committee, Parks and Foreshores Sub-committee and/or Development Sub-committee.
- Committees may hold additional informal or subcommittee meetings; actions arising of which do not need to be presented to Council.
- Ideally the outcomes/summary of any sub committee meetings should be presented at the next general Committee meeting. This includes any significant actions arising.
- Requests of any kind (other than information updates) should not be submitted to Council outside of submission of actions arising/minutes from a formally advertised Committee meeting.

5.3.4 GUEST SPEAKERS

- It can be informative to have guest speakers at your Precinct meetings. Plan in advance if you would like a guest speaker. Contact them well in advance and provide an outline of what you would like them to discuss.
- Council can suggest guest speakers and topics. Where possible staff can also assist by organising and liaising with guest speakers. Please allow as much time as possible for speakers to be arranged.
- If Precincts require Council to organise specific guest speakers please clearly request this as an 'action' with the minutes; it will not be actioned by Council if its noted as discussion only.
- Give the speaker a timeframe and a designated place on the agenda. As a courtesy to the speaker, it is recommended that their item be brought forward on the agenda.
- Formally introduce the guest speaker.
- Where possible include detail of the guest speaker on any promotional material distributed prior to the event.



5.3.5 STREET/UNIT REPRESENTATIVES

- Some Committees have regular attendees often representing their street or unit building, other than themselves. They usually informally keep their neighbours in touch and informed about the current issues about Precinct activities that might affect them.
- If a person raises an issue on behalf of other residents in their street or building it is treated as one (1) vote at the time a formal resolution is made.
- Street/unit representatives can also be used to distribute meeting notices.

5.3.6 JOINT PRECINCT MEETINGS

- Committees may want to occasionally hold 'joint' meetings with their neighbouring Precinct/s to share guest speaker opportunities and joint activities. Or where issues of concern are relevant to more than one Precinct Committee. In such cases the Office Bearers should jointly coordinate the meetings agenda and promote this accordingly.

5.3.7 PROJECTS AND EVENTS

- Precincts may wish to undertake projects or hold events. The types of projects and events undertaken by Committees are divided into two (2) categories; Category A refers to small to medium scale projects/events and/or events that do not involve the public (i.e. contained only to activities of Committee members), whilst Category B refers to large-scale public events. Refer to table below for more information.
- Committees are eligible for additional funding from Council to undertake/host projects and events. The amount of funding is determined each year by Council. Refer to section 10.4 Precinct Event Funding for more information.
- Committees wishing to undertake/hold projects and events (including requests for additional funding) must seek endorsement from Council first. For both categories of projects/events applications must be received two to three (2-3) months prior to the project commencement/event date. Council will give written approval if your application has been successful.
- Council's Community Engagement Coordinator can assist Committees prepare applications.

Category A - small/medium scale projects and events	Category B - public events
Apply using the <i>Precinct Project or Event Application</i> form. Examples of 'Category A' project and event types include photographic projects and Committee End of Year celebrations held in Civic Park or Geddes Room.	Apply using the <i>Precincts Application to Hold a Public Event</i> form. An example of 'Category B' public event types includes Street Parties and Community BBQs - events where public parks/streets are to be used.





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- The frequency of meetings is at the discretion of each Committee, however a minimum of four (4) committee meetings must be held annually. The majority of Committees meet once each calendar month; some Committees hold meetings bi-monthly and/or quarterly.
- It is preferable that meetings are held in a regular venue, on a fixed day e.g. first Tuesday; second Wednesday. The regularity of meeting date, time and venue makes it easier for residents to remember when the meetings are held and allow them to plan ahead.
- It may be unavoidable that meetings fall on the same date and time as others.
- Each Committee must advise Council by the end of each year of its meeting schedule for the following year. Council will provide an annual schedule of meetings to all Precincts, this will be distributed in hard copy and available on Council's website.

Meeting frequency

- Council must be notified of any changes to meeting one (1) week prior to it being held so it can inform interested residents and update records. Any meeting of the Committee held outside of the predetermined annual meeting schedule must be broadly advertised throughout the Precinct area at least one (1) week prior to the meeting.
- Depending on the date of the meeting, most Committees do not meet in January each year and many use the scheduled December meeting to host an 'end of year celebration'. Some Committees have also held 'New Year welcome meetings', when other commitments of members are less demanding. Committees who meet in the third or fourth week of the month may find it more appropriate to miss a December meeting.

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- Committees can use the venue of their choice. Council can provide use of its meeting rooms free of charge. Other suitable venues include community centres, church halls, schools, cafes or local clubs; however these venues may charge a hire fee.
- Consider the needs of attendees eg: disability access, childcare, acoustics, parking etc. when selecting your venue. Provide a comfortable environment for meetings so that attendees feel relaxed and included. Provide refreshments for each meeting.

Venues

- Precinct Committees are covered under Council's public liability insurance policy and proof of this may be required at the time of booking. Contact Council's Community Engagement Coordinator for assistance with arranging meeting venues or obtaining proof of insurance.



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Annual General Meeting

- Committees must hold an Annual General Meeting (AGM) once each year, preferably held in the same month each year.
- In accordance with the *Precincts Policy (CL06-0G)* the maximum tenure for Office Bearers is four (4) years, in line with local government elections.
- Where a position has been vacated earlier in the year it may be filled through nomination at the time of the AGM only. Prior to the AGM the position may only be filled as an interim measure e.g. Acting Chairperson.
- An extraordinary AGM may be called should the Committee wish to elect Office Bearers mid term, or alternatively refer to section 8.1 where acting persons can continue as Office Bearers to the next AGM.
- Council needs to be updated of any changes to Office Bearer contacts details.

8.1 NOMINATION OF OFFICE BEARERS

- Standard procedure at an AGM is for the election of office bearer positions to commence with the declaration that all vacant positions (i.e. positions that were vacated prior to the end of the four (4) year tenure) are now vacant and the Chairperson 'steps down' and does not chair the election itself. Alternatively at the end of the four (4) year tenure all positions are declared vacant.
- It is recommended that an independent 'Returning Officer' is used. This person calls for nominations. Nominations can be taken by self or peer nomination. In announcing nominations include any written nominations received.
- All nominations should be 'seconded' by and the person nominated asked of they accept the nomination.
- If only one (1) nomination is received the person is declared elected. If, however more than one (1) nomination is received (including any written nominations received prior to the meeting) the option to share the position can be discussed. If this is agreed to an election is not necessary, otherwise a vote will need to be taken.
- Voting may be conducted by 'show of hands' or secret ballot (writing the preferred candidates name on identical pieces of paper), which are then collected by the returning officer and counted in private. First past the post wins or in the event of a draw, a name can be drawn from a hat. The Returning Officer declares the result. These procedures are repeated for all Office Bearer positions.
- At the conclusion of the appointment of all Office Bearer positions, the Returning Officer hands the meeting over to the new Chairperson. If the new Chairperson is not familiar with the issues on the agenda, the previous Chairperson may assist by running the meeting and a formal hand over can occur at a mutually agreeable time before the next Committee meeting.
- The number of members voting for/against must be recorded in the AGM minutes.



8.2 NOTICE OF MEETING

- Committees must promote their upcoming AGM throughout the Precinct area, giving a minimum of 7 days notice. Only black and white printing on colour paper is available. Flyer templates are available from the Extranet. Ideal flyer sizes are either A5 (i.e. two per A4 page) or A6 (i.e. four per A4 page). Send WORD or PDF doc files, set up ready for printing, to precincts@northsydney.nsw.gov.au
- Flyers must include meeting date, time and venue. Printing requests must be submitted a minimum of 5 working days before flyers need to be distributed. Advise quantity required. Office Bearers must arrange pick up of printing from Council's Customer Service Centre unless other arrangements have been made with the Community Engagement Coordinator.
- Upon request Council's Community Engagement Coordinator can also assist Committees with AGM preparation; including agenda development, election processes, guest speakers and preparing annual financial statements.

8.3 COMPULSORY SUBMISSION OF AGM MINUTES, ATTENDANCE RECORDS, FINANCIAL STATEMENT AND CONTACTS DETAILS FORM

Following every AGM each Committee must:

- Submit a copy of their AGM minutes to Council
- Submit a copy of the *Attendance Sheet*
- Submit an *Annual Financial Statement*, showing all income and expenditure for the given financial year period.
- Complete the *Precinct Officer Bearer Contact Details form* so Council's records can be updated.



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Combined Precincts Committee

Like the individual Committees, the Combined Precincts Committee (CPC) is not a formal committee of Council. Both are under the auspice of North Sydney Council and are independent from the Council in its activities and decision-making.

- The CPC was founded by the Precincts themselves back in the 1990s. The Committee meets on a quarterly basis (usually March, May, August and November), submitting its meeting minutes/actions arising to Council for response. Council processes the actions/recommendations and replies in the form of a memo from the General Manager. Meeting dates are included on the annual schedule distributed to all Committees.
- The CPC provides an opportunity for the individual Committees to network amongst themselves, to discuss issues of joint concern and raise them with Council and/or be briefed by Council of key issues. Committees are encouraged to participate in each CPC meeting.
- Nomination to the Executive Committee of the CPC is open to all Office Bearers of individual Committees. The positions of the Executive Committee include two (2) Co-Conveners. Council's Community Engagement Coordinator provides secretarial and treasury support. The CPC usually holds its AGM in May each year.



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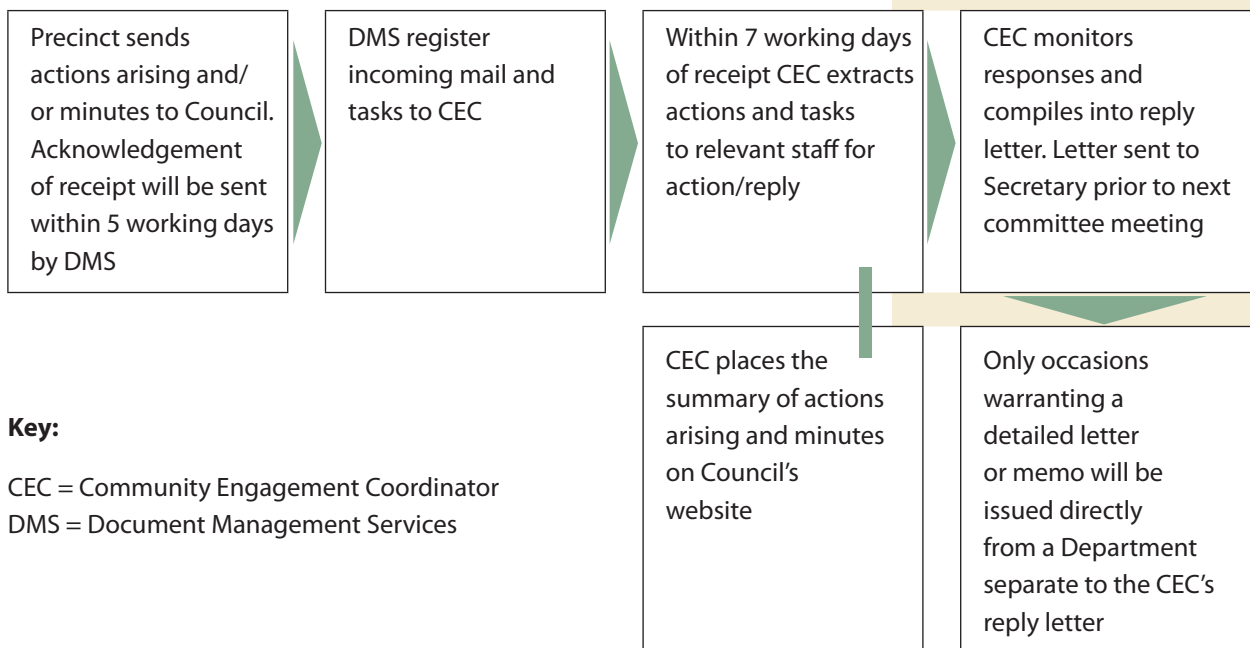
Council's Role and Responsibilities

Council provides various forms of support to the North Sydney Precincts System, primarily coordinated through the Community Engagement staff, situated within Council's Corporate Planning and Governance Department.

10.1

RESPONDING TO ACTIONS ARISING/MINUTES

The following diagram illustrates the steps involved in Council responding to actions arising. If sending summaries of actions arising/minutes to council@northsydney.nsw.gov.au an automated response will be generated advising that your email has been received.



10.2 WEEKLY CORRESPONDENCE

Council prepares weekly correspondence that is distributed to all Secretaries in both hard copy (post) and soft copy (e-bulletin). This includes the following information on a regular basis:

- Flyers per event, program or service
- Community and Library Newsletters
- Council and Committee minutes (where requested by Precinct)
- Community consultations and surveys
- Notices of proposed works and Plans of Management
- Streetscape and Bushcare project information
- Council Projects and Strategic Plans
- Development Application Notices and Consents
- Council and community events

Please note: if a committee does not receive mail one week it is likely it was because there was nothing to send.

10.3 OPERATIONAL FUNDING

Each year Council determines the amount of operational funds available to precinct committees. This may include but is not limited to venue hire, printing and flyer distribution costs, stationery, phone call and internet reimbursement, refreshments and catering, PO Box rental, website administration, promotion, committee activities etc. Council reviews the amount of operational funding annually. Precinct Committees are not registered for GST, as such Council will not pay GST on top of the operational or event funding allocations.

In 2010/11 Council is offering Precinct Committees a maximum of \$1,000 operational funding:



Council will distribute funding to Precincts by either of the following two (2) options; each Committee may nominate their preferred option:

Option A	Option B
<p>Funding can be paid in two (2) installments, each of \$500.00:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The first installment of \$500.00 will be issued upon receipt of an invoice and appropriate documentation. 2. The second installment of \$500.00 will be paid upon receipt of statement of income and expenditure demonstrating how funds are used; 3. Residual funding in excess of \$500.00 must be returned to Council. 	<p>Alternatively, to assist Committees to minimise administrative responsibilities, in particular those that don't have a Treasurer, Committees can:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Receive up to \$500.00 petty cash; and 2. Council will administer the balance of funding (i.e. \$500.00). Council can organise payment of invoices, liaise with contracted suppliers etc. 3. Council retains residual funding. Unspent funding allocations can not be accumulated and spent in a subsequent financial year.

To receive payment by either option each Committee must supply the following documentation:

Form	Purpose
<i>Bank account details</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email or letter confirming account details to be received by Council from each Precinct and registered in Dataworks. This must be received if the Committee's bank account has changed since the previous year. • Must include institution name, BSB, account name and number.
<i>Memorandum of Understanding</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MOU is an agreement between Council and the individual Precinct Committee confirming the roles and responsibilities of each party. • The MOU is to be signed by the Chairperson/delegated Council officer.
<i>Precincts Acknowledgement form</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All Office Bearers are required to complete this form. • By completing the form you are confirming that you have read and understood the terms and conditions regarding Council's auspice of the North Sydney Precinct System as outlined in the <i>Precincts Policy (CL06-OG)</i>, <i>Code of Conduct - Precincts (CL03-Code)</i> and the <i>Precinct System Guidelines</i>.



Council anticipates that some Committees will not require the full operational funding allocation each year. Whilst there will be some Committees that can demonstrate their activities require additional financial assistance; therefore Council will on an application by application basis allocate remaining funds to Committees that demonstrate they require additional financial support.

Committees requiring additional financial support must apply in writing to Council demonstrating why additional funds are required (i.e. how funds will be spent). Applications must be accompanied by a *Statement of Income & Expenditure*. Each application will be considered and approval will be granted pending available funds. For more information contact Council's Community Engagement Coordinator.

10.4 ADDITIONAL PROJECT AND EVENT FUNDING

In 2011 Council is also offering additional funding to each Precinct, up to \$1000.00, for 'special events'. To obtain this funding each Committee must complete the *Precincts Application to Hold a Public Event form* (Category B) or the *Precinct Project or Event Application form* (Category A), depending on the scale of the activity, and advise Council of the amount requested and provide details of how the funds will be spent. Council will administer the funding as outlined under section 10.3 Operational Funding.

10.5 DEVELOPMENT APPLICATIONS

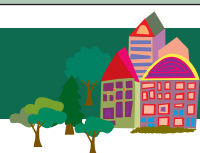
Council notifies owners and occupants of properties that it believes might be affected by a development proposal so that they may make a submission, which will be considered when the application is assessed. Committees also receive the same notification. Precincts may wish to comment on proposed developments within or neighbouring their Precinct area, providing feedback to Council on the impact on the immediate neighbourhood of the proposed development.

10.5.1

COLLECTION AND RETURN OF DA PLANS

- Council will provide copies of current development application plans for Precincts to view. Council sends hard copy notifications of every development application affecting the Precinct to its Secretary weekly. A soft copy summary is also included in the correspondence e-bulletin.
- Council requires development applicants to submit an additional set of plans for the Precinct where the development is proposed (and for neighbouring Precincts if the location is close to or near a boundary).
- Precincts borrowing plans must sign a form on collection, with the undertaking that no copies of any sort will be made. Committees can borrow plans for up to seventy-two (72) hours.
- To borrow plans Precincts must notify Council's Community Engagement Coordinator up to three (3) working days prior to the desired date of collection, advising the relevant DA number/s and addresses. Requests for DA plans can be made via email or phone.
- Plans will be ready for collection from Council's Customer Service Centre and will be packaged in a plastic waterproof pouch. Each pouch includes seals; please use them when returning plans, ensuring that you have enclosed the complete set borrowed. Missing or late plans will result in a reminder call from Council. Plans can also be collected from Stanton Library during opening hours, upon request.
- As an alternative to returning DA plans to Council's Customer Service Centre during business hours Monday to Friday, Precincts can now use any of the following methods to return plans: via the Council mail box (size permitting) via Stanton library after-hours return chute; and or via Stanton Library front desk.
- Following determination of a development application, plans and other documents can be accessed via Council's website in accordance with Council's *Access to Council Documents Policy (CL01-OG)*.

Requests to borrow DA plans should be directed to Council's Community Engagement Coordinator on 9936 8181, or send an email to precincts@northsydney.nsw.gov.au, quoting DA number and address.



10.5.2 CONTACT WITH COUNCIL'S PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT STAFF

- Council staff, including Planning Advisors, can assist with any questions regarding current development application (DA), and can answer questions on specific technical issues.
- Council's Planning Advisors are available to respond to general enquiries in regard to Development Applications or any general planning matters/enquiries. Such enquires should be made via the *Precincts General Planning/DA Enquiry Form* - either email to council@northsydney.nsw.gov.au or fax to 9936 8177; or alternatively Ph 9936 8100. A Council officer will provide a response, either via email or phone, within 48 hours of receipt.
- If the Committee has a specific question phone contact can be made with the Assessment Officer daily, between the hours of 9.30am to 11.00am only. Alternatively Council's Planning Advisors hold free, informal half hour duration meetings per week. Appointments are held on Tuesday and Thursday mornings – between the hours 10.30 am and 1.00pm (last meeting time 12.30pm). Notes of each meeting are kept for Council's records. To book an appointment contact Customer Service on Ph 9936 8100. Allow up to two (2) weeks notice for an appointment to become available.
- The Planning Advisors are also available to address Committee meetings periodically in order to provide general information and education on planning matters. To arrange attendance contact Council's Manager of Planning and Development Services, Ph 9936 8100.
- Applicants and submitters should be aware that Councillors can not indicate their voting position prior to a Council Meeting nor convey any suggestion of willingness to provide concessions or peripheral treatment to applicants or objectors.
- Staff are not in a position to comment on the merits of the proposal at notification stage, nor is it appropriate that they assist you in formulating your objection, should you have one.
- Refer to the *Code of Conduct - Precincts (CL03-Code)* for more information.

10.5.3 COMMENTING ON ADVERTISED PROPOSALS

- Council considers applications as soon as possible as part of its service to local residents and applicants. As a result, submissions must be lodged within fourteen (14) days as indicated in the notification letter. Should your submission be lodged after the close of this period it is possible that Council may have determined the application prior to receipt of your submission.
- Submissions **MUST** be in writing using the *Precincts DA Submission Form* and should relate directly to the work proposed and its possible impact on surrounding property or the locality. Clearly state on the form the reasons for submission, e.g. privacy, traffic, overshadowing, neighbourhood characteristics, safety etc.- referring to both positive and negative aspects of the proposal. Do not submit a form if there are no comments.
- Council prefers that Committees use the *Precincts DA Submission Form* instead of including comments within minutes; the purpose of this is to ensure that the submission is received by the assessing officer by the close of the notification period. The completed form can be lodged separately from the summary of actions/minutes. On occasion Committees have submitted their minutes which contain comments on development applications, well after the closing period and/or even after determination. **Using the form prevents delays.**
- *Precinct DA submission forms* can be submitted to Council when returning borrowed DA plans.
- Committees are encouraged not to repeat comments within the summary of actions arising/ minutes; however reference can be made if a *Precincts DA Submission Form(s)* has been submitted. Refer to the example in the coloured box.
- Council will acknowledge receipt of Committee submissions. However, Council does not provide a specific reply to the matters raised by individual submissions during the assessment process and thus DA comments made by Precinct Committees are no different. All concerns raised in submissions received at Council are addressed in the report prepared for the application.
- Committees can check determinations/conditions of consent for a development application via



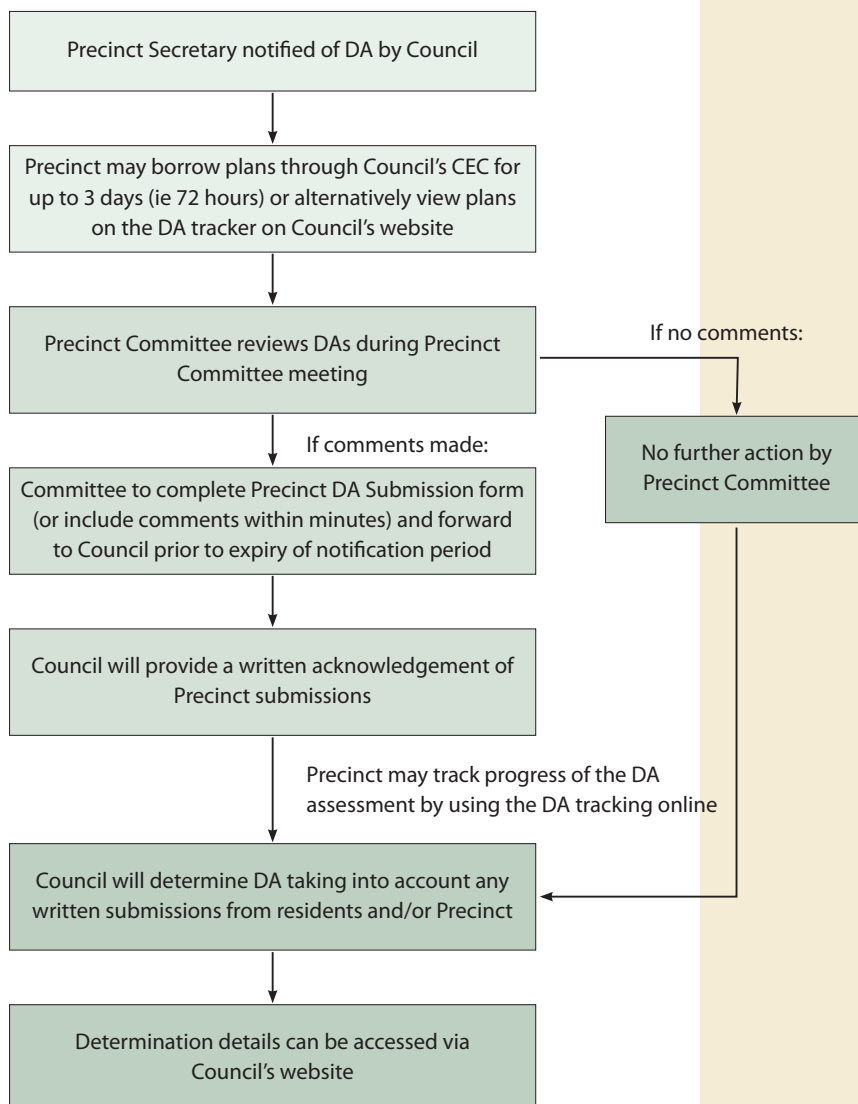
<p>The following example illustrates how to include reference to <i>DA Submission Forms</i> submitted under separate cover in your summaries of actions arising/minutes:</p>	<p>Item 4 - Development Applications</p> <p>Comments on the following proposals have been submitted under separate cover:</p> <p>DA 123/08 DA 456/08</p>
<p>* Comments made on the form do not need to be repeated in the summary of actions arising/minutes.</p>	

Council's website www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au/DAtracking DA Tracking Online allows you to track the progress of any development applications submitted and or access the development application plans and get progress updates by email. The summary of contents will also be forwarded electronically to all Committees, in PDF format, from one month after determination.

via the *Precincts General Planning/DA Enquiry Form* - either email to council@northsydney.nsw.gov.au or fax to 9936 8177. A Council officer will provide a response, either via email or phone, within 48 hours of receipt.

- If a Committee has specific questions relating to a development application these should be made

- If minor amendments, or amendments made to overcome concerns already raised, are made to the application before it is determined, you may not be re-notified, but your earlier submissions will be considered.



10.6 ANNUAL BUDGET & OPERATIONAL PLAN BRIEFING NIGHT

Each year Council hosts a briefing night for Committees to discuss the budget, capital works priority list for the coming year and Operational Plan. This is usually held in May/June. Committees will receive advance notification of this briefing session. Refreshments will be provided. At this meeting Committees should raise any issues that affect their Precinct area.

10.6.1 ANNUAL TRAFFIC STRATEGY REVIEW

Where a Precinct Committee makes a request for a traffic facility such as a new pedestrian crossing or traffic calming, this is referred to the annual Traffic Strategy Review. The Traffic Strategy meetings occur in May each year. A Committee representative is invited to attend these meetings to discuss with Council officers and Councillors the priorities for traffic facilities for the following financial year. The traffic strategy implementation procedure adopts a methodology that allows the community's high priority traffic projects to be ranked according to a number of criteria, including safety, residential amenity, pedestrian amenity, cyclist amenity, through traffic control, public transport benefits and equity. The traffic projects in each financial year are usually reported to Council and set by August of that year.

10.7 PRECINCT COMMITTEE TRAINING

Council will provide training opportunities for Office Bearers including:

10.7.1 ANNUAL INDUCTION SESSION

Council will host an annual Induction Session for new Office Bearers, outlining the roles and responsibilities of the Chairperson and Secretary and detailing forms and correspondence procedures. This session is usually held in February. This is also a useful refresher

course for long-standing Office Bearers.

10.7.2 OTHER TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Council will endeavour to provide other training opportunities as required or requested.

10.8 PROMOTION

Council will provide the following to promote the Precinct System:

10.8.1 CORPORATE ADVERTISEMENT

When space is available within Councils weekly corporate advertisement in the local papers, adverts promoting Precinct meetings will be included. The advertisement will include the Precinct name, meeting date, time and venue. Other related events and activities can also be promoted through this advertisement.

10.8.2 COUNCIL WEBSITE

- Council has several pages of its website www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au/precincts designated to promotion of the Precinct System. These pages are regularly updated.
- Each year Council updates the individual pages to include Committee contact details, meeting dates, highlights of Precinct activities and achievements, maps and summary of actions arising.
- Committees may request that specific information regarding their activities be included on their page of the website.
- Minutes will continue to be posted on the individual pages, provided they are sent to Council in a compatible format (i.e. WORD). Refer to section 5.2.3 for more information.
- Council will post Committee minutes on the website as supplied, however if they include any defamatory comments, allegations and/or names instead of initials Council will edit accordingly. Should significant edits be required these will be discussed with the committee prior.



10.8.3 COMMUNITY NOTICE BOARDS

- Council has over sixty (60) community noticeboards for advertising community events and services.
- Notices are changed approximately every six (6) weeks, and closing dates are strictly adhered to. The six (6) weekly changeovers are posted throughout the LGA, and therefore may not be suitable for advertising local Precinct meetings - in this case Committees may prefer to obtain a key and access the "Precinct" section (approximately 2 x A4) of each noticeboard within their boundary.
- Notices should be A5 size or smaller, but other sizes can sometimes be negotiated.
- For more information or to obtain a key contact Council's Community Information Officer on 9936 8189 for further information.

10.9 COUNCIL MEETING SCHEDULE

Each Committee will receive from Council an annual schedule of all meetings convened by resolution (including ordinary Council and committee meetings). Council holds various meetings during the year. Meetings are not held in January and sometimes, the date of December meetings may be altered. The majority of these meetings are open to the public to attend.

10.9.1 COUNCIL MEETINGS

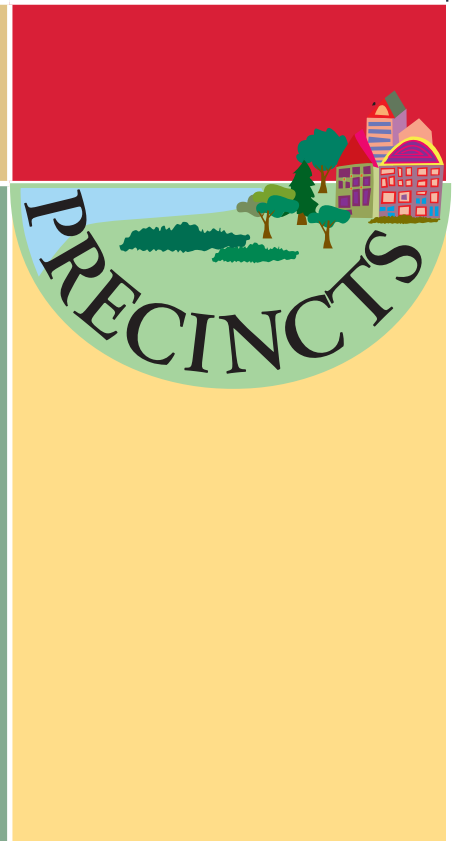
- Council is held at 7.00pm on three (3) out of four (4) Monday nights (except public holidays). For upcoming agendas call the Information Line (updated after Thursday midday) ph 9936 8188.
- Notice of Council Assessment agenda is distributed to all Precincts following publication of each business paper. Precincts can request agenda and minutes.

- The public is welcome to attend these meetings and address the Council (refer to guidelines available at www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au). If you have an interest in or wish to address Council on an agenda item please ph 9936 8115 before 5.00pm on the day of the meeting, or notify the officer outside the Council Chamber between 6.40pm and 6.55pm. Such items will be brought forward in agenda order and dealt with before items in which there is no interest from the public gallery.
- It should be noted that parts of Council meetings may be recorded to assist in the transcription of the Minutes. The recordings are deleted immediately after Council has adopted the Minutes. Freedom of Information (FOI) laws applies to the recording of Council meetings, and from time to time, Council may receive applications to release such recordings. These applications are processed in accordance with FOI legislation.

10.9.2 REFERENCE GROUP MEETINGS

- Council has a number of reference groups including the Community Access and Safety Reference Group, Community Services Reference Group, Environmental Services Reference Group, Library, Historical and Cultural Resources Reference Group.
- Reference group meetings are held at various times - for details of their meeting times and locations please refer to the schedule available at www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au includes searchable agendas, minutes and reports.
- A summary of upcoming reference group meetings is also included in the weekly e-bulletin.





NORTH SYDNEY COUNCIL
200 MILLER STREET
NORTH SYDNEY NSW 2060
Ph: 9936 8100

January 2011