

Waverley Community Strategic Plan

2022 - 2023

Community engagement
outcomes report

March 2022



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1. Introduction

Waverley Council is developing a new 10-Year Community Strategic Plan, 2022-2032 (CSP). The CSP represents the highest level of strategic planning undertaken by Council. It articulates the aspirations and priorities of the Waverley community and provides clear strategies to achieve this shared vision.

In 2021, Council engaged Cred Consulting to deliver an extensive community engagement program to inform the development of the new CSP.

The purpose of engagement was to explore the community's vision, aspirations and priorities for the future of the Waverley Local Government Area (LGA).

This report provides a summary of outcomes across all community engagement activities.



Community engagement pop-up at Bondi Farmers Market on Saturday 29 January 2022 (Source: Cred Consulting)

2. How we engaged

2.1 Engagement activities

Between July 2021 and February 2022, we heard from nearly 1,000 Waverley community members between the ages of 4 and 70+ years old.

As shown in the tables below, the community engagement program consisted of two phases:

- **Phase 1** explored the community's vision for the future of the Waverley LGA, including what the community is excited and concerned about for the next ten years.
- **Phase 2** focused on understanding the community's priorities and ideas to achieve the vision identified through phase 1.

Phase 1: Vision and themes

Engagement activity	Number of participants
Online community survey	178
LGBTQIA+ online roundtable	11
Community online workshop	14
Youth online summit	10
Combined Advisory Committees online workshop	9
Combined Precinct Committees online workshop	11
Community online focus groups (2)	21
DIAP online focus group	11
Preschool survey	53
Primary school survey	32
SAMP/EAP engagement panel (4 meetings)	22
Asset priorities online survey	200
Local business online consultation	12
Total number of participants phase 1	584



Phase 2: Priorities

Engagement activity	Number of participants
Online community survey	70
Pop-ups at Bronte Beach, Bondi Beach, Dover Heights and Bondi Junction	265
Community submissions by email	1
Total number of participants phase 2	336



Community engagement pop-up at Bondi Farmers Market on Saturday 29 January 2022 (Source: Cred Consulting)

2.2 Engagement process

All community members had the opportunity to provide feedback via online surveys, workshops, focus groups and pop-ups. The aim was to capture a broad range of voices and perspectives to ensure the new CSP accurately reflects the priorities and aspirations of our diverse community.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, the majority of community engagement activities were delivered online in order to adhere to NSW Health Guidelines with the exception of the socially distanced pop-ups held in Phase 2, when restrictions had relaxed.

The focus groups were specifically targeted to ensure we heard from community members from a range of backgrounds, including people with disability, LGBTQIA+ people, older people, young people and First Nations people.

A key focus of the engagement program was targeted at children and young people to ensure that they were able to have a say in decision-making that will influence their lives. These activities included child-friendly surveys distributed to local primary schools and Council-run early education centres, as well as an online Youth Summit in which young people pitched their ideas to Council to make Waverley a better place for young people.

Precinct committee and advisory committee members were invited to provide feedback via online workshops and were also invited to complete the online surveys.

Waverley business owners were invited to participate in an online business consultation in which they discussed their ideas for the future of Waverley's local economy and business community. As part of the engagement program, Council also held an online meeting with representatives from LGBTQIA+ community organisations to discuss how to make Waverley more inclusive for all.

As part of the engagement program we also consulted with residents on other Council plans, including a recruited engagement panel and survey exploring priorities for the Strategic Asset Management Plan and Environmental Action Plan. Findings have informed outcomes around future visioning but are reported on separately.

The draft Community Strategic Plan will be placed on public exhibition in April 2018 and community members will be invited to provide feedback.



Community engagement pop-up at Bondi Farmers Market on Saturday 29 January 2022 (Source: Cred Consulting)

3. Findings from Phase 1

3.1 What the community loves about Waverley now

Across Phase 1 engagement activities, people told us that they highly value living in Waverley now and are proud of the many strengths and assets of their community and place. Some people told us that during the COVID-19 pandemic, they felt that Waverley was one of the best places in the world to live due to its proximity to the beach and beautiful open spaces that support health and wellbeing.

Community members told us they love to live in Waverley now because:

- It's on the coastline with access to the beach, nature and green open spaces
- It has a range of local shops and transport options available
- It's located conveniently with access to the City and airport
- The sense of community and heritage of the area.

"I love the vibrant buzz of people in cafes, markets, bars etc."

"What makes Waverley attractive is that we have a balance of cosmopolitan and natural environment, good transport connections between main centres like Bondi Junction and the beach and we are in walking distance to the assets and spaces that we value. We need to protect our open space and maintain and improve it. This means ensuring planning controls that will protect local character and local scale."

"I love how diverse our community is. It includes visitors and short-term residents from all over the world and people of all ages living in close proximity to each other."



Community engagement pop-up at Rose Bay on Sunday 30 January 2022 (Source: Cred Consulting)



3.2 What the community said they're **excited** about for Waverley's future

- **Streets that are easier to get around** with less traffic, that are more walkable with better cycling and walking connections
- **Upgraded parks and open spaces to support healthy lifestyles and to enjoy nature**
- **More arts and cultural venues and events and a more vibrant and inclusive night life**
- **More cohesive and inclusive communities**, including more events and programs to bring people together. More support for vulnerable community members including people with disability, people on low incomes, LGBTQIA+ people, older people, and rough sleepers
- **Protected natural environment and the greening of Waverley** by increasing trees and verge gardens
- **More sustainable living** including composting, recycling and the use of solar panels
- **Upgraded facilities and local centres**, including Charing Cross, Campbell Parade, Bondi Road, Bondi Pavilion, and beaches and parks
- **More activated Bondi Junction** with more interesting places and events to visit for all ages, such as outdoor dining and markets
- **Better collaboration and communication** between Council, community and not for profit organisations, as well as more support for community grassroots initiatives, such as small grants and capacity building programs
- **More representative leadership** with decision making based on community needs
- **Protected local character** including low-rise and heritage buildings
- **Stronger, more diverse and innovative local economy**
- **More visibility and opportunities to learn from First Nations peoples and culture**, and
- **More opportunities and spaces for young people** to socialise and study



3.3 What the community said they're concerned about for Waverley's future

- **Overdevelopment and overcrowding** which could lead to loss of community spaces and local character, and make the Waverley area a less welcoming place to live and visit
- **Traffic, lack of parking and not enough public transport, walking and cycling options**
- **High cost of living** and lack of affordable housing making Waverley less liveable
- **Local centres need upgrades** that reflect local character and provide spaces to connect
- **Need for more maintenance of public infrastructure** including bus stops, footpaths and Bondi Beach promenade
- **Not enough social infrastructure and public spaces** such as schools, parks, and spaces for recreation as our population grows
- **Loss of green space and biodiversity**
- **Economic and community recovery from COVID-19**
- **Limited accessibility of public spaces** for people with diverse types of disability and older people (such as playgrounds, footpaths etc.)
- **The impacts of climate change**
- Ability for Waverley Council to control impacts of development
- **Loss of sense of community and growing inequality**
- **Getting the balance right between the needs of visitors and locals, and**
- **Rubbish dumping, littering and the need for more cleaning of public spaces as more people visit Waverley.**



“The traffic especially in peak and on weekends makes it hard to move around the area even just to go up the road to get groceries.”

“I’m concerned that first home buyers and young people are being locked out of the area due to investors, high housing prices and gentrification. I’m worried about being priced out, losing our egalitarian society and Bondi becoming a place only for the wealthy.”

“Losing creative practitioners from living in the area, who contribute to the vibrancy of the local neighbourhoods.”

“Overdevelopment and the resulting loss of private green space, being replaced by concrete and pavers. The reduction of greening and habitat throughout the community, as well as urban heat and loss of biodiversity.”

3.4 The community's vision for the future of Waverley

We asked community members what words they would like to use to describe Waverley in the future. Across all engagement activities, people were most likely to use the words **sustainable, green, inclusive, vibrant, affordable, beautiful, diverse, innovative, connected, welcoming and resilient**.



3.5 Capturing diverse community voices

Local business owners told us they support the vision of the broader community and would like to see Waverley support local businesses in the wake of the pandemic which has presented significant challenges and financial security. They want to see more opportunities for local businesses and Council to connect and collaborate for strength.

Volunteers told us their ideas to strengthen community wellbeing and build neighbourliness in Waverley including increasing events to bring people together, connecting people to existing community groups and services, encouraging volunteering and local initiatives such as verge gardening, and promoting and supporting ideas that encourage sharing of skills and resources.

Young people told us their priorities for the future of Waverley include:

- More community spaces for young people to socialise and study
- Opportunities to develop job skills and creative pursuits
- Addressing climate change and the future of Waverley's natural environment, and
- Building a welcoming community that is diverse and inclusive.

The **LGBTQIA+ community** would like the future of Waverley to be safe, inclusive and welcoming for LGBTQIA+ community members and visitors.

People living with disability told us their priorities for the future of Waverley include:

- Improved accessibility of public domain and public spaces
- Access to meaningful employment
- More consultation and communication between Council and people with disability.

The top things that **children** want to see in their future neighbourhood includes places to swim, parks and open spaces, places to cycle, scoot and skate, and lots of plants and trees.

Precinct committee members told us they are excited about preserving the local environment, building more connected communities, improving entertainment hubs and greening Waverley's streets.



3.6 Children's dream future neighbourhoods

We distributed surveys to local Primary Schools to ask children about their hopes for the future of their neighbourhood.

The drawings show some of their ideas including more nature, places to play and events for everyone.

What do you hope your neighbourhood will look like in the future?
Draw a picture of you and your family and friends spending time in your 'dream' neighbourhood.

Describe your dream future neighbourhood:
I want more trees/nature. Places to go on walk with lots of nature. Homes for Animals. Trees for shade.

What do you hope your neighbourhood will look like in the future?
Draw a picture of you and your family and friends spending time in your 'dream' neighbourhood.

Describe your dream future neighbourhood:
I think we could PUT Some more birds in the Park because we can listen to them twist and songs

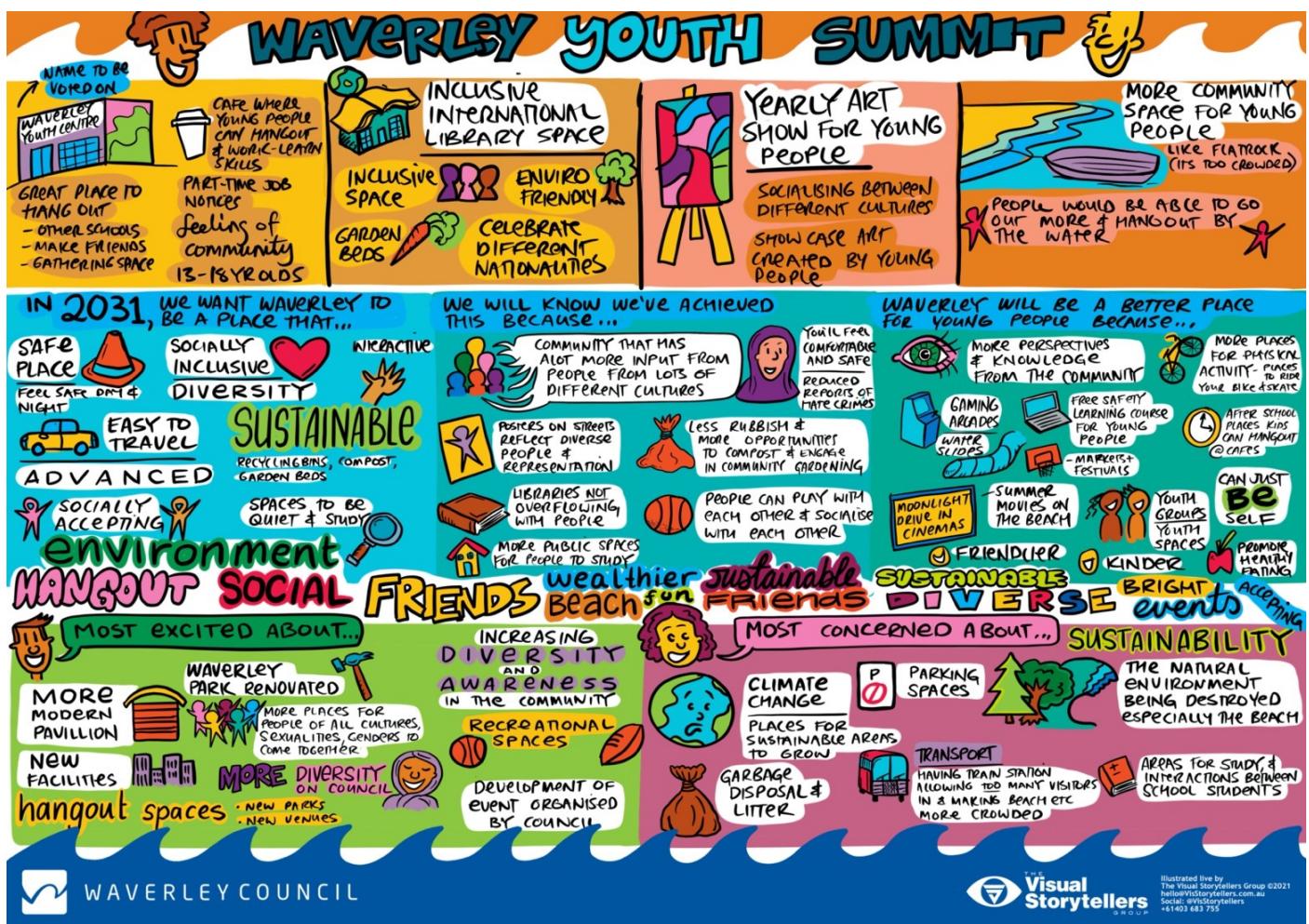
What do you hope your neighbourhood will look like in the future?
Draw a picture of you and your family and friends spending time in your 'dream' neighbourhood.

Describe your dream future neighbourhood:
I think that we need a Pool, Skate Park and a Fun Park because I don't think there is much fun.

What do you hope your neighbourhood will look like in the future?
Draw a picture of you and your family and friends spending time in your 'dream' neighbourhood.

Describe your dream future neighbourhood:
My dream neighbourhood would be a large one with tons of houses which will throw lots of parties and events. There will also be a massive multi-use stadium that the public can also use. There will also be a race track and an arcade along with nice shops and restaurants. But overall lots and lots of cool parties

3.7 Young people's concerns, aspirations and ideas for the future



The drawing above was made during the online Youth Summit. It reflects a summary of what we heard from local young people about their concerns, aspirations and ideas for the future of Waverley.

Participants told us that in 2031, they want Waverley to be safe, inclusive, diverse, sustainable and easy to get around - with more things to do and places to hang out for young people.

During the Youth Summit, participants worked together to pitch their ideas to make Waverley an even better place to live for young people in the future. The most popular idea was for an inclusive youth centre that is environmentally friendly, celebrates cultural diversity and where young people can meet friends, socialise and feel a part of the community. Other suggestions included a yearly art show for young people and more youth-friendly outdoor gathering spaces by the water.

"In 2032, we want Waverley to be a place that is interactive, safe and is socially accepting. We want a place where you can feel socially accepted no matter your background or where you come from, and where you can go out with friends and feel safe during the day and at night."

"We'll know we've achieved our vision for Waverley because the community has a lot more input from people with different cultures and backgrounds, and more voices to be heard."

4. Findings from Phase 2

4.1 The community's priorities under the Waverley CSP themes

The purpose of Phase 2 engagement activities was to truth-test what we had heard so far and to understand the community's priorities to achieve the vision identified through Phase 1.

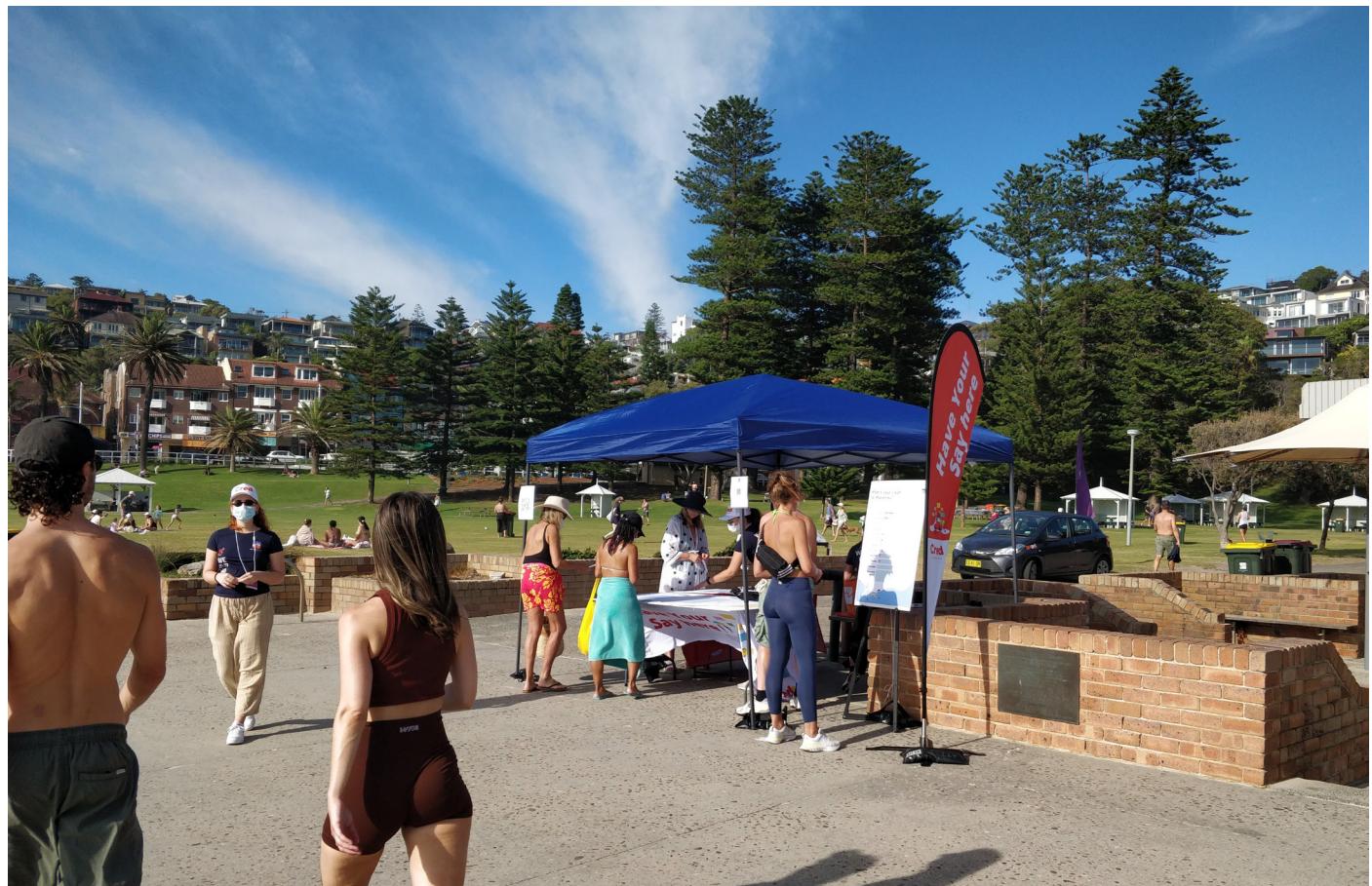
Via an online survey and face to face pop-ups, we engaged the community on their priorities under the three themes that will guide the Waverley Community Strategic Plan 2022-2032:

1. People
2. Place
3. Performance

The following pages outline the key issues and priorities identified by community engagement participants related to these themes.

“I want Waverley to be a place for people of all ages, supporting young families through to senior citizens.”

“It is important to maintain our existing lifestyles and protect the services and assets we value, especially as development and population growth increases.”



Community engagement pop-up at Bronte Beach on Sunday 30 January 2022 (Source: Cred Consulting)

Theme 1: People



Some of the top words you used to describe your future vision under this theme:

- Caring
- Cohesive
- Community
- Happy
- Connected
- Creative
- Cultural
- Family-focused
- Dynamic
- Diverse
- Friendly
- Compassionate
- Inclusive
- Respect
- Supportive
- Welcoming

Commentary

Community members told us that our diverse and skilled people are one of Waverley's greatest strengths. We heard that people value the opportunities that our area provides to be active and healthy, and the sense of community that they experience in our local centres. People said they want to see Waverley continue to be inclusive, connected and welcoming for people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities.

Your priorities

We asked pop-up activity participants and online survey respondents to tell us their top three priorities under the 'People' theme. The list below shows their top priorities from most votes to least votes:

- **18%** Provide facilities and opportunities to live active and healthy lifestyles
- **13%** Promote and encourage art, culture and creative expression and participation
- **12%** Ensure young people have more opportunities and spaces for interaction and recreation
- **12%** Respect, acknowledge and protect the continuous living culture of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- **11%** Actively drive housing policy to meet the needs of the vulnerable, diverse and growing population
- **10%** Provide access to social services and facilities for all stages of life
- **9%** Foster a caring, well connected and cohesive community
- **9%** Celebrate diversity, promote inclusion and accessibility for all members of the community
- **6%** Support a safe community with capacity and resilience to adapt to change

Community voices

"There are lots of play spaces for young children, however not many spaces or events for young people."

"My favourite especially in the local community is the people. We all look after each other."



Theme 2: Place



Some of the top words you used to describe your future vision under this theme:

- Accessible
- Clean
- Liveable
- Vibrant
- Active
- Environmental
- Local
- Village
- Affordable
- Human-scale
- Open spaces
- Sustainable / Green
- Beautiful
- Heritage
- Safe
- Walkable / Cycling

Commentary

Community members told us they highly value Waverley's natural environment and want to protect our coastline, green spaces and biodiversity into the future. Maintaining our streetscapes and public spaces to a high standard is a priority for the community, as is managing development and preserving local character and heritage. People said they want it to be easier to get around Waverley by car, foot and bicycle.

Your priorities

We asked pop-up activity participants and online survey respondents to tell us their top three priorities under the 'Place' theme. The list below shows their top priorities from most votes to least votes:

- **14%** Protect and increase our local bushland, parks, urban canopy cover and habitat areas
- **13%** Keep public spaces clean, and minimise environmental impacts of waste generation and disposal
- **12%** Support the community to embrace environmentally sustainable living and adapt to a changing climate
- **12%** Control and manage development to protect the intrinsic values of the community including aesthetics, size, heritage and population
- **11%** Ensure public spaces, parks and open spaces have equitable access, are safe day and night, and meet community needs for recreation
- **11%** Ensure sustainable transport infrastructure is easily accessible and provides climate friendly transport alternatives
- **10%** Manage traffic, transport and parking in a balanced way
- **7%** Build, maintain and renew well-designed, accessible and sustainable assets and infrastructure, to improve the liveability of neighbourhoods
- **6%** Reduce greenhouse gas emissions across Waverley
- **2%** Conserve water use and improve water quality



Community voices

"My area is very difficult to navigate. There are constant road works, uneven footpaths, holes in the road and the footpaths. It's very difficult to get around."

"Creating more urban biodiversity where people and nature can interact in symbiosis to improve biodiversity objectives and improve wellbeing within the LGA."

Theme 3: Performance



Some of the top words you used to describe your future vision under this theme:

- Accountable
- Adaptable
- Collaborative
- Committed
- Customer focused
- Exemplary
- Global
- Innovative
- Leaders
- Partnerships
- Realistic
- Resilient
- Responsive
- Transparent

Commentary

Community engagement participants told us that they highly value opportunities to help shape local decision-making and had many ideas for council and community to collaborate towards great outcomes for the Waverley area. Ensuring that Council is financially sustainable, well-governed and responsive to community needs were priorities.

Your priorities

We asked pop-up activity participants and online survey respondents to tell us their top three priorities under the 'Performance' theme. The list below shows their top priorities from most vote to least votes:

- **25%** Create opportunities for the community to engage with council decision making, and ensure input is listened to and acted on where appropriate
- **19%** Ensure Waverley Council is financially sustainable, and manages resources, assets and contracts effectively
- **16%** Govern Waverley Council well, and build culture, capability, capacity, systems and processes to deliver services to the community
- **14%** Foster Waverley as a smart, safe, connected, and innovative city of the future
- **13%** Deliver the Waverley community excellent customer service, with services delivered efficiently, and with innovation
- **13%** Support the local economy to build resilience and meet the needs of the community and businesses



Community voices

"Council needs to think more long-term and undertake greater analysis and evaluation."

"I would like for community consultation processes to be clearer, and Council to follow up after consultations. Uniformity is needed to understand the process."

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