



Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009 Information Guide

2018-2019

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1 Preface

The *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* (GIPA Act) provides members of the public with a right of access to government information. Under the GIPA Act, Woollahra Municipal Council is required to publish an Information Guide.

This Information Guide describes the role and operation of Council. It also provides details of the types of information held by Council and how and where that information is, or may be, made available to the public.

Council is committed to the principles of open, accountable, fair and effective government and recognises the right of the public to access Council information. Council holds a wide range of information concerning both the Woollahra local government area and the operation of the Council. Much of this information is available on Council's website. A detailed guide to how you can access Council information is contained in Chapter 7 below.

This publication provides members of the public, community organisations, the media, government agencies and staff with information about:

- Council's Charter, values, vision and our commitment to the community;
- the structure and functions of Council;
- the ways in which Council's functions (including, in particular, its decision making functions) affect members of public;
- the avenues available to the public to participate in the formulation of Council policies and the exercise of its functions;
- the kinds of information held by Council and, in particular, the information Council makes publicly available;
- the manner in which Council makes information publicly available; and
- the kinds of information that are (or will be) made publicly available free of charge and those kinds for which a charge is (or will be) imposed.

I am pleased to present this Information Guide which is a clear and concise picture of Council's structure and functions and a confirmation of our commitment to openness and accessibility.

Gary James
General Manager

2 Council's Charter

Guiding Principles

Council recognises the guiding principles set out in the Local Government Act in everything it does. These principles are:

Exercise of Functions Generally

- Provide strong and effective representation, leadership, planning and decision-making;
- Carry out functions in a way that provides the best possible value for residents and ratepayers;
- Plan strategically for the provision of effective and efficient services and regulation to meet the diverse needs of the local community;
- Apply the integrated planning and reporting framework in carrying out their functions so as to achieve desired outcomes and continuous improvements;
- Work co-operatively with other Councils and the State Government to achieve desired outcomes for the local community;
- Manage lands and other assets so that current and future local community needs can be met in an affordable way;
- Work with others to secure appropriate services for local community needs;
- Act fairly, ethically and without bias in the interests of the local community; and
- Be responsible employers and provide a consultative and supportive working environment for staff.

Community participation

- Actively engage with their local communities, through the use of the integrated planning and reporting framework and other measures.

Decision-making

- Recognise diverse local community needs and interests;
- Consider social justice principles;
- Consider the long term and cumulative effects of actions on future generations;
- Consider the principles of ecologically sustainable development; and

- Decision-making should be transparent and decision-makers are to be accountable for decisions and omissions.

Financial Management

- Spending should be responsible and sustainable, aligning general revenue and expenses;
- Invest in responsible and sustainable infrastructure for the benefit of the local community;
- Have effective financial and asset management, including sound policies and processes; and
- Have regard to achieving intergenerational equity.

Integrated Planning and Reporting

- Identify and prioritise key local community needs and aspirations and consider regional priorities;
- Identify strategic goals to meet those needs and aspirations;
- Develop activities, and prioritise actions, to work towards the strategic goals;
- Ensure that the strategic goals and activities to work towards them may be achieved within council resources;
- Regularly review and evaluate progress towards achieving strategic goals;
- Maintain an integrated approach to planning, delivering, monitoring and reporting on strategic goals;
- Collaborate with others to maximise achievement of strategic goals;
- Manage risks to the local community or area or to the council effectively and proactively; and
- Make appropriate evidence-based adaptations to meet changing needs and circumstances.

3 Visions and Values

Our Vision Statement

Woollahra will continue to be a great place to live, work and visit where places and spaces are safe, clean and well maintained.

Our community will offer a unique mix of urban villages with a good range of shops, services and facilities.

We will make the most of the natural beauty, leafy streetscapes, open spaces, views and proximity to the water and the city.

We will be a harmonious, engaged and connected community that looks out for each other.

Our Values

Respect for people

Integrity and excellent performance

Professional, quality service

Open, accountable communication

Our Commitments to the Community

We will deliver seamless, responsive services to our community.

We respect the rights of every customer to be treated fairly.

We will keep our community informed about Council's services and activities and encourage community feedback.

We will continuously strive to improve our services to the community.

We will engage with our community to promote opportunities for participation in Council's planning and decision making.

We will commit to continuous improvement and innovation in our service delivery to deliver best value for our community.

Our Commitments to our People

We will manage our internal processes to ensure a seamless customer experience.

We will conduct a safe, fair and open work place where people are recognised and encouraged to develop their talents.

We will communicate openly and inclusively in clear and consistent language.

We will challenge ourselves to go on doing better.

Updating our Vision

Our vision reflects our engagement with the community and the feedback we have received. Acting as a guide for the last eight years, our vision statement has informed our decisions and helped prioritise our actions. We have made an addition to our vision statement in response to our most recent community feedback:

“We will be a harmonious, engaged and connected community that looks out for each other.”

This addition is linked to and reinforces our goal of community wellbeing. It also recognises Council's role in fostering strong community connections over the next 10 years and beyond. As our local community continues to grow and change, we acknowledge the importance of looking after the future of our natural and built environment, as well as our commitment to leading and encouraging community connection, participation and a sense of belonging.



Our Community Values and Our Priorities

Community wellbeing

- Community facilities, activities and events.
- Activities for young people.
- Support for healthy ageing and activities to engage seniors and isolated people in our community.
- Programs and services that are inclusive of people with a disability.
- Quality library services.
- A safe community.

Quality places and spaces

- Retention and enhancement of the village atmosphere throughout the area, offering a good range of shops and services.
- Protection of local history, heritage values and buildings.
- No inappropriate high rise and oversize development.
- Quality design of new developments.
- Retention of local urban character.
- Sustainable development.
- Renewed and upgraded infrastructure, especially footpaths, pedestrian ramps, kerb, guttering, stormwater drainage and local roads.
- Reduced traffic congestion
- Improved parking.
- Good public transport.
- Good access to the city, harbour, beaches and facilities.
- Good pedestrian and bicycling access.
- Well-managed trees in streets and parks.
- Well-maintained foreshores, beaches, parks, sports fields and recreation areas.
- Local parks and green open spaces.
- Trees and leafy green streetscapes that are well maintained.
- Children's play areas and playgrounds.
- An environment with less graffiti.
- A clean and well maintained environment.

A healthy environment

- Environmental monitoring and protection.
- Environmentally sustainable initiatives.
- Retention of bushland and bush regeneration.
- A commitment to sustainable waste management.
- Reduced water pollution and improved stormwater drainage.
- A commitment to responsible management of biodiversity.
- Good street cleaning, recycling and waste collection.

Local prosperity

- Enhancement and revitalisation of our shopping areas.

Community leadership and participation

- Information on Council activities.
- Council being responsive to the community.
- Opportunities for community engagement and participation and involvement in Council's planning and decision making.

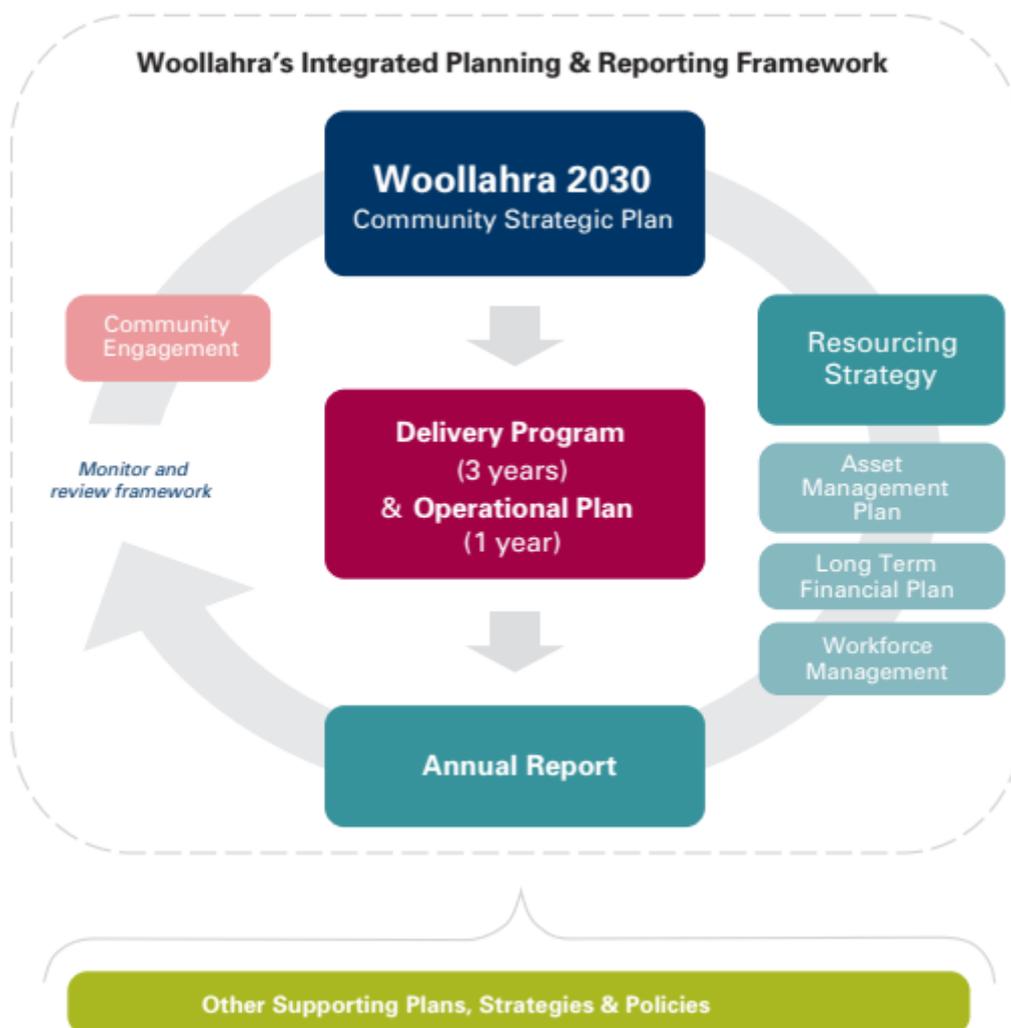
Our Integrated Planning Framework

Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) is a strategic planning framework for NSW Local Governments. The aim of the framework is to promote the long term sustainability of our community including social, economic, environment and civic leadership in a manner that is affordable in the long run. Maintaining a financially sustainable Council and ensuring that services and assets are delivered and maintained in a manner that is equitable is a priority.

Woollahra Council's integrated planning and reporting framework comprises our Community Strategic Plan and our combined Delivery Program and Operational Plan, all supported by our Resourcing Strategy.

Progress is monitored and reported to Council through quarterly updates and our Annual Report and at the end of election term there is an End of Term Report to the community.

Council's Priorities or Actions make reference to the relevant IP&R – Related Plans, Strategy, and Policies.



Integrated planning principles

Woollahra 2030 is our Community Strategic Plan which outlines our community's aspirations for the future. From this the community can work with Council to develop strategies and set priorities.

Council's plans are based on the principle of sustainability, ensuring we meet the needs of today while maintaining the long term ability of Council to continue to meet the needs of future generations. The concept of sustainability balances the community's social, economic, environmental and civic leadership needs, also known as the 'Quadruple Bottom Line'.

In developing the Plan's key strategies, reference is made to the Principles for Sustainable Cities devised as part of the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP). The aim of the UNEP principles is to create an environmentally healthy, vibrant and sustainable city where people respect one another and nature, to the benefit of all. These principles provide a sound way forward both globally and locally.

Council's principles align with the 'UNEP' principles

- Provide a long term vision for cities based on sustainability;
- Empower people and foster participation and intergenerational equity;
- Recognise and build on the characteristics of cities including their human, cultural, historic and natural systems;
- Build on the characteristics of ecosystems;
- Achieve long term economic and social security;
- Expand and enable cooperative networks to work towards a common sustainable future;
- Enable communities to minimise their ecological footprint;
- Enable continual improvement, accountability and transparency;
- Require effective demand management and appropriate use of environmentally sound technologies for cities; and
- Recognise the intrinsic value of biodiversity and natural ecosystems and their protection and restoration.

Delivering Woollahra 2030

The Delivery Program 2018 to 2021 and Operational Plan 2018/19 is structured on the Community Strategic Plan – Themes and Goals. Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting framework includes five (5) broad interrelated Themes.

Each broad theme is supported by a number of Goals, Strategies, Priorities and Actions.

Details of our key challenges in the future and key performance indicators are also outlined for each Goal.

Detailed budget information including Operating Expenditure, Operating Income, Capital Expenditure and Capital Funding is presented for each Goal.

Planning hierarchy definitions



4 Structure and Functions of Council

Our Municipality

Woollahra Municipality is located in Sydney's eastern suburbs, approximately 5 kilometres from the Sydney GPO.

The municipality is bounded by Port Jackson (Sydney Harbour) in the north, the Waverley Council area in the east, Randwick City in the south and the City of Sydney in the west. The Woollahra Municipality includes the suburbs of Bellevue Hill, Darling Point, Double Bay, Edgecliff, Paddington (part), Point Piper, Rose Bay (part), Vaucluse (part), Watsons Bay and Woollahra.

The total land area is 12 square kilometres including harbour foreshore and beaches. The area is predominantly residential, with some commercial land use, parklands and a military reserve. Natural features of the Municipality include 16 kilometres of harbour foreshore consisting of rocky headlands, coastal cliffs and beaches, approximately 30 hectares of bushland located in 5 reserves with 3 vegetation communities containing over 300 plant species including 2 threatened and 1 vulnerable species.

Other prominent features include Sydney Harbour National Park, the Macquarie Lighthouse, Gap Park and the award winning Rose Bay Promenade. Woollahra is also the location of some of Sydney's premier shipping precincts such as Double Bay, Paddington and Queen Street, Woollahra.

Our History

The original inhabitants of the Woollahra area were the Cadigal and Birrabirragal Aboriginal people and Woollahra is thought to be named from an Aboriginal word meaning "meeting ground".

European settlement dates from 1790, although development was minimal until the 1860's. Land was used mainly for dairy farming and market gardening, with some fishing. Expansion took place in the 1880's and 1890's, continuing into the early 1900's and the inter-war period. Significant development occurred during the immediate post-war years, from the 1950's to the mid 1960's.



Our People

The most recent census data calculated in 2016 has the population of our Municipality at 58,290 people, living in 26,119 dwellings.

We are mostly a community of families and young adults. We have a growing population of empty nesters and retirees as well as a growing number of couples with children. Residents from a diversity of cultural backgrounds live here. Some areas of Woollahra have a transient population, with over 50% of residents moving to the area since 2001.

How We Live

In many suburbs, most of our housing is medium or high density with a sizeable proportion of people living in flats and about 50% of housing being single dwellings. In 2011, 32% of households in our area contained only one person, compared with 23% for Greater Sydney. The most dominant household size is two persons per household.

People	Economy	Environment	Industry
Population 58,290 (Trend increasing)	No. of Businesses 9,989 (2017) (Trend increasing)	Total Land Area 1,228 ha (12km ²)	Registered vehicles 31,797 (Trend increasing)
Median Age 38.8 (Trend increasing)	Building approvals 230 (Trend increasing)	Residential Area 73% (2011)	Vehicle Types: Petrol 27,203 (decreasing) Diesel 4,167 (increasing) LPG/Dual 117 (decreasing) Electric 35 (increasing)
Population Density 47.48 persons per hectare (Trend increasing)	Unemployment rate 3.3% (Trend decreasing)	Parkland 21% (2011) Other Uses 6% (2011)	Main Employer 18.8% Professional & Technical services



Our Council

Our community is represented by fifteen Councillors. Generally our Councillors are elected for a four year term, however due to the recent lengthy review of council amalgamations across NSW, scheduled elections were delayed and our current Councillors were elected in September 2017 for a three year term concluding in September 2020.

The Woollahra Local Government Area is divided into five electoral wards:

- Bellevue Hill
- Cooper
- Double Bay
- Paddington
- Vaucluse

Each Ward is represented by three Councillors. Our Councillors for 2017 - 2020 are:

Bellevue Hill Ward
Cr Nick Maxwell
Cr Lucinda Regan
Cr Isabelle Shapiro

Cooper Ward
Cr Luise Elsing
Cr Anthony Marano
Cr Megan McEwin

Double Bay Ward
Cr Richard Shields
Cr Mark Silcocks
Cr Toni Zeltzer

Paddington Ward
Cr Peter Cavanagh
Cr Harriet Price
Cr Matthew Robertson

Vaucluse Ward
Cr Claudia Cullen
Cr Mary-Lou Jarvis
Cr Susan Wynne

Further information about our [Councillors](#), including contact details and committee membership, is available on our website.



There are three formal standing committees of Council that meet regularly to discuss a range of issues, applications and proposals:

- Finance, Community & Services Committee;
- Environmental Planning Committee; and
- Strategic & Corporate Committee.

The Finance, Community & Services Committee and Environmental Planning Committee meet concurrently on the first and third Monday of each month with membership divided equally between the Councillors.

The Strategic & Corporate Committee deals with issues that have an impact on the whole of Council, such as major development applications, and meets as and when such issues arise. All Councillors are members of this Committee.

Full Council meets twice a month on the second and fourth Monday of each month.

In addition, two planning panels assess and determine development applications in the Woollahra municipality:

- Woollahra Local Planning Panel (WLPP); and
- Council's Application Assessment Panel (AAP).

The WLPP is an independent hearing and assessment panel that comprises of a chair, two independent expert members and a community representative. The referral criteria for the WLPP has been set by the NSW Minister for Planning and includes contentious developments, developments that contravene development standards by more than 10% and sensitive developments. Additional details of referral criteria can be found on the NSW Government's Planning & Environment website: [IHAP – Statutory Rules](#).

Council's AAP considers development applications of a certain nature or scale. The AAP is a panel of senior Council staff who meet to assess and determine development applications which involve a significant community interest, which accords to our delegations.

The WLPP meets on the first and third Thursday of each month and the AAP meets every Tuesday of each month (subject to availability of agenda items).

Full Council meetings, meetings of our three formal standing committees and meetings of the two planning panels are open to the public.

The formal committee structure of Council is supported by a range of Advisory Committees and Working Parties that provide a wider opportunity for community involvement in the Council decision making process. Further details are available on Council's website: [Working Parties and Sub-Committees](#).

Information on [upcoming meetings and meeting guidelines](#) are also available on Council's website. In addition, further details of Council and Committee meetings are provided below in Chapter 6 – Public Participation in Local Government.

Our Organisation

Woollahra Council is governed by an elected Council comprising fifteen Councillors who are generally elected each four years by the residents of the Municipality. The role of the governing body is to direct and control the affairs of the Council in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993* and other applicable legislation. As elected officials, Councillors are required to represent the interests of the residents and ratepayers, provide leadership and guidance to the community, facilitate communication between the community and the Council and formulate policies.

The Mayor has been elected for a two-year term by the Councillors and undertakes the civic and ceremonial functions of the Mayoral office. The Mayor also presides at meetings of the Council and exercises, in cases of necessity, the policy making functions of the governing body of Council between its meetings and other functions as Council determines.

The role of the Councillors is:

- to provide a civic leadership role in guiding the development of the community strategic plan for the area and to be responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Council's delivery program;
- to direct and control the affairs of the Council in accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993*;
- to participate in the optimum allocation of the Council's resources for the benefit of the area;
- to play a key role in the creation and review of the Council's policies and objectives and criteria relating to the exercise of the Council's regulatory functions;
- to review the performance of the Council and its delivery of services, and the delivery program and revenue policies of the Council;
- to represent the interests of the residents and ratepayers;
- to provide leadership and guidance to the community; and
- to facilitate communication between the community and Council.

The General Manager is responsible for the efficient and effective operation of Council's organisation and for ensuring the implementation, without undue delay, of decisions of Council.

The General Manager also has the following particular functions:

- to assist the Council in connection with the development, preparation and implementation of Council's community strategic plan, community engagement strategy, resourcing strategy, delivery program, operational plan and annual report;
- the day-to-day management of the Council;
- to exercise such of the functions of the Council as are delegated by the Council to the General Manager;
- to ensure the Councillors are given timely information and advice and administrative and professional support necessary to effectively discharge their functions;
- to appoint staff in accordance with an organisation structure and resources approved by the Council and to direct and dismiss staff; and
- to implement the Council's equal employment opportunity management plan.

To facilitate effective management and to assist the General Manager in fulfilling these responsibilities, Council has adopted an organisational structure consisting of four Divisions:

- Community Services;
- Corporate Services;
- Planning and Development; and
- Technical Services.

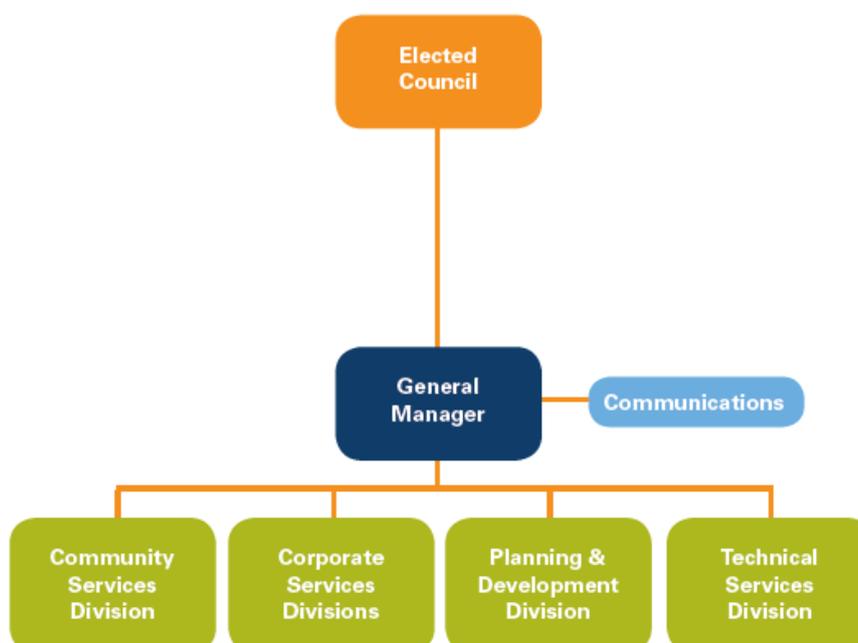
Each Division has a number of functional responsibilities and is headed by a Director. A list of the functional responsibilities by Division is provided below.

There is also a Communications Department that reports directly to the General Manager.

Services we provide include:

- Asset management
- Capital works
- Community and cultural development
- Development assessment
- Environmental health and building control
- Recreation and open space management
- Urban planning

Internal services under the Corporate Services Division include Business Assurance and Risk, Customer Information and Records Management, Finance, Governance and Council Support, Information Technology and Organisational Development and Human Resources.



Our Organisation and Functional Responsibilities by Division

General Manager	
Communications	
Internal and external communications Branding, advertising, design and promotion Online content Media liaison Event management Speech writing Issues management	

Community Services Division	
Woollahra Libraries	Three library lending service points Local History Centre Home Library Service Collection development Cultural programs including Writers and Readers, Tea Topics, Poets Picnic, etc. Community programs including children, seniors and young adults Management of library volunteers
Community Development	Social planning Community development Woollahra Preschool Community grants Community committees, i.e. Safety, Access, Youth Support and facilitation of community services and activities, such as Holdsworth Community Centre Community facilities management and venue hire
Cultural Development	Cultural policy and planning Cultural development Woollahra Small Sculpture Prize Public Art Program Cultural Committee Cultural grants Partnership with cultural organisations, i.e. Critical Path, Woollahra Philharmonic Orchestra, ESORA
Public Art	Public Art projects and programs Public Art Panel Public Art Gallery Policy Cultural Committee
Marketing & Projects	Community information Marketing and promotion of community service activities

Corporate Services Division	
Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget management, reporting and advice Long term financial planning Corporate planning Rates and debt recovery Investments Accounts receivable & payable Taxation (FBT & GST) Internal and external financial reporting Financial system administration and training Accounting for grants and contributions Asset accounting Internal controls
Business Assurance & Risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Risk management framework WHS Insurance program Workers compensation Rehabilitation programs Business Assurance framework Audit program Audit and Assurance Committee administration
Governance & Council Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Probity Council & Committee business papers & minutes Printing Councillor Support Services GIPA Access to Information
Customer Information Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer service Telephone service Complaints management Customer service strategies and policy Promotion and enhancement of Council image Records management Records service within legislative requirements Document management system Archive storage Appropriate community access to records
Information Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information services Land information systems Systems administration Systems support

	<p>Customer Information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Records Management Records service within legislative requirements Document management system Archive storage Appropriate community access to records Customer service Telephone service Complaints management Customer service strategies and policy Promotion and enhancement of Council image
<p>Organisational Development & Human Resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recruitment Organisational Development Training EEO Staff policies Performance management system Job re-design Industrial relations Payroll

Planning & Development Division	
Development Control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pre-lodgment advice Assessment of development applications Determinations of applications under delegation Section 96 applications Section 82A reviews Appeals Construction Certificates (Class 1 & 10)
Strategic Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strategic land use planning Planning proposals Local Environment Plans Heritage conservation planning Urban design Public domain strategies Special projects Certificates (Planning, Notices and Orders, Rates)
Placemaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business centres strategies Support to business representative organisations Economic development Implementation of Place Plans (Double Bay and Oxford Street) Coordination of placemaking activities
Compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction certificates Complying development certificates Principal Certifying Authority (PCA) services Building and land use compliance Fire safety Food safety and public health inspections Air, noise and water pollution Erosion and sediment control Swimming pools compliance Immunisation Parking enforcement Abandoned vehicles Littering Companion animals Public place law enforcement Lifesaving service at Camp Cove

Technical Services Division	
Civil Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waste management Business centre cleaning Street cleaning Fleet management Vehicle & plant repair Purchasing Stores management Civil depots management Emergency services Civil maintenance Road and footpath restorations Minor capital works (civil) Harbourside structures maintenance
Capital Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Capital projects management – Open Space Capital projects management – Civil Capital projects management - Traffic Capital projects management – Environmental Civil design Landscape design Capital projects procurement Project management systems
Open Space & Trees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open space management Open space maintenance Tree management and tree maintenance Recreation planning Environmental sustainability Natural areas management Open space asset management Community land management Open Space improvement programs DA referrals Parks depot management Minor capital works (Parks)
Property	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building management Building maintenance Land and property management Building trades Property assets management Property capital projects Street furniture maintenance and installation Car parking stations Graffiti removal
Engineering Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Traffic and transport DA referrals Stormwater management Street lighting Asset management systems Civil assets management Road and driveway approvals Road opening permits Parking management Street furniture management Harbourside structures management

Major Functions of Council

Under the *Local Government Act 1993*, Council's functions can be grouped into the following categories:

Service Functions
Includes: Provision of community health, recreation, education and information services Environmental protection Waste removal and disposal Land and property, industry and tourism development and assistance Civil infrastructure and planning Civil infrastructure, maintenance and construction
Regulatory Functions
Includes: Approvals Orders Building Certificates
Ancillary Functions
Includes: Resumption of land Powers of entry and inspection
Revenue Functions
Includes: Rates Charges Fees Borrowings Investments
Administrative Functions
Includes: Employment of staff Management plans Finance reports Annual reports
Enforcement Functions
Includes: Proceedings for breaches of the <i>Local Government Act 1993</i> and other legislation Prosecution of offences Recovery of rate and charges

Council also has functions conferred or imposed on it under a number of other Acts, which include:

- *Biosecurity Act 2015* – prevention, elimination, minimisation, management of biosecurity risks
- *Building Professionals Act 2005* – accreditation scheme for building professionals
- *Civil Liability Act 2002* – the awarding of damages for negligent acts
- *Community Land Development Act 1989* - planning functions as consent authority
- *Companion Animals Act 1998* - companion animal registration and control
- *Conveyancing Act 1919* - placing covenants on council land
- *Coastal Protection Act 1979* - limitation on coastal development by councils
- *Contaminated Land Management Act 1997* – managing contaminated lands
- *Copyright Act 1968 (Clth.)* – defines legally enforceable rights of creators of creative/artistic work
- *Crown Land Management Act 2016* - provision for the ownership, use and management NSW Crown land
- *Crown Lands Act 1989* –provision for ownership, use and management of Crown land
- *Dividing Fences Act 1991* – apportionment of cost of dividing fences
- *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* - environmental planning
- *Fire Brigades Act 1989* - payment of contributions to fire brigade costs and furnishing of returns
- *Food Act 2003* - inspection of food and food premises
- *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* – publication of certain information and granting of access to other information by Council
- *Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002* – standards and requirements with regard to the collection and processing of health records and information
- *Heritage Act 1977* - rating based on heritage valuation
- *Impounding Act 1993* - impounding of animals and articles
- *Library Act 1939* - library services
- *Pesticides Act 1999* – regulation and control of use of pesticides
- *Plumbing and Drainage Act 2011* – regulation of plumbing and drainage work
- *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998* – standards and requirements with regard to the collection and processing of personal information
- *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997* - pollution control
- *Public Health Act 2010* - inspection of systems for purposes of microbial control
- *Public Interest Disclosures Act 1994* – protected complaints or disclosures about maladministration, corruption, substantial waste or failure to fulfil functions under GIPA Act
- *Recreation Vehicles Act 1983* - restricting use of recreation vehicles
- *Roads Act 1993* – roads
- *Road Transport Act 2013* - provisions concerning road users, road transport and the improvement of road safety
- *Smoke Free Environment Act 2000* – prohibition on smoking in certain public places
- *State Emergency and Rescue Management Act 1989* - Council required to prepare for emergencies
- *State Emergency Service Act 1989* - appointment of local controller
- *State Records Act 1998* – imposes requirements for record keeping and access to Council records
- *Strata Schemes Development Act 2015* – approval of strata schemes
- *Strata Schemes Management Act 2015* – management of strata schemes and disputes related to strata schemes
- *Swimming Pools Act 1992* - ensuring restriction of access to swimming pools
- *Transport Administration Act 1988* – administration of transport
- *Unclaimed Money Act 1995* - unclaimed money to be paid to the Chief Commissioner of Unclaimed Money
- *Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Act 2001* – promotes waste avoidance and resource recovery
- *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* – to secure the health, safety and welfare of persons at work
- *Workplace Injury Management and Workers Compensation Act 1998* – requirements for occupational health and safety practices in the workplace

5 How Council Functions Affect Members of the Public

As a service organisation, the majority of Council's activities have an impact on the public. The following is an outline of how the broad functions of Council affect the public.

Service Functions

Council exercises these functions in providing services and facilities such as parks, halls and community facilities, libraries, recreation facilities, infrastructure and garbage removal. In turn, these facilities can be used and enjoyed by the general public.

Regulatory Functions

These functions provide Council with a mechanism for regulating various activities for the general wellbeing of the local community. Members of the public are required to comply with the legislative process in pursuing any of the stated activities.

Ancillary Functions

These functions assist Council in carrying out its other functions. Only some members of the public will be affected in the performance of these functions, for instance, the entry onto land by a Council Officer.

Revenue Functions

The exercise of functions, like levying rates and setting fees and charges, has a direct impact on many residents. Rates, fees and charges must be paid by the public and this income is used by Council to provide services and facilities for its residents and visitors to the area.

Administrative Functions

These functions deal more with the internal operations of Council and as such do not have direct impact on the public. However, by setting out processes of Council's operation and mechanisms for accountability, the public are kept informed of the administration of their Council.

Enforcement Functions

These functions only affect those members of the public that are in breach of certain legislation, such as the non-payment of rates and charges and parking fines, or the failure to obtain an approval or comply with an order or notice.

Community Planning and Development Functions

These functions affect areas such as cultural development, social planning and community profile. They involve advocating and planning for the needs of our community, providing support to our community and facilitating opportunities for people to participate in the life of the community.

6 Public Participation in Local Government

Woollahra Council supports the principles of open government and encourages community involvement in policy development and general activities of Council.

There are a number of avenues available to the public to enable their participation in the formulation of Council's policies and the exercise of its functions.

Council and Committee meetings

There are three formal standing committees of Council that meet regularly to discuss a range of issues, applications and proposals:

- Environmental Planning Committee;
- Finance, Community & Services Committee; and
- Strategic & Corporate Committee.

Council also convenes the meetings of the Woollahra Local Traffic Committee.

The Environmental Planning Committee considers design and strategic planning issues that affect the municipality and our local environment. The Finance, Community & Services Committee considers financial, budget and work issues, and issues relating to services for people. Councillors are divided equally between these two Committees.

The Strategic & Corporate Committee deals with issues that have an impact on the whole of Council, including major development applications, and meets on an occasional basis when required.

In addition, two planning panels assess and determine development applications in the Woollahra municipality:

- Woollahra Local Planning Panel (WLPP); and
- Council's Application Assessment Panel (AAP).

The WLPP is an independent hearing and assessment panel that comprises of a chair, two independent expert members and a community representative. The WLPP considers contentious developments, developments that contravene development standards by more than 10% and sensitive developments.

Council's AAP is a panel of senior Council staff that meet to assess and determine development applications which involve a significant community interest, but have not reached the WLPP criteria threshold. Most AAP items relate to additions, new houses and smaller scale residential apartments.

Members of the public are advised of the business to be transacted at Council, Committee and Planning Panel meetings through the publication of 'Business Papers', including Meeting Agendas. Business Papers for the Council, Committee and WLPP Meetings are available on [Council's website](#) from the Thursday prior to each meeting. Business Papers for the AAP are available on Council's website from the Wednesday prior to each meeting.

Copies of Business Papers are also available at Council and Committee Meetings.

Having Your Say at Meetings

Council, Committee and Panel Meetings are open to members of the public except when the Council is dealing with specified confidential matters. Council will consider matters in confidential session only if they fall within the limited circumstances identified in section 10A of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

Addressing the Meeting

During Committee and Panel Meetings, members of the public are invited to address the Committee or Panel on any matter on the Meeting Agenda and will be allowed a maximum time limit of 4 minutes to make each presentation and 3 minutes in the case of the WLPP. If a large number of persons wish to address a meeting on a particular matter, the Chairperson may determine, with a view to fairness of representation, how many persons may address the meeting.

Members of the public wishing to address the WLPP must register using the [Register to Address the Panel Form](#) to be completed and forwarded to Council by 12 noon on the Wednesday before the meeting. It is not necessary to register to address any other Committee or AAP meeting.

Council does not allow members of the public to address the Councillors on items being considered at Council meetings as most matters that are considered by Council have already been the subject of consideration by a Committee. Committee meetings are the most appropriate forum for less formal debate and consideration of submissions from all parties that have an interest in a matter.

Late Correspondence

Members of the public can also submit items of late correspondence for the Council, Committee or Panel members to consider. The deadline for submission of late correspondence is 12 noon on the day of the relevant meeting (and 12 noon on the Wednesday preceding the meeting for the WLPP) to give staff time to digest and comment, if appropriate, on the contents of the late correspondence. Late correspondence, including a clear reference to the matter being addressed, should be forwarded to records@woollahra.nsw.gov.au.

Public Forum at full Council Meetings

Members of the community are able to address Council in the Public Forum section of the Council meeting on any local government related matter, excluding matters that are on the Council meeting agenda, or any application already lodged with Council for a decision, or complaints about Councillors or staff.

The Public Forum provides an open and friendly opportunity to bring matters to the attention of the Council which may not otherwise be considered. The opportunity to address Councillors for a maximum of three minutes will be provided just after the start of the meeting. Up to three people can make use of each public forum opportunity. If you wish to make an address to Councillors at a Council meeting, you must complete a [Public Forum Registration Form](#) and submit it to Council prior to 5:00pm on the Wednesday preceding the Council meeting.

Meetings Schedule

The monthly meeting cycle of Council, Committee and Panel Meetings is as follows.

First and Third Monday of each month

6:00pm Environmental Planning Committee
6:00pm Finance, Community & Services Committee

First and Third Thursday of each month

1:00pm Woollahra Local Planning Panel

Every Tuesday of each month

3:00pm Application Assessment Panel

Second and Fourth Monday of each month

8:00pm Council Meeting

Further information on Council, Committee and Panel Meetings can be found on our website: [Meetings and Committees](#).

Making representations to Councillors

The role of Councillors, as elected representatives, is to represent the interests of residents and ratepayers, provide leadership and guidance to the community and facilitate communication between the community and the Council. Members of the public can discuss issues affecting the Municipality with their Ward Councillor(s).

The [Councillors' Brochure](#) lists our Councillors, their contact details and Committee membership. To find out which Ward you live in, search for your property on our [Wards Map](#).

Mayoral Interviews

After speaking to the relevant Ward Councillors, members of the public may make an appointment with the Mayor, with Council officers present, to discuss issues that require further attention. To arrange an appointment, please contact 9391 7013.

Submissions to Council on general matters

The public can either personally or in writing address matters within the jurisdiction of the Council. Every attempt is made by Council to satisfy the concerns of the enquirer and/or explain the reasons why Council is undertaking certain actions.

Submissions to Council on specific matters

Through the provisions of certain Acts or Regulations, members of the public have the opportunity to influence Council's decisions by making submissions, comments or objections to proposals. For example, matters such as the level of rates and charges, the contents of Council's Community Strategic Plan, Delivery Program and Operational Plan and the consideration of development applications are advertised and public comment is invited prior to Council's decision on the matter.

Submissions may be delivered to Council's Customer Information Front Counter at 536 New South Head Road, Double Bay or forwarded to Council by post to PO Box 61, Double Bay 1360 or email to records@woollahra.nsw.gov.au.

Privacy notification on submissions to Council

Submissions, summaries of submissions and/or names and addresses of people making a submission may be included in publicly available reports to Council, Committee and/or Planning Panel Meetings and on Council's website. All submissions will be placed on the appropriate Council file and may be accessed by Councillors, Council Officers, consultants to Council or members of the public.

Council Polls

Council may elect to take a poll of electors to obtain information and guidance on certain matters. Council is also required to conduct a constitutional referendum before being able to proceed with certain matters relating to its area, mayoral office and election of councillors.

Community Workshops/Working Parties

Community Workshops and Working Parties are held to gain public input and understanding in respect of major studies, key issues, projects and initiatives that may affect the area and be of public interest or concern. A special committee or working party may be formed to guide Council in its deliberation of a matter. Opportunities for members of the public to participate in these Community Workshops and/or Working Parties are generally advertised in the local newspaper and on Council's website.

7 Access to Council Information

Council is committed to the principles of open, accountable, fair and effective government and recognises the right of the public to access Council information. Council holds a wide range of information concerning the Woollahra local government area and operation of the Council. Much of this information is available on Council's website at www.woollahra.nsw.gov.au.

Council information may be made available in four ways, under the direction of the *Government Information (Public Access) Act 2009* ('GIPA Act'):

1. Mandatory Proactive Release for 'Open Access Information',
2. Authorised Proactive Release,
3. Informal Access Request, or
4. Formal Access Application.

Open access information

The GIPA Act requires Council to make certain information publicly available. This information is called 'open access information' or 'mandatory release information'. This information is to be published on Council's website, unless there is an overriding public interest against disclosure of the information. A detailed list of Council's open access information is provided at 7.1 below.

Authorised proactive release of information

In addition to open access information, Council will make as much other information as possible publicly available, unless there is an overriding public interest against disclosure of the information.

Informal access request

Council will allow access to information it holds that is not on its website, unless there is an overriding public interest against disclosure of the information.

Open access information that Council is not able to make available on the website can be accessed by completing an [Application for Access to Council Information Form](#) and ticking 'Informal Request'.

Council introduced an electronic document and records management system in October 2014. Prior to this date, Council maintained a 'hard copy' filing system, with material being held in physical files. Information on both electronic and 'hard copy' files may be accessed via an access application.

There is no charge for an informal request for access to information. Council encourages applications for access to information to be made, in the first instance, under the informal request provisions.

Formal access application

The GIPA Act provides a formal method for requesting access to information that is not publicly available. For example, information containing personal information of another party or commercial information is not open access information.

Formal access can be applied for by completing an [Application for Access to Council Information Form](#) and ticking 'Formal Application'. An application fee of \$30.00 applies for formal applications and a processing fee of \$30.00 per hour may also apply.

Formal applications should be viewed as a 'last resort' method to access Council information.

Public Interest Test

When deciding whether to release information, Council will apply the public interest test. This means Council must weigh the factors in favour of disclosure against the public interest factors against disclosure. Unless there is an overriding public interest against disclosure, Council will provide the information. There are some limited exceptions to this general rule, for example where dealing with an application would constitute a significant and unreasonable diversion of Council's resources.

The public interest test involves three steps:

- 1 Identify the relevant public interest considerations in favour of disclosure
- 2 Identify the relevant public interest considerations against disclosure
- 3 Determine the weight of the public interest considerations in favour of and against disclosure and where the balance between those interests lies.

Public interest considerations against disclosure are grouped under the following headings:

- Responsible and effective government
- Law enforcement and security
- Individual rights, judicial processes and natural justice
- Business interests of agencies and other persons
- Environment, culture, economy and general matters
- Secrecy provisions
- Exempt documents under interstate Freedom of Information legislation.

Copyright

Copies of documents are provided for information purposes only and are released by Council to meet its obligations under the GIPA Act. Copyright laws still apply to each document. The copyright owner's consent is required if any part of the document is used for any other purpose.

Reviewing Information

Most information requested is in the form of files. Council will notify applicants when files are available for inspection. Files may be inspected at Council's Customer Service Centre, 536 New South Head Road, Double Bay between the hours of 8.00 am and 4.30 pm Monday to Friday. If copies of any documents are required, the files are sent to an external authorised copier and the applicant is responsible for payment for any copies made.

Council's Open Access Information

Open Access Information

Council's open access information includes the following:

- Information Guide
- Policy documents
- Disclosure log of access applications
- Register of government contracts
- Record of open access information not publicly available on the basis of an overriding public interest against disclosure.

Additional Open Access Information

Schedule 1 of the *Government Information (Public Access) Regulation 2018* lists additional open access information for local authorities:

1 Information about Woollahra Council

- Code of Conduct
- Code of Meeting Practice
- Annual Report
- Annual financial reports
- Auditor's report
- Management plan
- EEO management plan
- Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities to the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Councillors' Policy
- Annual reports of bodies exercising functions delegated by Council
- Any codes referred to in the Local Government Act 1993
- Returns of the interests of councillors, designated persons and delegates
- Agendas and Business Papers for any meeting of Council or any Committee of Council (but not including business papers for matters considered when part of a meeting is closed to the public)
- Minutes of any meeting of Council or any Committee of Council but restricted (in the case of any part of a meeting that is closed to the public) to the resolutions and recommendations of the meeting
- Division of Local Government Representative Reports presented at a meeting of the Council in accordance with section 433 of the Local Government Act 1993
- Land Register
- Register of Investments
- Register of Delegations
- Register of Graffiti Removal Works
- Register of current Declarations of Disclosures of Political donations
- Register of Voting on Planning Matters

2 Plans and Policies

- Local policies adopted by Council concerning approvals and orders
- Plans of management for community land
- Environmental planning instruments, development control plans and contributions plans made under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 applying to land within the Council area

3 Information about Development Applications

Information contained in:

(a) Development applications (within the meaning of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*) and any associated documents received in relation to a proposed development including:

- Home warranty insurance documents
- Construction certificates
- Occupation certificates
- Structural certification documents
- Town planner reports
- Submissions received on development applications
- Heritage consultant reports
- Tree inspection consultant reports
- Acoustics consultant reports
- Land contamination consultant reports

(b) Records of decisions made on or after 1 July 2010 on development applications (including decisions made on appeal).

(c) Records describing the general nature of documents that Council decides to exclude from public view including internal specifications and configurations, and commercially sensitive information.

The following information is specifically excluded from development application 'open access' information. Internal plans and commercial information will not be released.

Internal Plans: The plans or specifications for any residential parts of a proposed building, other than plans that merely show its height and its external configuration in relation to the site on which it is proposed to be erected, and

Commercial Information: If the information would be likely to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied it or to reveal a trade secret.

Development Applications made before 1 July 2010: Development applications made before 1 July 2010 and any associated documents received (whether before, on or after that date) in relation to the application and the records of decisions, including decisions on appeal, on development applications made before 1 July 2010 are not 'open access' information but may be requested via an access application.

4 Approvals, Orders and Other Documents

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

Review of an Access to Information Decision

If you disagree with Council's decision in relation to a request for information, you can apply in writing to Council for an internal review of the decision or to the Information Commissioner, Information and Privacy Commission or the Administrative and Equal Opportunity Division of the NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal for an external review.

You have 20 working days from the time of the decision is sent to you to ask for an internal review. An internal review will cost \$40. A person authorised by the General Manager and senior to the original decision maker will review your application and inform you of the review decision as soon as practicable but no later than 15 working days after the initial review application is made to Council. This time frame may be extended in certain circumstances.

Reasons will be given if the original decision remains unchanged. Information on your review rights can also be found in the Information and Privacy Commission Fact Sheet [Your Review Rights under the GIPA Act](#) .

8 Access to Personal Information

You can ask for your personal information from Council using either the *Privacy and Personal Information Protection Act 1998* or the GIPA Act. Personal information is 'information or an opinion about an individual whose identity is apparent or can reasonably be ascertained from the information or opinion'.

If you are interested in obtaining access to documents concerning your personal information or wish to seek amendment to Council's records concerning your personal information (on the basis that you consider the information is incorrect) you may submit an [Application for Access to Council Information Form](#) or submit a written application to Council outlining your reasons for requesting the amendment to your personal information.

Information on access to personal information can also be found on the Information and Privacy Commission website including the Fact Sheet [How to Access Your Personal Information From Government Agencies](#).

9 Council Officers and Contact Details

Right to Information Officers

The Director - Corporate Services, Manager - Governance & Council Support, Governance Services Coordinator and Information/Administration Assistant have been appointed as Council's 'Right to Information Officers' and are responsible for determining applications for access to information and for the amendment of records. Should you have difficulty in obtaining access to any Council documents, you should contact one of the Right to Information Officers.

Public Officer

As well as being appointed a Right to Information Officer, the Director - Corporate Services has also been appointed Council's 'Public Officer' under the provisions of the *Local Government Act 1993*. Among other duties, the Public Officer may deal with requests from the public concerning Council's affairs and has the responsibility for assisting people to gain access to Council's public documents. You may forward enquiries to the Public Officer at the following address.

Woollahra Council Contact Details

Woollahra Municipal Council
536 New South Head Road
Double Bay NSW 2028

Postal address: PO Box 61, Double Bay NSW 1360
Phone: 9391 7000
Email: records@woollahra.nsw.gov.au
Website: www.woollahra.nsw.gov.au

10 Information Guide Review

This Information Guide will be reviewed at intervals of not more than 12 months in accordance with Section 21 of the GIPA Act.

Any amendment to this Information Guide must be by way of the approval of the General Manager.

11 Information and Privacy Commission

If you require any other advice or information about access to information you may wish to contact the Information and Privacy Commission.

Email: ipcinfo@ipc.nsw.gov.au
Phone: 1800 472 679
Post: GPO Box 7011, Sydney NSW 2001
In Person: Level 17, 201 Elizabeth Street, Sydney

Information Guide Amendments

Date	Responsible Officer	Summary of Amendments
4 July 2018	Ailsa Crammond	Updated to reference Delivery Program 2018 to 2021 and Operational Plan 2018/2019, new Councillors post 2017 election and new committee meetings structure.
7 Nov 2018	Ailsa Crammond	Updated to include change in Council and Committee meetings schedule (twice a month) and new Government Information (Public Access) Regulation 2018 (DAs before 1 July 2010 no longer open access).