KPMG
Enterprise

Corporate Relations Service Review

Final report

Wingecarribee Shire Council

–

September 2021

Contents

This report has been prepared as outlined with Wingecarribee Shire Council in the Scope Section of the engagement letter/contract 27 July 2021. The services provided in connection with this engagement comprise an advisory engagement, which is not subject to assurance or other standards issued by the Australian Auditing and Assurance Standards Board and, consequently no opinions or conclusions intended to convey assurance have been expressed.

The findings in this report are based on a qualitative study and the reported results reflect a perception of Wingecarribee Shire Council stakeholders but only to the extent of the sample surveyed, being Wingecarribee Shire Council's approved representative sample of management, personnel and community stakeholders. Any projection to the wider management, personnel and community stakeholders is subject to the level of bias in the method of sample selection.

No warranty of completeness, accuracy or reliability is given in relation to the statements and representations made by, and the information and documentation provided by, Wingecarribee Shire Council management, personnel and community stakeholders consulted as part of the process.

No reliance should be placed by Wingecarribee Shire Council on additional oral remarks provided during the presentation, unless these are confirmed in writing by KPMG.

KPMG have indicated within this report the sources of the information provided. We have not sought to independently verify those sources unless otherwise noted within the report.

KPMG is under no obligation in any circumstance to update this report, in either oral or written form, for events occurring after the report has been issued in final form.

Section 1:

Executive summary

Project context, scope and approach

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CONTEXT

Wingecarribee Shire Council (WSC, Council) has undergone a significant level of change, with Council suspension, a complete Executive turnover and the recent public inquiry announcement. This current climate has contributed to the erosion of trust with the community.

It is an opportune time to reflect on the capability and capacity of the Corporate Relations Service (the Service) to appropriately manage the reputational impacts of this situation, improve the level of service to staff and the community and ultimately rebuild trust.

SCOPE

This document outlines the outcomes of the review of the Corporate Relations Service. It establishes:

- A clear understanding of the current state of the Corporate Relations Service, and the opportunities for improvement;

- A deeper insight into the community expectations for communications and engagement, building on the 2021 WSC community research;

- A comparative analysis of the services' resourcing against a set of agreed Councils, with evaluation of capacity and strategic priorities; and

- An evaluation of the capacity of the Service to effectively manage the reputation impacts of the Council suspension.

The intended audience for this report is the Corporate Relations management and the Executive team of the Council.

APPROACH

Phase 1 | *Current state*

An analysis of the current state of the Service

Phase 1 focused on gathering data on the current state of the service to develop insights around the current challenges and opportunities. It involved desktop reviews of available information, consultations with the Service team and consultations with select representatives of internal customers and the community.

Phase 2 | *Ideate*

Ideating improvement opportunities for the Service

Phase 2 focused on defining future state improvement opportunities in workshops with the key Service stakeholders, as well as internally with KPMG's subject matter experts. Comparative analysis of WSC against a set of "like" councils was also undertaken, to deliver insights on service resourcing and focus areas.

Phase 3 | *Document*

Development and socialisation of Service recommendations

Phase 3 focused on validating and finalising the improvement recommendations with the key Service stakeholders, and prioritising them into a roadmap to guide execution. As a value-add outside the scope of this review, two additional recommendations were defined, to address the broader community dissatisfaction finding from the consultation process.

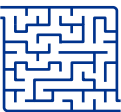# Background | A timeline of key events leading up to the review

While it is important to recognise the context of the significant operational and cultural disruption faced by Council in the lead up to this review, this review will not significantly reflect on the current political climate and its implications. Instead, the review is forward-looking, conducted with a focus on better positioning the Corporate Relations service to support the achievement of the revised strategic direction under new leadership.

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Timeline

2020

Sept 2020 — *Performance Improvement Order issued*

Oct 2020 — *General Manager departs*

2021

Mar 2021 — *Council suspended and Interim Administrator appointed*

Jun 2021 — *General Manager appointed*

Key events and operating conditions

Corporate Relations Service Review

2020
- Wingecarribee Shire Council Draft Reputation Strategy developed by external adviser, providing reputation management advice
- Current state communication challenges were identified and recommendations made to rectify the issues including:
  - ❖ Provide information on issues most important to community through multiple channels (hard and soft copy newsletter, media centre)
  - ❖ Establish one source of truth for Council Information
  - ❖ Create more opportunities for community engagement with Mayor and staff

Feb 2021
- The biennial WSC Community Research Report was conducted
- The percentage of respondents who were satisfied with the Council's level of communication was 68%, down 11% from 2019
- Three of the top five drivers of overall satisfaction identified related to communications and community engagement ('Council provision of information to residents', 'Council's level of communication and 'opportunities to participate in Council decision making')

May 2021
- A Small Business Consultation report was developed by the Small Business Commissioner
- The report found that businesses found engagement with WSC challenging and inconsistent across a number of areas.
- Recommendations from the review included: improved communications and customer service for small businesses, improved DA approvals process, and the implementation of initiatives to build opportunity for small business development.

Jul 2021
- A presentation to Council by the newly appointed General Manager identified the need to
  - ❖ improve communication, transparency & access to information
  - ❖ improve Community understanding of / participation in decision making and feeling heard

Jun 2021
- An Economic Development Roundtable was held
- The 16 attendees comprised of representatives from local bodies and a cross section of interested individuals
- Participants expressed a high level of dissatisfaction with the Southern Highlands Destination Strategy believing it to be factually inaccurate and lacking in defined actions
- Participants were dissatisfied with the level of community engagement in the development of the strategy

What does this mean for this service review?

It is important to recognise the context of the significant operational and cultural disruption faced by Council in the lead up to this review.

- Previous leadership and suspended Councillors have had an influence over the direction and operations of the Corporate Relations service historically.
- The outcomes of this influence on Council as a whole are well established through the Interim Administrator reviews and reports. The Corporate Relations Service review will not significantly reflect on these findings.
- Community sentiment has been a focus area of a number of external reports commissioned since 2020. The findings of such reports are incorporated into this report, to allow for a holistic consideration of the problem statement.
- Ultimately, this review is forward-looking, conducted with a focus on better positioning the Corporate Relations service to support the achievement of the revised strategic direction under the new leadership.

Executive summary | Key findings

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There is very low strategic capability in the Corporate Relations service

- The current Communications & Community Engagement strategies are **not regarded as fit-for-purpose.** The strategies **do not establish clear objectives** and **do not offer specific implementation activities** for how the service will support the achievement of Council's Community Strategic Plan.

- The strategies appear rolled over year-on-year with **minimal reflection on the current operating conditions**, renewed service aspirations or dynamic stakeholder needs.

- With ill-defined strategic objectives and a lack of assigned responsibility or targets to measure execution, **the function has fallen into a reactive operating rhythm**, and an inability to prioritise service delivery that matters.

- There are **no planned or proactive crisis management activities including deliberate reputation management**, despite it being a critical need. The community is interpreting the silence as a lack of honesty and transparency.

Service delivery is fragmented, and poorly governed

- A significant volume of communications and community engagement activities happens outside of the service, **with no governance mechanism**. Accordingly, there is a **lost opportunity to broaden the reach and amplify the key Council narratives** by leveraging Council-wide communications channels and the network of internal staff.

- The are no guidelines about accessing the corporate relations services, and **a lack of clarity for responsibilities and timeliness through the process**. This contributes to inconsistencies in service delivery and further reinforces the organisational siloes, with business units choosing not to engage.

- The operating model has also **prevented the function from positioning itself as the subject matter expert on corporate relations** within Council. The current Executive and the Interim Administrator have taken on the role of directing the activities of the function, rather than considering recommendations from the function.

- The fragmented service delivery is evident to the community, and in combination with the silence on the current crisis, it **leads to a further erosion of trust.**

Stakeholder needs and expectations are not well understood

- The Corporate Relations **service delivery focus is narrow,** with the residents, local journalists and internal project managers as the target audience. The service is therefore **not able to appropriately respond and manage conflicting stakeholder priorities**.

- Current activities appear to be informed by **generalised assumptions about what the community wants and needs,** with little evidence-based analysis of the community input.

- The downward community satisfaction trend identified in the community research reports highlights this **fundamental mismatch between the current service design and the community needs.**

Comparative analysis of WSC against five other Councils indicates that the **service requires additional resourcing investment**. At a minimum, this includes hiring **a Managerial capability** specific to the Corporate Relations service, to take ownership of the function's strategic direction.

Investment considerations

Given the findings of this review, it is important that the Council Executive consider the need to make an investment into the Corporate Relations service. The service is under-resourced in comparison with like Councils and lacks many of the key functional capabilities required to deliver on the strategic improvement initiatives. If investment is not able to be made in light of other Council priorities, then the team will need to identify opportunities to re-balance and re-prioritise their workload to at least make a start on the critical improvements required.

Headcount

- Our analysis indicates that the current team is under-resourced, with like Councils having twice the team size for both communications and community engagement, relative to Council-wide FTEs. The potential increase based on comparative data is 3 FTE.

- The role of a Manager of Corporate Relations (or similar) needs to be hired as a priority, to lead the execution of the recommendations from this report, and redefine the function's strategic focus areas.

- In deciding whether to continue to increase the team headcount, WSC should also consider the individual's capabilities to support the delivery of the function's strategic focus areas, as supported by training and development where appropriate.

Capability

- Crisis settlement expertise is a niche capability that WSC requires as a matter of urgency, given little deliberate effort has been made to manage the current political crisis over the last three months.

- Other recommendations from this report require varying levels of skills and expertise, however early investment can help WSC expedite the delivery of the outcomes and their associated benefits for Council and the community.

- A number of the strategic recommendations outlined in this report require expertise from outside of the organisation. Most of them also present an opportunity to get the current team upskilled by having them co-deliver alongside third party providers.
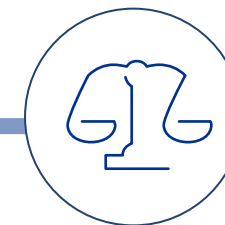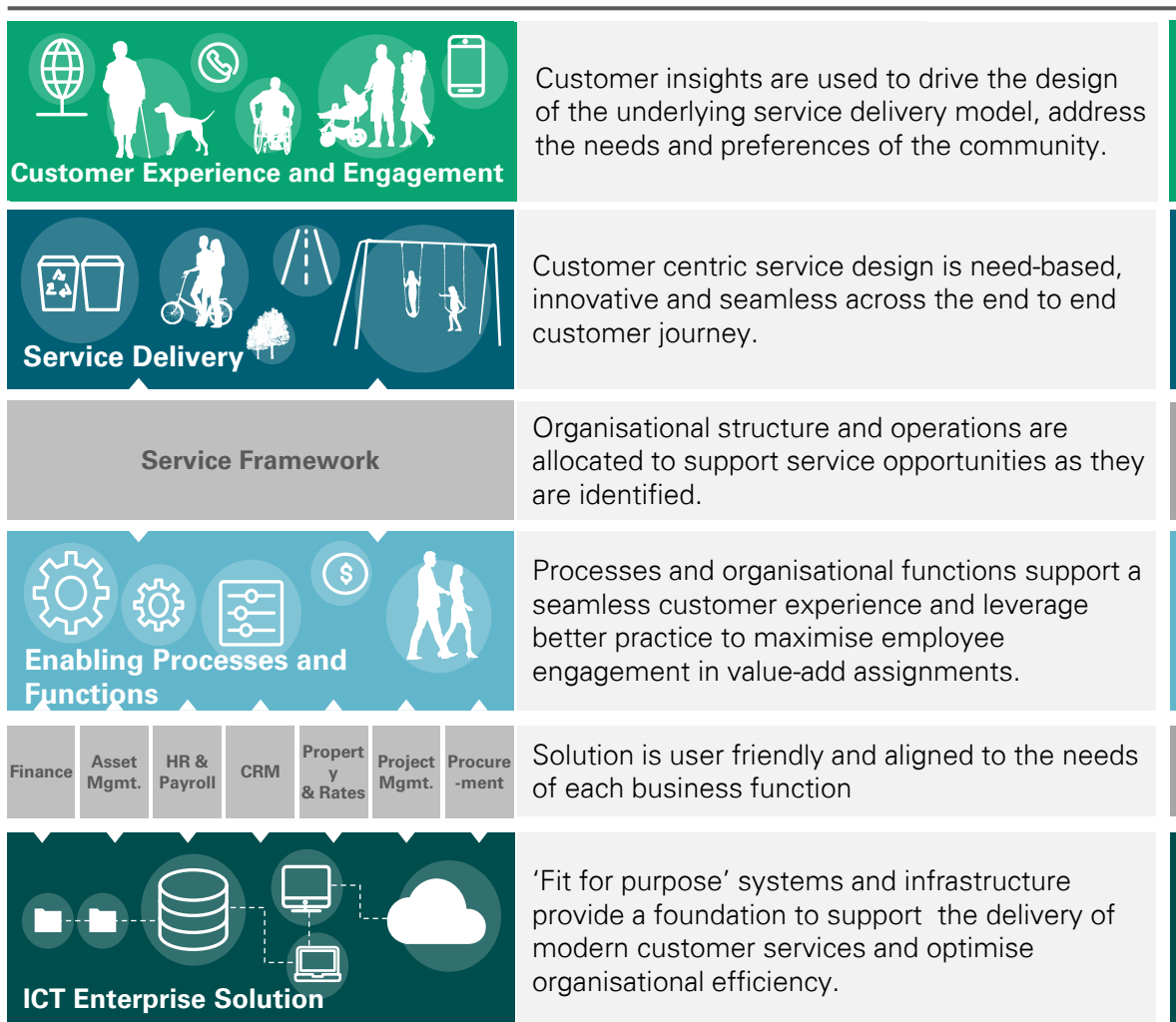
Workload prioritisation

- In the absence of investment, there is limited capacity for the Corporate Relations staff to take on additional workload without conducting a re-prioritisation of their existing activities. Opportunity exists to optimise the approach to graphic design and the frequency of media releases in particular, however this is likely to only free up sufficient capacity to action the tactical recommendations.

- In addition, the community engagement role is seconded into the function, on recent resignation of a long-standing team member, and will require a period of time to come up to speed with Council-wide engagement processes, further constraining capacity.

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KPMG's Connected Council philosophy for Local Government

At the heart of the recommendations is our philosophy about a 'Connected Council', placing the customer at the centre and connecting their experience to the design of the middle office through to the back office, which we consider imperative for effective and value adding change to an organisation.

Structure of a Modern Connected Council[1]

Customer Experience and Engagement	Customer insights are used to drive the design of the underlying service delivery model, address the needs and preferences of the community.
Service Delivery	Customer centric service design is need-based, innovative and seamless across the end to end customer journey.
Service Framework	Organisational structure and operations are allocated to support service opportunities as they are identified.
Enabling Processes and Functions	Processes and organisational functions support a seamless customer experience and leverage better practice to maximise employee engagement in value-add assignments.
Finance / Asset Mgmt. / HR & Payroll / CRM / Property & Rates / Project Mgmt. / Procure-ment	Solution is user friendly and aligned to the needs of each business function
ICT Enterprise Solution	'Fit for purpose' systems and infrastructure provide a foundation to support the delivery of modern customer services and optimise organisational efficiency.

How to Build a Connected Council

▶ **Identify and build meaningful community engagements:** Develop a 'one-council' experience, addressing the whole-of-person – from initial interaction through to ongoing relationship and engagement.

▶ **Review customer service design**: Services are defined and designed from the customer's perspective, considering their needs, wants and journeys, rather than organisational functions**.**

▶ **Define roles to support service delivery:** Roles and responsibilities are defined to support end-to-end service delivery across all functions.

▶ **Optimise business processes**: Processes are integrated across the front, middle and back office to eliminate silos and fragmentation. Organisation and operational design focuses on reclaiming time from old processes and re-allocating it to activities that drive value for the council.

▶ **Align technology to business needs:** Systems are configured to enable best-practice processes while ensuring Council's business needs are met

▶ **Lay the ICT foundations:** Systems, applications and infrastructure are selected for their ability to address challenges now and to support future goals and ambitions. Connectivity, security and scalability are key considerations.

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[1] KPMG proprietary framework that is supported by Local Government specific reference models and accelerator tools. Application of this framework has been proven as fit for purpose for Local Government nationally and internationally (e.g. UK and Canada).
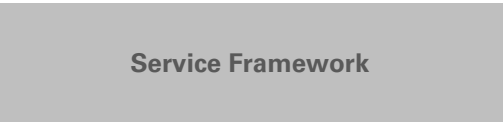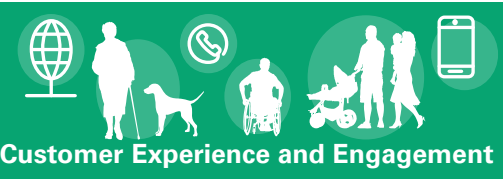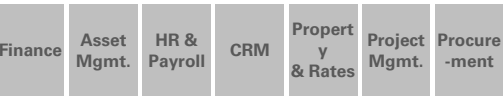
Connected Council | Recommendations overview

Five tactical recommendations and six strategic recommendations were developed for the Corporate Relations Service out of this review. Dissatisfaction expressed by customers through the project's community consultation cannot be fully addressed at the Corporate Relations Service level, and as a value-add, we have outlined additional transformational recommendations to address this dissatisfaction.

Owned by Corporate Relations

Owned by Council

Structure of a Modern Connected Council

Customer Experience and Engagement

Service Delivery

Service Framework

Enabling Processes and Functions

| Finance | Asset Mgmt. | HR & Payroll | CRM | Property & Rates | Project Mgmt. | Procure-ment |

ICT Enterprise Solution

TACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS
Constitute low effort to implement, deliver high value to enable the transitional state of the function.

TR-1 | Include a new section in the weekly Community Update 'Submissions & Feedback' summarising recent consultations outcomes and related action plans.

TR-3 | Implement standard practice guidelines for hyperlinks and cross-referencing in communications content.

TR-2 | Centralise all graphic design work into a single internal or outsourced role to release capacity.

TR-4 | Review and uplift the project Consultation & Communication Plan template to enhance its functionality.
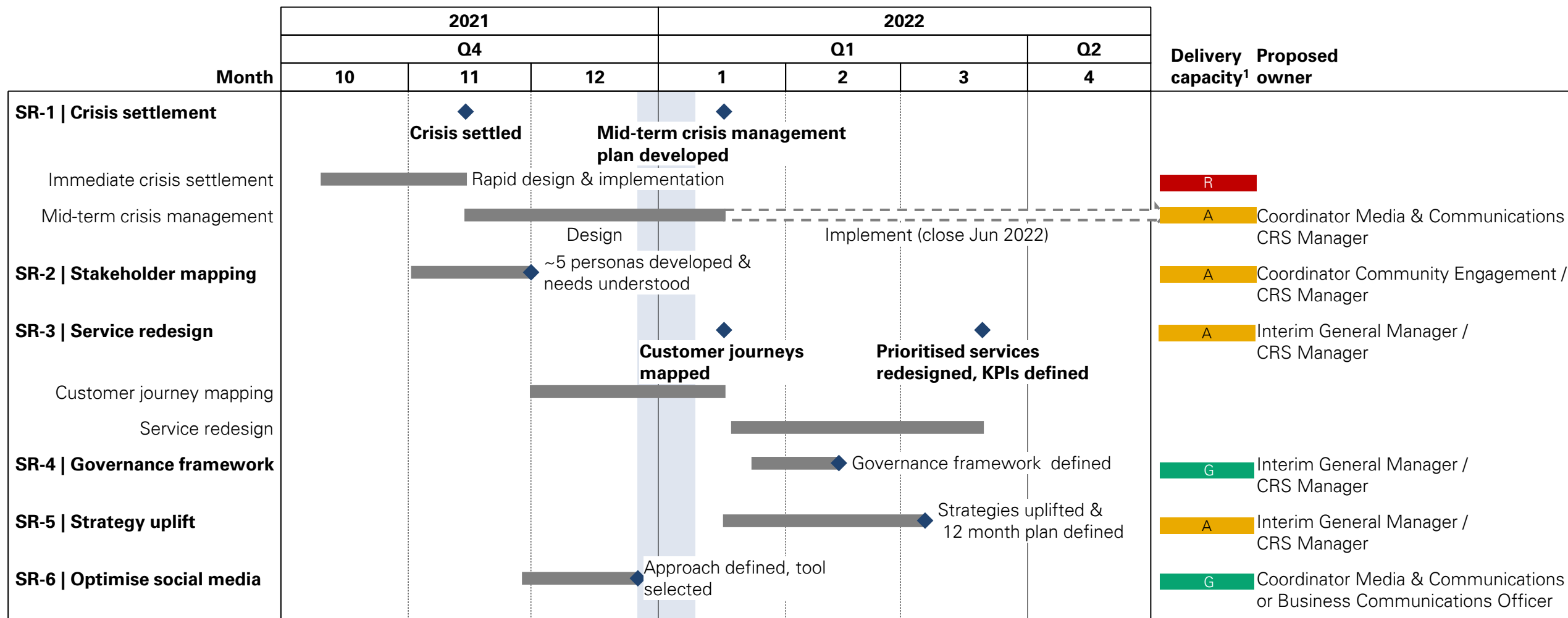
TR-5 | Streamline stakeholder-heavy approval processes[1] to allow for a more agile approach considering the level of risk for different types of communications channels and content
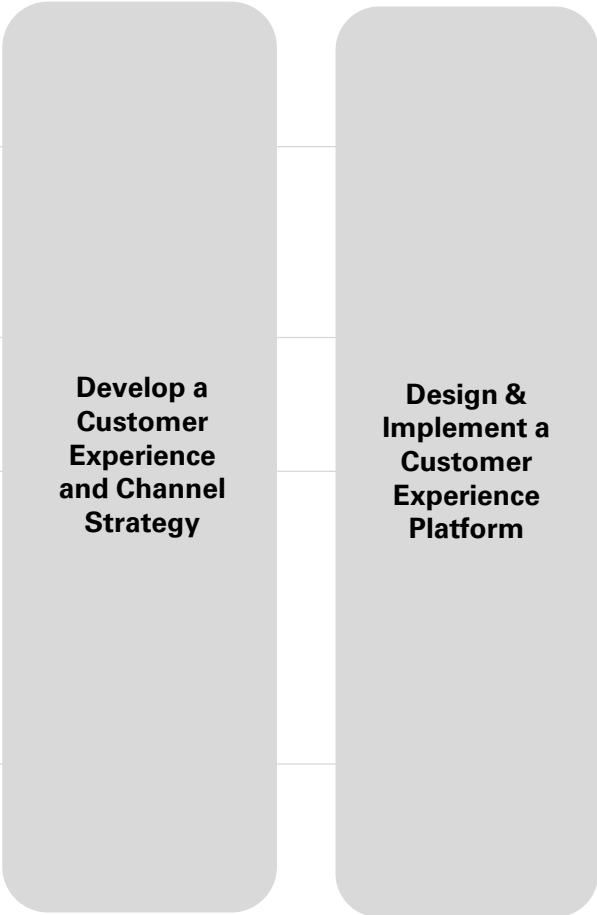
[1] This recommendation has already been identified by the Service, and is being implemented.

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS
Constitute high value, higher effort to implement, focus on developing a future-ready service

SR-2 | Map your stakeholders & understand their needs

SR- 1 | Crisis settlement & mid-term approach

SR- 5 | Uplift Communications & Community engagement strategies

SR- 3 | Redesign the Corporate Relations services

SR- 4 | Establish a Corporate Relations governance framework

SR-6 | Develop a council-wide social media approach

TRANSFORMATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Develop a Customer Experience and Channel Strategy

Design & Implement a Customer Experience Platform

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Proposed roadmap

Strategic recommendations identified through this report have been sequenced into a high level roadmap to guide execution activities and agreed with key stakeholders. Tactical recommendations have not been included, as they can be delivered in a shorter timeframe and with minimal prioritisation of priorities.

	2021			2022				Delivery capacity[1]	Proposed owner
	Q4			Q1			Q2		
Month	10	11	12	1	2	3	4		

SR-1 | Crisis settlement
— ◆ Crisis settled
— ◆ Mid-term crisis management plan developed

Immediate crisis settlement — Rapid design & implementation — R

Mid-term crisis management — Design — Implement (close Jun 2022) — A — Coordinator Media & Communications / CRS Manager

SR-2 | Stakeholder mapping — ◆ ~5 personas developed & needs understood — A — Coordinator Community Engagement / CRS Manager

SR-3 | Service redesign
◆ Customer journeys mapped
◆ Prioritised services redesigned, KPIs defined
— A — Interim General Manager / CRS Manager

Customer journey mapping

Service redesign

SR-4 | Governance framework — ◆ Governance framework defined — G — Interim General Manager / CRS Manager

SR-5 | Strategy uplift — ◆ Strategies uplifted & 12 month plan defined — A — Interim General Manager / CRS Manager

SR-6 | Optimise social media — Approach defined, tool selected — G — Coordinator Media & Communications or Business Communications Officer

Christmas closedown

[1]Delivery capacity legend:

G	Can be initiated and delivered with internal functional capability and some re-prioritisation of functional workload
A	Requires external delivery expertise in a partnership model and some re-prioritisation of functional workload
R	Cannot be delivered with current resource capacity and expertise

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Section 2:

Current state analysis

Corporate Relations strategy reviews | Key insights

Current strategies clearly frame the organisational approach to Communications and Community Engagement, and outline high-level organisational responsibility. However, there is a high number of actions compared to the team size, and they generally do not lend themselves to implementation planning. There is limited progress in executing the strategy.

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KEY INSIGHTS

- The strategies **do not establish clear objectives** and **do not offer specific implementation activities** for how the service will support the achievement of Council's Community Strategic Plan
- The strategies were reviewed in July 2020, but no significant updates were made for the current operating conditions. Objectives are not service-specific, and half of the objectives are the same for the two strategies
- The number of actions associated with the strategic objectives is large in relation to the team presumably tasked with delivery; no ownership or timeframe is assigned
- Actions are loosely defined; some are too granular and likened to a task, others are broad and similar to objectives
  - ~50% of actions defined in the Communications Strategy would generally be considered as initiatives / mini projects
  - ~20% of the actions defined in the Community Engagement Strategy would generally be considered as initiatives / mini projects
- None of the actions define the outcomes to be achieved or how success will be measured

CLASSIFICATION OF ACTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

	Communications Strategy	Community Engagement Strategy
Number of original actions	19	12
# (% of total) classified as **Initiatives**	11 (58%)	3 (25%)
# (% of total) classified as **BAU Activities**	6 (31%)	9 (75%)
# (% of total) classified as **Outcomes**	2 (11%)	-

For the purpose of this analysis, we have reclassified actions associated with strategic objectives either an 'Initiative', 'BAU activity' or 'Outcome' where:

- **Initiative** refers to a one-off project or activity that can be implemented
- **BAU Activity** refers to an ongoing task that is either an established process or should be established in the future
- **Outcome** refers to a description of an outcome where no clear task or action s defined

Communications Strategy analysis[1]

OBJECTIVE	ACTION	CATEGORY[1]	STATUS
01. Ensure Council has proactive, deliberate and sustained communication with its audiences across divers communication channels	Implement a proactive and prioritised media strategy – focused on the areas of importance identified in the Community Satisfaction Survey and W2031	Initiative	In Progress
	Ensure information on all key decisions, projects, events and issues is communicated through a mixture of online and traditional tools	Outcome	NA
	Continue to identify and explore emerging communications methods and channels in-line with changing technology and community needs.	BAU Activity	NA
	Establish a process for submitting information to the Communications team for dissemination through various channels	Initiative	Not Started
	Resource the Communications team to ensure the actions in this strategy can be delivered	Initiative	In Progress
	Provide assistance for elected members in managing their own communication and engagement activities.	BAU Activity	NA
02. Clearly communicate what Council delivers. Through consistent messages and an engaging visual presence	Enforce the principles of the Style Guide and use of key messages in all communication	BAU Activity	NA
	Implement plain language communication across the organisation	Initiative	Not Started
	Ensure risk/crisis communication plans are in place to respond appropriately to a range of scenarios	Initiative	Not Started

OBJECTIVE	ACTION	CATEGORY[1]	STATUS
03. Ensure Council staff have the tools they need to be reputation ambassadors	Maintain a proactive program of internal communication	BAU Activity	NA
	Strengthen internal communications process, with an emphasis on improving links between Customer Services, Communications and Community Engagement staff	Outcome	NA
	Implement and review policies for media (including social media) and community engagement	Initiative	In Progress
	Ensure key staff are trained in delivering effective media interviews	Initiative	Not Started
	Review the structure of the Communications team to ensure it is best placed to deliver the Communication Strategy and meet organisational needs	Initiative	In Progress
	Create awareness of what the Communications team does and the many channels available to staff	Initiative	Not Started
	Ensure key elements of communication and engagement, including the Style Guide and this strategy, form part of new staff inductions	Initiative	Not Started
	Include communication competency as a key performance indicator for all key staff	Initiative	Not Started
04. Strengthen Council's partnership with the community through effective engagement	Celebrate community engagement successes	BAU Activity	NA
	Actively promote community engagement activities	BAU Activity	NA

Community Engagement Strategy analysis[1]

OBJECTIVE	ACTION	CATEGORY[1]	STATUS
01. Manage a proactive program of community engagement, ensuring all sectors of the community are included	1.1 - Face to face engagement ~ Conduct information sessions, drop in kiosks or shopfronts to promote and engage with the community	BAU Activity	NA
	1.2 - Technology ~ Use technological advancements to reach further into the community and ensure feedback gathered is integrated into Council projects and decisions.	BAU Activity	NA
	1.3 - Inclusive and accessible ~ Ensure a broad mix of engagement channels are used including events, newspaper advertising, media releases, radio, website, public meetings, surveys and individual consultations in order to make public participation in decision making convenient.	BAU Activity	NA
	1.4 - Stakeholder Database ~ Maintain a database of community contacts for representative groups, venues and communication opportunities.	BAU Activity	NA
02. Ensure engagement at an appropriate level is built into all key projects and Decisions	2.1 – Project planning ~ Implement a process to determine the level of engagement appropriate for each project and the techniques to be used.	Initiative	In Progress
	2.2 - Community engagement coordinator services ~ Implement a formal internal process for requesting the services of Council's Community Engagement Coordinator, to ensure community engagement work can be prioritised and appropriately resourced.	Initiative	Not Started
	2.3 - Councillor and Committee briefings ~ Provide information about the tools and techniques used to undertake community engagement so recommendations and/or resolutions are appropriate.	BAU Activity	NA

OBJECTIVE	ACTION	CATEGORY[1]	STATUS
03. Ensure Council staff have the tools they need for effective communication	3.1 - Staff training ~ Ensure Council staff are appropriately trained in community engagement techniques and are informed about community engagement policies and guidelines.	BAU Activity	NA
	3.2 – Council reports ~ Ensure the 'community engagement' section in the Council Business Paper template is completed for each key decision and project.	BAU Activity	NA
	3.3 - Report on the outcome; Ensure the outcome of each community engagement activity is reported to participants in an appropriate way. This may include individual letters/emails or broad media releases or social media posts as required.	BAU Activity	NA
04. Strengthen Council's partnership with the community through effective engagement	4.1 - Community engagement database ~ Create and maintain a database of community engagement activities to ensure valuable information about community engagement projects is collected for future reference.	BAU Activity	NA
	4.2 - Surveys on engagement and communication ~ Regularly seek feedback from the community on appropriate channels for engagement and communication, and refine activities accordingly.	Initiative	Not Started

[1] See appendix for full size tables developed through a desktop review of the respective strategies and subsequent validation with the Acting Group Manager Corporate & Community and Acting Deputy General Manager Corporate, Strategy & Development Services

Corporate Relations Policy Reviews | Media and Social Media

The revised Media Policy and Social Media Policy are heavily focused on restrictions around engagement and provide little guidance on best-practice engagement in their respective channels. Based on our observation, the social media channels can be better used to position the narrative around negative media releases.

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MEDIA POLICY

✓ The **owner for media releases is specified** as the Media and Communications Coordinator and accountability is attributed to the General Manager

✓ The media-related **roles of internal Council stakeholders are defined**

✗ There is **no formalised crisis communications procedure** or leading practice approach (e.g. prioritisation, timeliness of response)

✗ There is **no assigned ownership for website content** and other forms of stakeholder communication (e.g. meetings, strategy publications, announcements)

✗ The is **no formal direction or guidance on when to use media releases** vs other communication methods

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

✓ The policy **defines appropriate private use of social media** and outlines precautions to ensure separation between personal and Council use

✓ **Compliance with the Council's Code of Conduct** is mandated for Council Officials engaging on social media in an official capacity

✗ **Site administrators are not specified** for each of the social media services engaged by WSC e.g. Facebook

✗ The policy **has no formal guidance on how to engage with stakeholders via social media channels** or what constitute leading-practice (e.g. posts should be informative, brief and written in first person)

KEY INSIGHTS

• **Policies are interpreted as risk-averse, containing comprehensive instructions on 'how *not* to engage'.** There is limited direction on proactive or crisis engagement methods for approved stakeholders, and no reference to any supporting documentation where these best practices are defined.

• There is unclear ownership and accountability for communication channels combined with a lack of clear direction for usage, adding to the **hesitancy to engage with stakeholders on critical issues (e.g. bushfire response, Council administration).** This is observed in the low proportion of media releases containing 'negative' content despite the level of bad press surrounding Council's current political environment.

• There is a community perception that Council is silent on key (and/or negative) issues and that the local media is the source of truth. Media releases are published on the WSC Media Centre and broadcast via local media and this can be **perceived as the media owning the content, rather than the Council.**

Of the media releases published[1] between 1st Jan and 16th Aug 2021,

16%
contained negative content
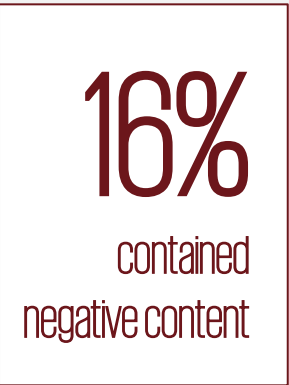
Of the negative releases,

62% were issued proactively

This highlights that there is sufficient **opportunity for WSC to set the narrative** on these releases, however no narrative has currently been defined.

Of the media releases published[1] between 1st Jan and 16th Aug 2021,

Only 1 of 26 negative media releases was posted on Facebook

Council is (by design or otherwise) **not using a key channel to position their narrative around negative media releases**.
WSC Facebook sentiment observations[2]:
• Positive Council posts relating to roadworks, infrastructure, waste or assets **often received negative engagement** as they **perceived to be disingenuous**
• When Council engages with the community in Facebooked comments, this **sentiment tends to change to a more understanding** and/or positive one

"We are pretending that nothing is happening" – Council employee

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[1]Media release data collected from MR stats document provided by Wingecarribee Shire Council.
[2]Manual desktop sentiment analysis by KPMG

Current state service catalogue | Corporate Relations

A total of 17 services are currently scoped[1] in the Corporate Relations service, and categorised into four groupings of Communication, Channel management, Community engagement and Events coordination. Approximately half of the services have low or no focus or demand, including internal communications and events. Civic reception coordination is scoped into the Corporate Relations service, but is funded and delivered outside of it.

Communication	Channel management	Community engagement	Events coordination

Communication strategy[4]
Develop & implement a proactive and prioritised communications strategy. Define goals and approaches for external channels, media, branding and crisis communication.

External communications management
Prepare and distribute reports, general correspondence and news release items for Council.

Branding management
Implement Council's branding and style guide.

Elected members communication support
Provide assistance for elected members in managing their own communication and engagement activities.

Crisis communication management
Implement risk/crisis communication plans.

Internal communications management
Manage internal Council communications.

Communication training coordination
Coordinate communications training for WSC staff and elected members.

Graphic design
Provide graphic design support to internal business units for customer communications templates.

Channel strategy
Identify changing technology and community needs and explore emerging communications methods and channels in-line with these.

Channel management
Engage with customers and community via channels and direct requestors to the relevant information or channels.

Information distribution
Disseminate Council communications across all channels. Enable process for customers to submit information to the Communications team for dissemination.

Community engagement strategy
Develop, implement and deliver Strategic Community Engagement plans and policies that support Council and Community interaction.

Community engagement management
Plan, promote and deliver community engagement activities (including online engagement tools such as the consultation hub).

Community consultation support
Support Council community consultation initiatives and enhance stakeholder experience through the effective utilisation of digital tools.

Community consultation training
Provide community consultation training to key stakeholders within Council business units who are engaging the community in the course of project implementation.

Events strategy
Develop the events plan and coordinate the scheduling planning and promoting of events for all functional divisions.

Civic receptions[2]
Coordinate civic events (e.g. Australia day and citizenship ceremonies).

Community events
Coordinate the planning, running and overall management of Wingecarribee Shire Council run community events.

Level of focus / demand for each service[3]:

High focus / demand >30% of time	Some focus / demand 10%-30% of time	Low or no focus /demand < 10% of time

[1] The interim view of Corporate Relations services and subservices was developed through a desktop review of the Corporate Relations service profile, 2020 and 2021 Communications strategies and Corporate Relations function position descriptions. It was validated during the Corporate Relations Discovery workshops. See Appendix for attendees.
[2] This service is performed by the PA to Mayor, it has been self-estimated at about 40% of the total effort of the role and is not budgeted in the Corporate Relations service.
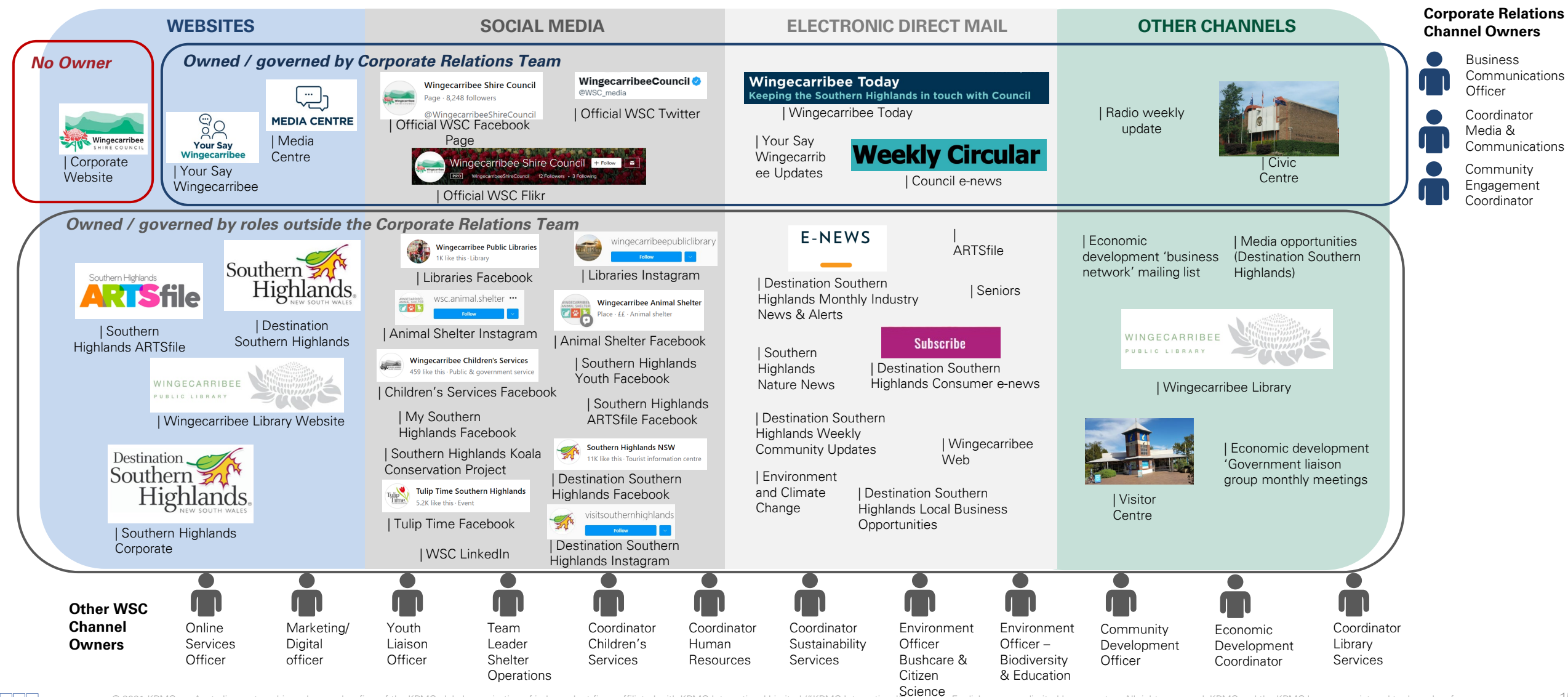[3] The total level of functional focus was calculated by asking the 3 Corporate Relations team FTEs to estimate the percentage of time spent on the above services.
[4] The level of focus attributed to the Communication Strategy was reduced from a self-estimated 10-30% but the Corporate Relations team to <10% following further investigation into the current state development and implementation activities for the Communication Strategy.

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A map of Council-wide engagement channels and owners

Wingecarribee Shire Council has a vast array of stakeholder engagement channels[1] managed by various business units across the Council. The Corporate Relations team only has visibility of a small proportion of these, and also has no scope or authority to govern the remaining channels. There are pages on the Corporate website with no assigned ownership and all these factors in combination contribute to a heightened risk of inaccurate or conflicting information being provided to the community.

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WEBSITES	SOCIAL MEDIA	ELECTRONIC DIRECT MAIL	OTHER CHANNELS

No Owner
- | Corporate Website

Owned / governed by Corporate Relations Team

Social Media:
- | Your Say Wingecarribee
- | Media Centre
- WingecarribeeCouncil @WSC_media | Official WSC Twitter
- Wingecarribee Shire Council Page · 8,248 followers @WingecarribeeShireCouncil | Official WSC Facebook Page
- Wingecarribee Shire Council | Official WSC Flikr

Electronic Direct Mail:
- **Wingecarribee Today** Keeping the Southern Highlands in touch with Council | Wingecarribee Today
- | Your Say Wingecarribee Updates
- **Weekly Circular** | Council e-news

Other Channels:
- | Radio weekly update
- | Civic Centre

Corporate Relations Channel Owners
- Business Communications Officer
- Coordinator Media & Communications
- Community Engagement Coordinator

Owned / governed by roles outside the Corporate Relations Team

Websites:
- Southern Highlands ARTSfile | Southern Highlands ARTSfile
- Southern Highlands NEW SOUTH WALES | Destination Southern Highlands
- WINGECARRIBEE PUBLIC LIBRARY | Wingecarribee Library Website
- Destination Southern Highlands NEW SOUTH WALES | Southern Highlands Corporate

Social Media:
- Wingecarribee Public Libraries 1K like this · Library | Libraries Facebook
- wingecarribeepubliclibrary | Libraries Instagram
- wsc.animal.shelter | Animal Shelter Instagram
- Wingecarribee Animal Shelter Place · ££ · Animal shelter | Animal Shelter Facebook
- Wingecarribee Children's Services 459 like this · Public & government service | Children's Services Facebook
- | Southern Highlands Youth Facebook
- | My Southern Highlands Facebook
- | Southern Highlands ARTSfile Facebook
- | Southern Highlands Koala Conservation Project
- Southern Highlands NSW 11K like this · Tourist information centre | Destination Southern Highlands Facebook
- Tulip Time Southern Highlands 5.2K like this · Event | Tulip Time Facebook
- | WSC LinkedIn
- visitsouthernhighlands | Destination Southern Highlands Instagram

Electronic Direct Mail:
- E-NEWS
- | Destination Southern Highlands Monthly Industry News & Alerts
- | Southern Highlands Nature News
- | Destination Southern Highlands Weekly Community Updates
- | Environment and Climate Change
- | ARTSfile
- | Seniors
- Subscribe | Destination Southern Highlands Consumer e-news
- | Wingecarribee Web
- | Destination Southern Highlands Local Business Opportunities

Other Channels:
- | Economic development 'business network' mailing list
- | Media opportunities (Destination Southern Highlands)
- WINGECARRIBEE PUBLIC LIBRARY | Wingecarribee Library
- | Economic development 'Government liaison group monthly meetings
- | Visitor Centre

Other WSC Channel Owners
- Online Services Officer
- Marketing/Digital officer
- Youth Liaison Officer
- Team Leader Shelter Operations
- Coordinator Children's Services
- Coordinator Human Resources
- Coordinator Sustainability Services
- Environment Officer Bushcare & Citizen Science
- Environment Officer – Biodiversity & Education
- Community Development Officer
- Economic Development Coordinator
- Coordinator Library Services

[1]Channels that have been identified during current state research. This is not an exhaustive list.

Current state functional capability snapshot[1]

The Corporate Relations service today 1) is largely reactive, lacking the strategic focus to guide service delivery, 2) has limited oversight of the breadth of communications and community engagement activities, across Council, including brand and logos and 3) is insufficiently focussed on articulating key messages to rebuild trust internally and externally in the Council's current political environment.

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01 — Insight-driven strategies and actions

- There is limited sharing of information related to communications and community engagement across business units
- Only a weak link between the Community Research undertaken and associated Communications and Community Engagement strategies
- Stakeholder data has not been embedded into processes or workflows
- Community engagement data and information is dispersed across Council in organisational siloes and disparate systems

02 — Innovative services

- Strategic service documents have limited consideration of business needs and contemporary practices
- Corporate Relations service provision is largely reactive, focussed on responding to Executive and/or Councillor media release requests
- Inconsistent levels of support offered to different business units (e.g. from conducting research to write media releases / other publications on one end of the spectrum to no support on the other)
- Out of scope services (e.g. graphic design) take up to 10-15%[1] of the team's time

03 — Experience-centricity by design

- There is no articulated communications plan or approach (incl. key messages) for management of current Council situation and political climate
- Community research undertaken only covers one customer segment (residents) and does not identify specific customer experiences that can improve satisfaction
- There is no internal and there is limited external feedback process to continuously improve and shape the service
- Additional community sentiment data may exist across Council but it is not formally synthesised or shared with Corporate Relations

04 — Seamless interactions

- There is duplication of effort as communications and community engagement services (incl. events) are performed across Council and with limited Corporate Relations oversight
- Impact is not measured well; there are some measures of engagement (e.g. e-newsletter open rate), but there is no documented view of what good looks
- Information can sometimes be rushed for publishing, without prior consultation with the business units responsible for the subject matter

05 — Responsive operations

- No process or guidance that clarifies responsibilities in engaging the Corporate Relations service, including how and when to engage and what information to provide. Corporate Relations knowledge and know-how is largely undocumented and in individuals' heads
- Reluctance by some business units to engage the Corporate Relations service can create inconsistent messaging
- Complex and lengthy approvals process for some media releases
- No prioritisation process to triage incoming requests for service

06 — Aligned and empowered workforce

- No deliberate governance of the multitude of Council channels, logos and brands can dilute the value of the Council brand
- Lack of clarity in the Corporate Relations team on the strategic direction for the service and refined expectations under new leadership
- Lack of understanding within the Council around the services provided but the Corporate Relations teams and the value they bring
- Conflicting information is sometimes provided to the community by virtue of multiple business units being responsible for communications and community engagement

07 — Digitally enabled technology architecture

- There is a lack of integration in the current technology landscape and accordingly, no single view of community
- Some customer engagement data is captured via social media channels, however there is no customer sentiment analysis
- Customer request are currently managed in two separate systems and digital workflows to complete requests do not consider the end-to-end customer journey
- Content for the main website is uploaded and maintained by multiple staff and business units independently with no oversight of content recency or relevance.

08 — Integrated partner and alliance ecosystem

- Very limited, tactical use of outsourcing (e.g. graphic design)
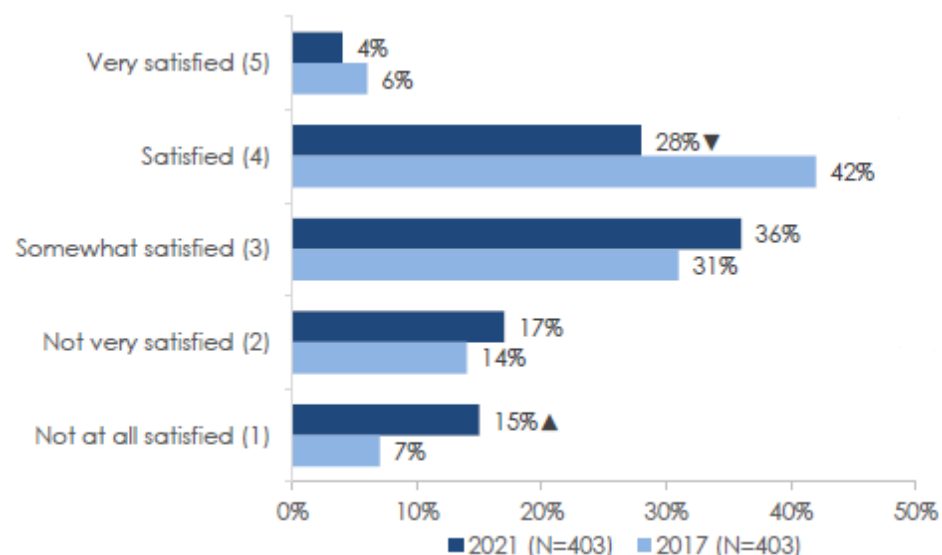
[1] See appendix for detailed insights

Section 2:

Voice of the community

2021 WSC community research report | Key insights

In the WSC Community Research Report 2021, 'Council provision of information to residents' was identified as the most significant driver of overall satisfaction with Council, with 68% of the community somewhat or less satisfied with the current communications. This findings of this community research, together with internal stakeholder consultation undertaken through this project, informed the hypothesis as to the cause of this dissatisfaction, which we tested in a further survey and in two community focus panels[1]. Moving forward, there is an opportunity to leverage the annual WSC community research to specifically identify customer needs underpinning these drivers of overall satisfaction in a larger sample and to inform the Council action plans.

Satisfaction with Council's communication

Satisfaction level	2021 (N=403)	2017 (N=403)
Very satisfied (5)	4%	6%
Satisfied (4)	28% ▼	42%
Somewhat satisfied (3)	36%	31%
Not very satisfied (2)	17%	14%
Not at all satisfied (1)	15% ▲	7%

Suggestions for areas to further explore through the 2022 Community Research

Council provision of information to residents

- What information are the different community segments satisfied with? What types of information is missing? Is the dissatisfaction related to broad awareness of Council strategies and activities, or is it service specific?
- What information and/or engagement channels are contributing to dissatisfaction? Do certain community groups feel disadvantaged by the communication methods and channels?

Council's level of communication

- What are the topics the community wants to be informed more or less on? Is the communication sufficiently tailored to different community segments? Is it timely?

Opportunities to participate in decision making

- Is dissatisfaction due to a lack of knowledge about opportunities to participate, or with the participation forums themselves?
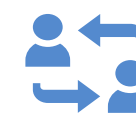

The 2021 Community Research Report identified five key drivers of overall satisfaction with Council. Three of the five drivers are services provided by the Corporate Relations function.

Performance of Councillors	Council's level of communication	Council provision of information to residents	Opportunities to participate in Council decision making	Enforcement of development and building regulations

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[1] See appendix for community consultation approach summary

Small business consultation[1] | Review of the Small Business Commissioner's findings

There are common findings between the WSC community research, the Small Business Commissioner's report, and the community consultation undertaken as part of this project. One of those is that the small businesses in the area do not generally feel engaged or heard by the Council. This creates an argument for a Council-wide approach to informing and engaging with the community (broader than the Corporate Relations' resident focus), which must be governed centrally to support cohesive execution at the business unit level.

Key insights from consultation feedback

- **Transparency**: Many businesses do not understand Council's processes or how decisions are made. Timing for similar types of processes were reported to vary widely for no discernible reason. A lack of transparency has led to speculation of favouritism in the prioritisation process.

- **Decision making:** Reasons for rejecting requests seemed unclear, unreasonable or unprofessional and there was a perceived lack of communication between different parts of Council, leading to conflicting advice being given.

- **Communication & engagement:** Communications are 'too little, too late'. For instance, when Council closes roads at short notice this does not allow businesses to make alternative arrangements. There is a lack of formal, regular stakeholder engagement with businesses or business chambers.

- **Strategic planning:** There's a perception that public consultation does not result in changes to Council plans.

- **Tendering opportunities:** Little or no information is provided regarding opportunities to supply goods and services to Council.

- **Event applications**: There is a lack of flexibility in accommodating temporary or seasonal events for the community benefit. In some cases businesses reported having to deal with nine different Council staff members to progress an application to run a walking tour.

Recommendations relevant to this review

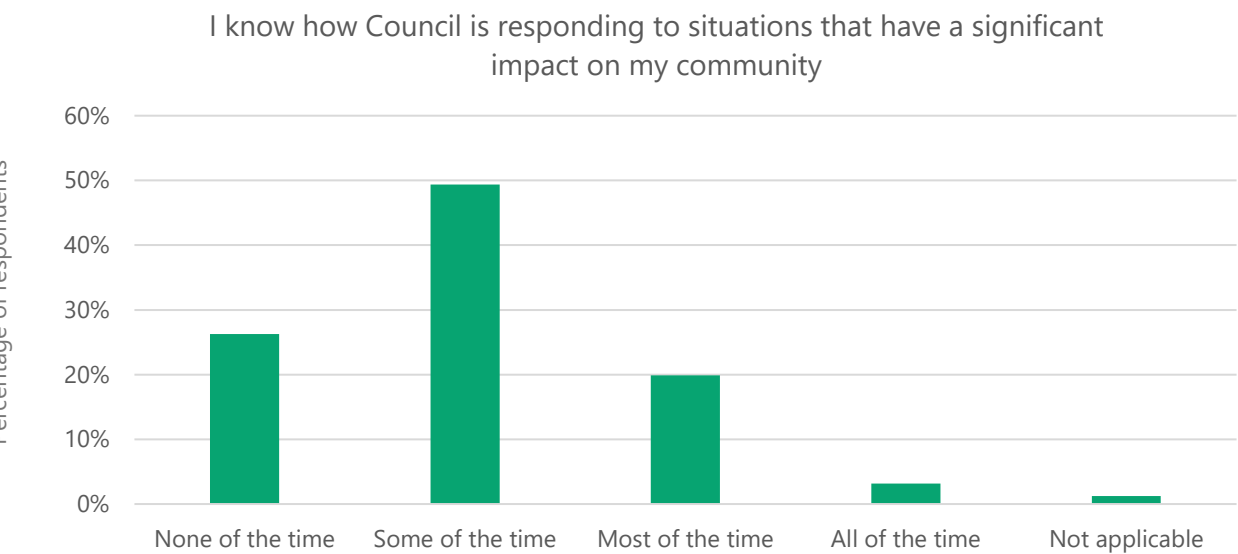| Focus Area	Recommendations
Improved communications and customer service	1. Council to develop a comprehensive communications strategy for stakeholder engagement with the business community. This strategy would be developed in consultation with the business community and would have an appropriate emphasis on active listening to business needs and feedback. 2. Council to establish a small business reference group with clear terms of reference. 3. Council to ensure appropriate measurement and reporting on key customer service reporting metrics and develop strategies to improve outcomes in areas where service improvements are required. 4. Council to provide a dedicated and professional service within Council to ensure reliable information and guidance on processes, cost(s) and timeframes associated with applications made by small business. This includes a dedicated events manager, officer or other resource who can provide support, information and guidance for events and festivals.
Initiatives to build opportunity and small business development	12. Council to increase the visibility of strategy documents and the inclusion of small business as a core part of strategic planning. Council to report on actions taken to deliver on the intentions, goals and objectives of these strategies on an annual basis. 16. Council to ensure that, where local small businesses are unsuccessful in tendering, feedback is provided where requested to assist small businesses in participating in future tenders.

[1] Insights and recommendations listed have been sourced from the Small Business Commissioner's Small Business Consultation, May 2021

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Voice of the community | Information needs (1/2)

The participants in the survey and focus groups report that they are not receiving sufficient communication from the Council on key issues and situations that have a significant impact on them, their local communities, and the wider Wingecarribee Shire. These issues include: the current Council administration, ongoing and planned major works, and future strategy and direction of the Council.

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Survey respondents would like information about how the Council is responding to key events and situations. A significant proportion are not regularly receiving such information.

- 51% of survey respondents[1] want information about Council's response and plans for one or more of the following key community issues:
  - Council administration
  - Major development and infrastructure projects
  - Environmental plans and response to climate change
  - Bushfire preparedness
  - How social issues are being addressed
  - The progress of Council's strategic and economic plans
- 75% of respondents know how Council is responding to situations that have a significant impact on their community either 'none of the time' or 'some of the time'.

I know how Council is responding to situations that have a significant impact on my community

Percentage of respondents (y-axis: 0% to 60%)

x-axis categories: None of the time, Some of the time, Most of the time, All of the time, Not applicable

[1] 'Respondents were asked to 'suggest topics you'd like to hear about in Council newsletters, social media, media releases, etc'

Council thinks that the shire stops at Mittagong. - Resident

Unless you know what is happening, you generally find out too late. Most general communications are marketing how well Council is doing, not providing information. - Resident

There are some documents that are so dense it requires specialist discipline to unpack them - strategy documents such as the recreation report were 70+ pages – Resident Association representative

A lot happens in my community regarding environmental services and I don't know it is happening unless it is near me. I feel so many decisions are being made that impact where I live and I don't have a say. - Survey Respondent

I'd like to see that the NSW Emergency directives are observed and that a thorough Emergency plan is completed by WSC and is available to the public. This has not been the case in previous years. – Survey Respondent

I would like to see transparency to community groups and residents and commitment to the provision of basic needs of the community. – Survey Respondent

I would like to hear how Council is progressing with meeting the community expectations in getting things done around the Highlands. I would like to see what they are working towards and actually achieving it. – Survey Respondent

Community Focus Group Key Insights

- Some members of the community **perceive Council as deliberately avoiding or keeping quiet** on key matters that affect the community, and on the current political climate.
- The community needs added visibility on **how the Council is addressing key areas** of community concern (e.g. Council administration, Council culture, bushfire response).
- The community would like to be **updated regularly on Council progress on strategies and major projects,** to increase Council's accountability and transparency.
- There is a strong **desire for targeted hyperlocal news updates** from Council about future activities, events or projects impacting specific towns or villages.

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Voice of the community | Information needs (2/2)

The participants in the survey indicated that limited information is offered by Council in respect of the service request process, changes in request status and the associated timelines. This is creating significant frustration for the community and is impacting their satisfaction with Council's provision of information. However, the root cause of this dissatisfaction is not the Corporate Relations service, instead it can be generalised as the Council-wide approach to customer.

Survey respondents indicate that there is a significant lack of information provided by Council to customers engaging their services.

- 47% of survey respondents are informed of the Council services and facilities that are available either 'most' or 'all of the time'.
- Information provision relating to service awareness is the responsibility of the Corporate Relations service, and can be improved.
- When it comes to specific service requests, only 29% of respondents are informed of process steps and timelines and only 31% are notified when requests are resolved either 'most' or 'all of the time'.
- Information provision relating to service requests is **not the responsibility of the Corporate Relations service.** Improvement to the provision of information in this areas **need to be addressed by a whole-of-Council approach,** with specific accountability at individual service level.
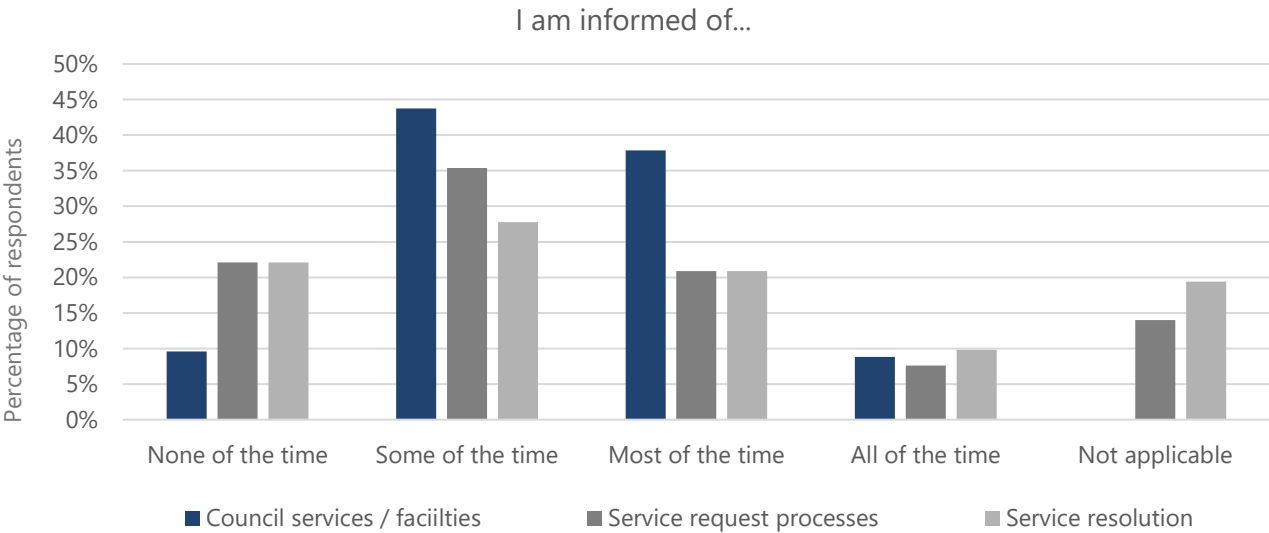
" Services should be broken down in a way that makes it easy to locate the service you would like to request and then understand how to resolve the process and what is required of both parties to have this done. - Resident

" There is no key person as point of contact . – Resident Association representative

" It should not matter who we go to see for what advice we get – Resident

" I don't want to call customer service because I feel like they can't help and I will be dismissed. – Resident

" There appear to be no service level agreements with the community. – Resident Association Representative

" We are pleased with response from Council re handling of road closure Fire Trail Old Argyle Road. Email from Council is the best form of communication in response to my email. – Survey Respondent

" Designated Council staff should be available to answer questions from the community about DA compliance and other planning complaints. At the moment compliance is a black hole. – Survey Respondent

I am informed of...

Percentage of respondents

| | None of the time | Some of the time | Most of the time | All of the time | Not applicable |

■ Council services / faciilties   ■ Service request processes   ■ Service resolution

Community Focus Group Key Insights

- It is **apparent to the community that the Council operates in a siloed manner** and that the Council staff do not communicate internally. This has led to customers feeling as though it is pointless to try to approach the Council for help with a service process
- **Staff turnover can contribute to community concerns "falling into an abyss"** as there is no appropriate mechanism to document, store and share knowledge
- The community notes **inconsistency in information provided** by different areas of Council
- Complaints to Council do not receive meaningful responses and/or acknowledgment

Voice of the community | Satisfaction with service-specific information

A deep dive into the satisfaction with the level of information provided by each service identified five services with the greatest level of dissatisfaction: Regulatory Compliance, Strategic Land Use & Planning, Asset Planning & Support, Development Control and Stormwater. Dissatisfaction with these services has also been noted in the 2021 Community Research Report, Small Business Commissioners Report and on the Wingecarribee Shire Council Facebook page.

Satisfaction with the level of information provided by services[1]

Service	Number of Respondents	Unhappy	Neutral	Happy
Customer Service	139	22%	53%	26%
Waste Management	135	21%	29%	50%
Development Control	99	50%	37%	13%
Community Facilities	94	21%	48%	32%
Environmental Services	94	26%	44%	30%
Parks and Recreation	87	31%	35%	34%
Library Services	85	3%	16%	81%
Water and Sewer Services	61	26%	31%	43%
Aquatic Services	53	21%	28%	51%
Natural Area Management	51	31%	42%	27%
Property Services	43	24%	50%	26%
Asset Planning and Support	36	50%	42%	8%
Stormwater	32	50%	34%	16%
Regulatory Compliance	28	74%	15%	11%
Tourism	27	15%	15%	69%
Civic Leadership	26	36%	40%	24%
Strategic Land Use Planning	25	64%	24%	12%

- Services related to **Regulatory Compliance, Strategic Land Use & Planning, Asset Planning & Support , Development Control and Stormwater** had the **highest dissatisfaction** amongst survey respondents for level of information provision.
- Services related to **Library Services, Tourism, Aquatic Services and Waste Management** had the **highest satisfaction** amongst survey respondents for the level of information provision.
- Further investigation should be performed to identify the causes of satisfaction in these, with a view to replicate for other Council services.

Community Focus Group and Survey - Key insights

- High dissatisfaction rates across the five identified services has also been noted in the 2021 Community Research Report, Small Business Commissioners Report and on the Wingecarribee Shire Council Facebook page.
- Reported sources of community frustration include:
  - Convoluted **and inequitable development approval processes**
  - **Lack of timely notification** of works on Council assets for impacted residents
  - **Lack of response to inquiries**, concerns or submissions to exhibitions
  - **Significant delays in works** without updates
  - **Inconsistent information provision**
  - Rude and **unprofessional staff behaviour** towards customers
- Five **key areas of improvement** have been identified by the community concerning these service-specific findings:
  - Ensure **up-to-date information regarding Council projects** can be easily located on the website
  - Develop and **implement a process to ensure sharing on information internally between staff**, especially within the one service
  - Develop and **implement a process to ensure impacted stakeholders are notified prior to Council works** starting using targeted channels
  - Develop and implement **a service level agreement that defines appropriate timelines for responding to inquiries or submissions**, and the frequency of updates until closure
  - Implement **systems and processes that can support channels for self service information**

A big challenge is with DAs - you only get "one bite" to respond and if the applicant makes changes, respondents don't know anything after the first application.

– Resident Association Representative

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Voice of the community | Channel preferences

There is a strong preference for Council information to both be made available and easy to access on the Council's main website, and to be summarised and distributed via e-newsletters for regular updates. However, our research was conducted digitally, potentially skewing the preference to these channels. Opportunities should be given to members of the community to opt into letterbox communications or participate in educational sessions that may increase their confidence in using digital communications channels.

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For both survey respondents and focus group participants, the overwhelming majority had a preference for receiving news about from Council via e-newsletters.

- 69% of survey respondents selected 'Council e-News – emailed weekly' as one of their three preferred ways to receive news about Council
- 20% selected 'Local media' as a preferred channel
- 18% selected 'Printed materials' as a preferred channel
- 18% selected 'Social media' as a preferred channel

In light of the above, the Corporate Relations team should look to redirect some of the effort from media releases into the e-newsletter content.

Additionally, survey respondents would like to access service specific information via the website or weekly newsletter (digital or paper) instead of a phone call to the Council customer service.

Preferred ways to receive news about Council[1]

Channel	Percent
Council e-News - emailed weekly	~69%
E-newsletters about specific topics	~40%
Your Say Wingecarribee email to registered members	~40%
Wingecarribee Today newsletter (quarterly)	~26%
Via local media – newspaper, TV, radio	~20%
Printed material (brochures, posters, flyers, letters)	~18%
Council's main social media accounts	~18%
Phone call to Wingecarribee Customer Service	~6%
Wingecarribee Council service specific social media	~5%
Civic Centre in person visit	~3%

Percent of respondents

Community Focus Group Key Insights

- For those with digital access the website is the preferred way to proactively seek information. However, **the current website is challenging to navigate and much of the information is difficult to locate** on or between websites or missing completely.
- **Some people feel 'locked out' due to digital or social media focus**. This lack of accessibility to information is a key concern with an ageing population. Channel preferences for this demographic include letterbox material, in person consultation and text message alerts.
- The **respondents would like to be able to subscribe to relevant information on channels that are most convenient for them**, suggested examples include:
  - Targeted text notifications for local service outages or roadworks
  - Newsletter subscriptions for information on individual topics or services (e.g. the environment, community events)
- The community wants **opportunities to hear news directly from senior Council representatives** such as the Mayor and General Manager.
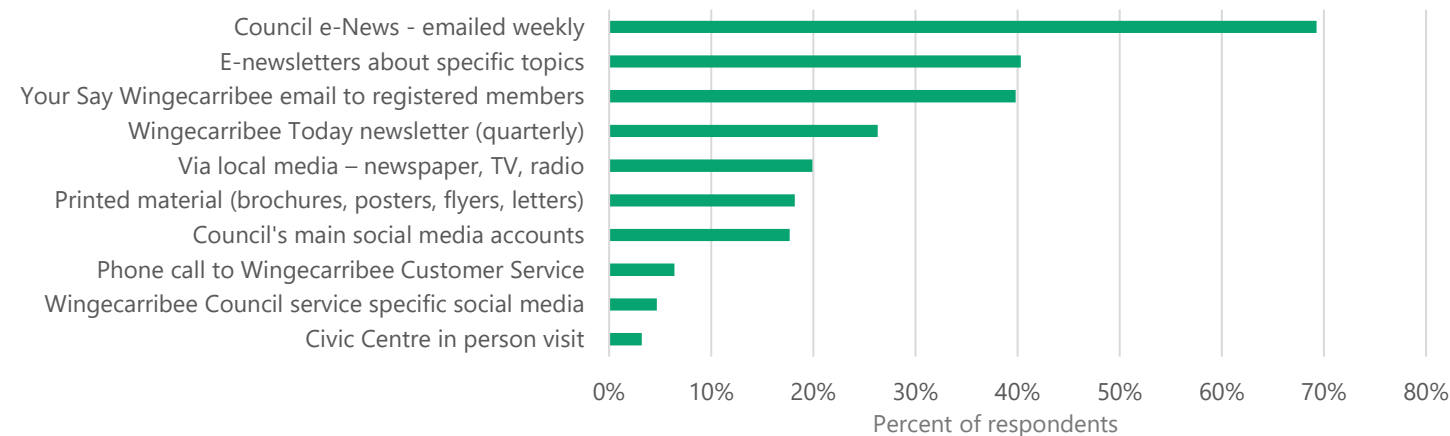
> *There isn't a way to subscribe to specific services, without being bombarded with information that may not be relevant.*
> – Resident

> *I am not aware of a self service option to see the status of requests. When I call the Council I get good service but not in a timely manner. I would like to be able to find the status of issues when I need them please.*
> – Resident

> *Don't assume everyone's on social media (e.g. Facebook), it makes it hard to find real information.*
> – Survey Respondent

> *A challenge to staying informed is getting into a routine to check announcements from Council.*
> – Resident Association Representative

> *There have not been any public opportunities for Council members to let the community know what they are doing. So a Tulip time event address, or Quarterly Update from the Mayor.*
> – Resident

> *I don't know whether to look at the WSC website or the media website.*
> – Resident Association representative

[1] Survey respondents were asked 'What are your top 3 preferred ways to receive news about Council'?

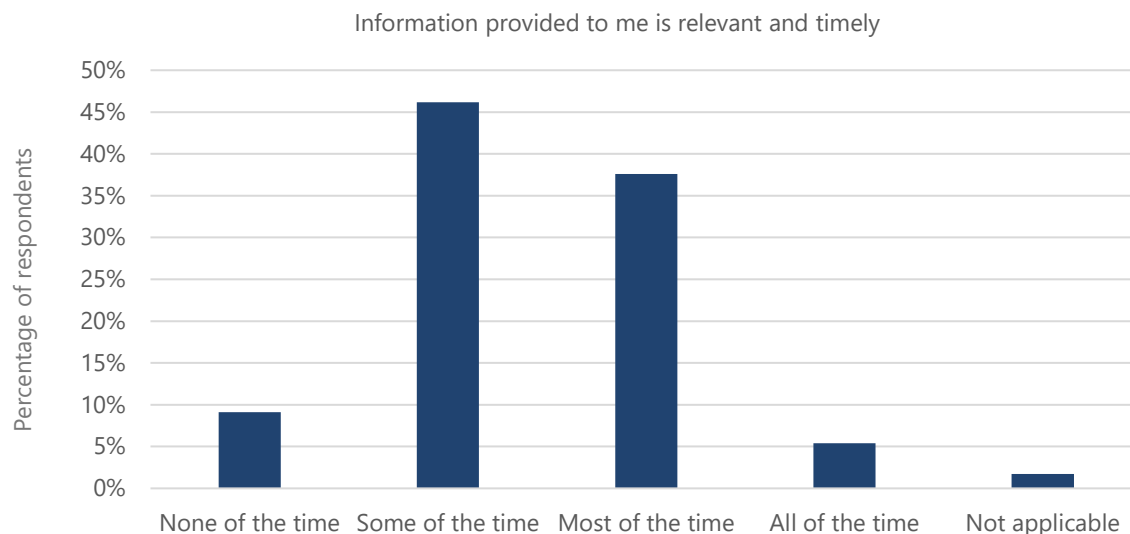# Voice of the community | Level of communication

Wingecarribee Shire Council's current level of communication with the community on issues and situations that are directly impacting them is insufficient. Community expectations are that they will receive timely and regular updates on a request or disruption until it is completed, however this is not currently happening.

Survey respondents and focus group participants would like to see an increase in regular, timely updates for Council services and works that they have either engaged directly (e.g. compliance matter) or are impacted by (e.g. road works).

Only 55% of survey respondents find the information provided to them to be 'relevant and timely 'some of the time' or 'none of the time'.

The level of communication was identified by respondents as insufficient in three key areas:
1. Impacted stakeholders are **not notified with reasonable warning, if at all, for planned Council works or ongoing projects** that will cause them disruption,
2. There is **no follow up response, and often not even acknowledgement of receipt** when submissions or complaints are made to Council; and
3. There are **no regular status updates provided when engaging a Council service** or experiencing disruptions due to Council operations.

Information provided to me is relevant and timely

Percentage of respondents

Category	Percentage
None of the time	~9%
Some of the time	~46%
Most of the time	~37.5%
All of the time	~5.5%
Not applicable	~1.5%

> *It appears that the public is notified of plans after they have been implemented.*
> – Survey Respondent

> *Matter raised with compliance - no feedback at all after an initial phone call about "looking into it". No contact details given for officer who was dealing with it.*
> – Survey Respondent

> *Telstra sends text messages when they are doing things in the area. Council provides nothing - until it is finished.*
> – Resident

> *Kerbside bulky waste collection - we always learn about these after the dates for our area have passed!*
> – Survey Respondent

> *There is a lack of engagement on issues raised and inconsistency of notifications and decisions made.*
> – Resident Association Representative

> *I would like prompt replies by phone or email to concerns as well asp an initial acknowledgement of receipt*
> – Survey Respondent

> *Generally very happy with library services but would like to see web information to be updated. e.g. I recently drove all the way to Mittagong library to find it closed despite having checked the opening hours on the web beforehand.*
> – Survey Respondent

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Voice of the community | Community engagement

The community does not feel as though their inputs to the Council are acted upon or used to inform any Council policies or strategies. This has lead to frustration with and disengagement from community engagement forums as there is a sense that participation is a waste of time and will not ultimately impact the decisions of the Council. Many documents are too long, and written in complex language, discouraging participation.

There are four key barriers preventing community members from participating in Council run community engagement forums.

1. **Community members are unaware of consultations happening** (44% of survey respondents). Notification of opportunities for community engagement need to be distributed through a wide variety of targeted channels.

2. **Community members are not sure their inputs have an impact** (38% of survey respondents). Participants in community engagement forums should be provided with the purpose of the consultation prior to engagement and how their input will be, or have been used, following the engagement.

3. **The form of engagement does not suit all community members.** This can be due to lack of time (30%), inconvenient location (7%) or the mode of engagement (uncomfortable public speaking – 10%, uncomfortable with computers – 6%). When developing community engagement plans a number of forms of engagement need to be utilised to ensure participation is convenient and comfortable for stakeholders.

4. **Community members feel don't know enough information to contribute** (24%). Proactive information provision to impacted stakeholders is required prior to engagement to ensure they are able to participate in a way that is informed and constructive. The documents are not written in simple language and can discourage participation.
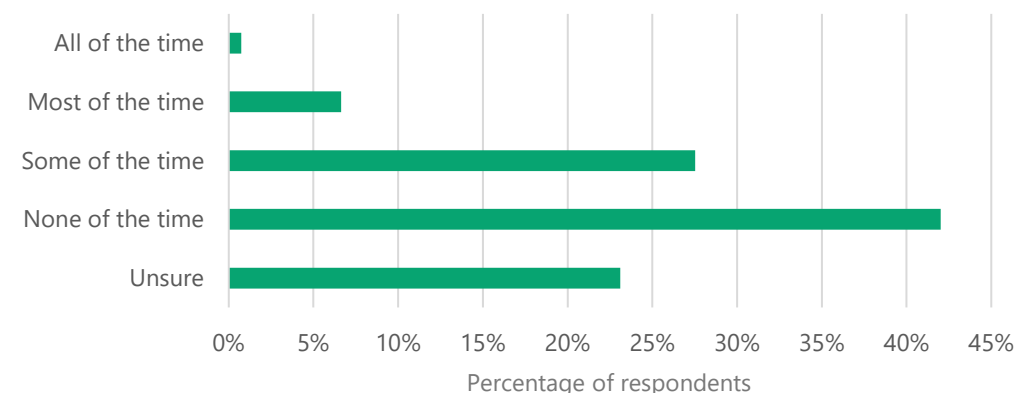
What can prevent you from participating in community engagement forums?[1]
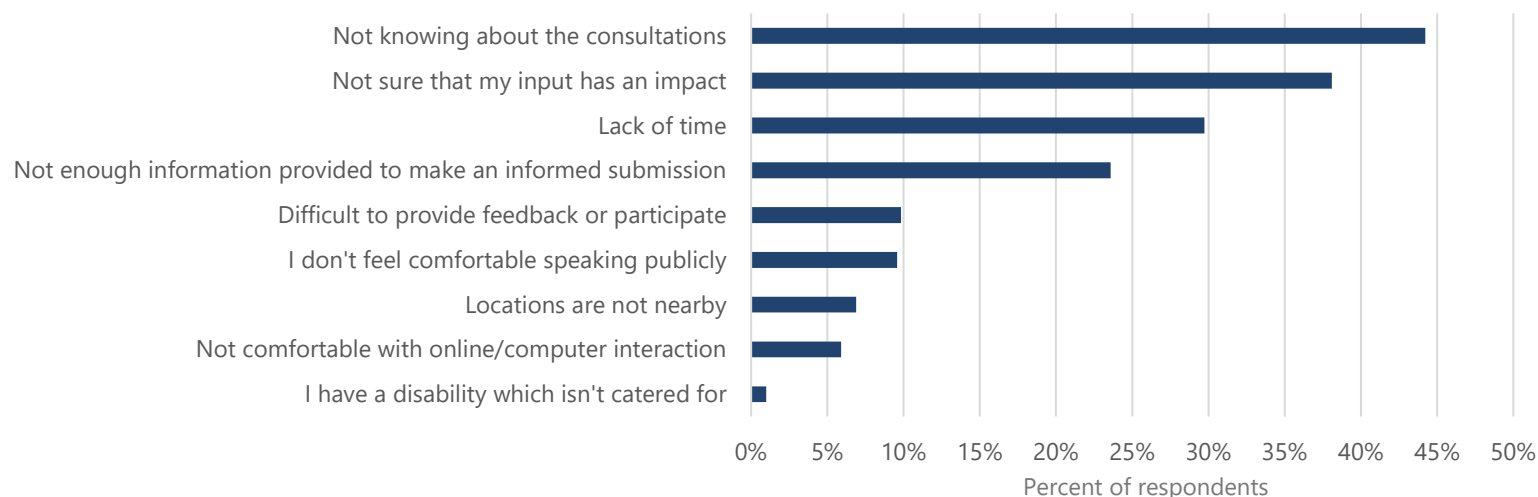
The community does not feel heard by the Council.

65% of survey respondents either felt their opinion was heard by the Council 'none of the time' or were unsure. An additional 23% felt their opinion was only heard 'some of the time'.

I feel as though my opinion is heard by Council...

> ❝ LISTEN TO US! Consultation implies you want to know what people think, want. It also implies that there is a possibility of being listened to and what you say acted upon. Until [Viv May] started virtually no genuine attempt has been made to involve the community.
>
> – Resident Association Representative

> ❝ If you are going to consult us professionally we need three things.
> 1. Easy ways for all non computer literate people to be able to participate.
> 2. Guarantee that what we say will have some possibility of having an effect..
> 3.Transparency as to how decisions on comments were received and implemented.
>
> – Survey Respondent

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[1] The sum of the percentage of respondents for all the categories is greater than 100% as survey respondents were able to select multiple answers to this question

Section 4:

Comparative analysis

Comparative analysis | Summary

A comparative analysis was conducted of Wingecarribee Shire Council's Corporate Relations Service against the comparable service of five NSW councils (to be referred as Councils 1-5 in this report). The comparison found that (1) WSC had a lower than average capacity to provide communications and community engagement services, (2) WSC is missing digital/web, graphic design and strategic capabilities that are present in other councils and (3) there is potential to reposition Corporate Relations services within the Council organisation structure to better utilise cross-team synergies.

SERVICE CAPACITY FINDINGS

Comparison of capacity
- For the five councils reviewed in the comparative analysis
  - The average capacity for communications was 0.7% of the Council's total FTE, close to double that of WSC's current capacity (0.4%)
  - The average capacity for community engagement (where owned by a centralised service) was 0.4% of the Council's total FTE, double that of WSC's current capacity (0.2%) (Council – 3 excluded as it has fully decentralised community engagement).

Alternate resourcing options
- Council – 1 uses a resourcing model which includes cadet roles. There is one FT cadet role in the service (Engagement Cadet). A similar leverage model can be considered by WSC, to include cadetship and/or volunteering roles where appropriate.

SERVICE FOCUS FINDINGS

Strategic capability
- Strategic capability as a result of one or more managers in the resourcing model is observed in four of the five councils

Toward digital services
- All benchmarked councils have digital communications capability in the comparable service
- 3/5 councils have web content governance and/or development capability within the comparable service
- Council – 1 have highlighted moving toward online engagement and promotion of the use of online tools as strategic focus. There is a similar ambition to do this at WSC however an assessment of the population demographic as well as a review of the internal digital capability is needed to determine what support needs to be provided to the community to do so

A centre of excellence for marketing and branding material
- 3/5 councils have one or more resources in the comparable service that specialise in marketing
- 4/5 councils have one or more resources in the comparable service that specialise in graphic design

Ownership of internal communications
- 3/5 councils have a dedicated resource in the comparable service to manage internal communications

ADJACENT SERVICES

Three of the Councils had an organisational structure that positioned the comparable service to work closely with other Council services. These services include:

- **Community events**: The Communications and Community engagement resources at Council – 1, Council – 2 and Council – 5 work closely with the staff who organise and run community events and manage the Council events strategy

- **Culture & placemaking**: The Corporate Relations service providers at Council – 2 and Council – 5 work closely with the teams who develop and implement culture and placemaking services for the local and tourist populations. Synergies inherent in this organisational structure include:
  - Greater awareness of events and initiatives for promotion
  - More occasions for community engagement
  - Opportunities to develop clear understanding of the needs and wants of council stakeholders

- **Economic development and tourism**: At Council – 5, the comparable service and the Economic Development and Tourism business unit report to a single Executive Manager. This likely establishes a closer working relationship amongst the two teams and provides opportunities for synergies to be explored across the two services.

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Council – 1 | Communications, engagement, events & signage

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RESOURCING

Total Council FTE	Corporate Relations FTE
1,218	16 (1.3%)

Title	FTE	Equivalent WSC role exists
Media Liaison Officer	1	✓
Internal Communications Officer	0.8	
Communications Officer	1	✓
Digital Communications Officer	1	
Communications Cadet	1	
Web Content Officer	1	
Marketing Specialist	1	
Engagement Coordinator	1	✓
Engagement Officer	5.4	
Aboriginal Engagement Officer	1	
Engagement Support Officer	0.8	
Engagement Cadet	1	

STRATEGIC SERVICE FOCUS – COMMUNICATIONS, ENGAGEMENT, EVENTS & SIGNANGE

SERVICES COMPARABLE TO WSC CORPORATE RELATIONS

LEGEND
- Current area of focus as WSC
+ Not a current area of focus for WSC

Communications
+ Develop a more integrated approach to marketing
+ Management of Council's online profile, including Council's website and social media channels.
+ Continue to streamline processes and optimise efficiencies in the design, printery and sign shop areas.

Community engagement
- Implementation of Community Engagement Policy and Framework.
- Delivery of engagement activities.
- Continue to engage with the local community regarding the development of upcoming community works
+ Promote and grow use of online engagement tools.

Civic Events
- Deliver major community celebrations e.g. New Year's Eve and Australia Day.
- Civic Receptions.

Internal Communications
+ Implement the Internal Communication Strategy (owned by the Corporate Strategy team)

ADDITIONAL SERVICES NOT COMPARABLE WITH WSC CORPORATE RELATIONS

Events
- Continue to streamline and improve the approval process for external event organisers.
- Support local and major events within the region that will benefit the community and showcase the LGA
- Develop generic event DA's for various sites outside the city centre
- Contribute to the delivery of the 3 Fest Arts, Science and Technology Festival in 2020

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Service capacity analysis
- Communications: 1.5 times the capacity of WSC as a percentage of total FTE (0.6% vs 0.4%)
- Community engagement: 4 times the capacity of WSC as a percentage of total FTE (0.8% vs 0.2%)
- Resourcing model includes cadet roles

Service focus analysis
- A higher focus on managing the Council's digital presence and online profile, through an integrated, Council-wide approach
- Web-content governance sits here (Web Content Officer role)
- In-house graphic design capability
- Promoting the use of online engagement tools to support the move towards digital engagement
- Dedicated internal communications resources to implement the internal communications strategy

Additional service information
- Community events management is delivered through this service (Marketing Specialist role)
- Design of the internal communications strategy is owned by the Corporate Strategy team

[1]SOURCE: Delivery program 2018-2022

Council – 2 | Communications, culture & events

RESOURCING

Total Council FTE	Corporate Relations FTE
702	**10 (1.4%)**

Title	FTE	Equivalent WSC role
Manager, Communications & Engagement	1	
Digital Communications Officer	1	
Community Engagement Co-Ordinator	1	✓
Senior Communications Officer	1	✓
Media & Public Relations Officer	1	
Communications Officer	1	✓
Internal Communications Officer	1	
Graphic Designer	1	
Engagement Officer	2	

STRATEGIC SERVICE FOCUS – COMMUNICATIONS, CULTURE & EVENTS

SERVICES COMPARABLE TO WSC CORPORATE RELATIONS[1]

LEGEND
- Current area of focus as WSC
- + Not a current area of focus for WSC

Communications
No specified strategic communications focus

Community engagement
- Undertake Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting(IPR) activities in alignment with legislative requirements and provide community engagement opportunities for input
- Implement Community Engagement Policy, Strategy and Guidelines across Council and ensure engagement meets the standards set by the strategy
- + Build partnerships with key stakeholders and explore funding opportunities that provide a diverse program of recreational and entertainment events that balance community and visitor expectations
- + Provide training for relevant internal stakeholders on community engagement procedures

Civic events
- Provide Council-delivered civic events

ADDITIONAL SERVICES NOT COMPARABLE WITH WSC CORPORATE RELATIONS

Community events & culture
- Develop and implement a Cultural Plan for the LGA that delivers a diverse range of integrated cultural activities
- Implement a rich and diverse program of cultural activities across a range of creative and performing art forms
- Provide a diverse program of recreational and entertainment events that balance community and visitor expectations
- Maintain the unique cultural value and heritage significance of key landmarks
- Plan and deliver a range of cultural heritage activities that inspire creativity, build participation and create learning opportunities

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Service capacity analysis
- Communications: 2.5 times the capacity of WSC as a percentage of total FTE (1% vs 0.4%)
- Community engagement: 1.5 times the capacity of WSC as a percentage of total FTE (0.3% vs 0.2%)

Service focus analysis
- Strategic capability in the Manager, Communications & Engagement role
- Governs communications and engagement across all stakeholders, managing competing priorities (e.g. visitor and community)
- Greater role specialisation in communications service delivery (Dedicated Digital Communications Officer and Media & Public Relations Officer)
- In-house graphic design capability (Graphic Designer role)
- Strategic focus on delivering community engagement training across Council

Additional service information
- Significant focus on community events & culture, as to support the placemaking for the local and tourist population (**20 FTEs, various roles**)

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[1]SOURCE: Delivery program 2018-2021

Council – 3 | Communications

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RESOURCING

Total Council FTE	Corporate Relations FTE
469	4.8 (1%)

Title	FTE	Equivalent WSC role exists
Corporate Manager Communications	1	
Senior Communications Officer	1	✓
Communications Officer	1	✓
Web and Communications Officer	0.8	
Graphic Designer	1	

STRATEGIC SERVICE FOCUS – COMMUNICATIONS

SERVICES COMPARABLE TO WSC CORPORATE RELATIONS[1]

LEGEND
• Current area of focus as WSC
+ Not a current area of focus for WSC

Communications
- Coordinate delivery of effective media coverage across a range of channels (prepare and distribute media releases, manage social media channels, issue quarterly newsletters)
- Proactively communicate information on Council services, activities and events
+ Manage corporate website
+ Graphic design of publications
+ Crisis management communications (Provide advice and public relations management in response to issues, manage media and public relations issues)

Community engagement
- Provide and promote opportunities for the community to be engaged on decisions, policies and plans through the use of the community engagement framework
- Support and provide advice to staff on effective community engagement
- Develop effective communications that support quality engagement
+ Assist to develop and implement communication strategies for key projects

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Service capacity analysis
- Communications: double the capacity of WSC as a percentage of total FTE (0.8% vs 0.4%)
- Community engagement: No dedicated capacity

Service focus analysis
- Strategic capability in the Manager, Communications role
- Management of communications channels that are similar to WSC (media release, social media, newsletter)
- Communications strategies are developed for each key project
- Web-content governance sits here (Web and Communications Officer role)
- Community engagement is decentralised, owned and governed at the business unit level The Communications team provides support if needed
- In-house graphic design capability (Graphic Designer role)

Additional service information[1]
- Civic receptions managed by Executive Services (3 FTE Administrative Assistants to the General Managers, the Mayor and Councillors)
- Events coordination sits in Tourism and Events (1 FTE Tourism Events Coordinator)

[1]SOURCE: Delivery programs 2017-22 & Direct engagement by WSC

Council – 4 | Communications & Engagement

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RESOURCING

Total Council FTE	Corporate Relations FTE
1,051	**8.2 (0.8%)**

Title	FTE	Equivalent WSC role exists
Manager – Media & Communications	1	
Communications & Digital Marketing Support Officer	1.6	
Communications & Engagement Support Officer	0.6	
Communications Officer	1	✓
Community Engagement Officer	1	✓
Graphic Designer	1	
Graphic Designer	1	
Events officer	1	

STRATEGIC SERVICE FOCUS – COMMUNICATIONS & ENGAGEMENT

SERVICES COMPARABLE TO WSC
CORPORATE RELATIONS[1]

> **LEGEND**
> • Current area of focus as WSC
> + Not a current area of focus for WSC

Communications
- Review and implement Council's Media and Social Media Policy
- Implement Council's Branding Guidelines across the organisation

Engagement management
- Provide opportunities for the community to engage with Council consultations, projects and information
- Improve and enhance Council's communication and engagement with the community about our future direction, major projects, key policies and messages by providing opportunities to connect with Council's civic events, major projects, key policies and future direction

Civic events
- Deliver major community celebrations and Civic Receptions

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Service capacity analysis
- Communications: Equivalent capacity to WSC as a percentage of total FTE (0.4%)
- Community engagement: Half the capacity of WSC as a percentage of total FTE (0.1% vs 0.2%)

Service focus analysis
- Strategic capability in the Manager, Media & Communications role
- Very similar service focus to WSC, with an operational emphasis on Communications and Engagement management.
- In-house graphic design capability (2 Graphic Designer roles)
- No specific strategic marketing focus area identified, however some digital marketing capability exists in the team (1.6 FTE Communications & Digital Marketing Support Officer)

[1]SOURCE: Delivery program 2021-2022

Council – 5 | Economic Development Events & Engagement

RESOURCING

Total Council FTE	Corporate Relations FTE
1,244	**22 (1.8%)**

Title	FTE	Equivalent WSC role exists
Manager, Communications	1	
Senior Administration Officer - Media & Communications	1	
Senior Communications Officer – Internal	1	
Communications Officer	0.6[2]	✓
Marketing Communications Lead	1	
Senior Marketing & Communications Officer	2	
Media & Content Coordinator	1	
Manager, Community Engagement	1	
Senior Community Engagement Specialist	1	✓
Community Engagement Officer	3	
Digital Producer	1	
Digital Lead	1	
Senior Web Developer	1	
Digital Officer	1	
Graphic designers	7	

STRATEGIC SERVICE FOCUS – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, EVENTS & ENGAGEMENT

SERVICES COMPARABLE TO WSC CORPORATE RELATIONS[1]

Communications
- Manage website and promotion of services, programs and events, as well as media and communications

Community engagement
- Revise the community engagement framework to address inclusion and new planning requirements

Graphic design
- In-house design and content services

ADDITIONAL SERVICES NOT COMPARABLE WITH WSC CORPORATE RELATIONS

Community events
Implement the Events Strategy
- Delivery major community and civic events

Economic development and tourism
Enhance economic development and tourism initiatives and projects
- Support and promote local businesses and industry, and sustainable business practices
- Deliver a seminar on inclusive employment practices and benefits for local businesses
- Provide place making projects, liaison, networks, events and activities
- Prepare a strategic approach to place making across our town and village centres
- Develop and implement an Economic Development Plan

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Service capacity analysis
- Communications: 1.5 times the capacity of WSC as a percentage of total FTE (0.6% vs 0.4%)
- Community engagement: Double the capacity of WSC as a percentage of total FTE (0.4% vs 0.2%)

Service focus analysis
- Highly operational focus with a centralised centre of excellence, resourced to provide communications, digital content and graphic design services to all of Council
- In-house graphic design capability (Graphic Designer role)

Additional service information
- Significant focus on community events & culture, as to support the placemaking for the local and tourist population
- Strong focus on enablement of the economic development and tourism services and strategies

[1]SOURCE: Delivery program 2020-2024
[2] Days not provided. assumed 3day part time as estimate

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Section 5:

Recommendations

Guiding principles for the Corporate Relations service

While there have been no formal updates to the Council's strategic direction, the refreshed intent set by the Executive is around rebuilding trust and credibility with the community and other stakeholders, including employees. With that in mind, four guiding principles have been defined with the Corporate Relations management and Executive, to underpin service delivery as it supports the achievement of Council's strategic objectives.

WINGECARRIBEE SHIRE COUNCIL MISSION[1]

To create and nurture a vibrant and diverse community, growing and working in harmony with our urban, agricultural and natural environments.

UNDER NEW LEADERSHIP, THIS MEANS...

Moving forward we want to rebuild trust and credibility, reinvigorate our organisation, out community and our places. We need to refocus our efforts, drive outcomes for the future and bring our stakeholders on the journey with us.

Current Corporate Relations services

Corporate Relations GUIDING PRINCIPLES	Communication	Channel management	Community engagement
REBUILD TRUST THROUGH ACTIONS	We will rebuild trust with our stakeholders through actively demonstrating, and guiding others in the organisation to demonstrate, how Council delivers on the stakeholder promises.		
COMMUNICATE HONESTLY	We will favour open and honest communication with our stakeholders, taking every opportunity to build rapport and create a genuine sense of engagement.		
FOCUS ON THE STAKEHOLDER	We will strive to understand and exceed our varied stakeholder expectations, giving our stakeholders the desired opportunities to be heard, and putting them at the heart of everything we do.		
STRENGTHEN OUR FOUNDATIONS	We will establish a strong service delivery foundation that favours better practice and continuous improvement, in order to deliver a service that is proactive, effective and agile.		

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KPMG's Connected Council philosophy for Local Government

At the heart of these recommendations is our philosophy about a 'Connected Council', placing the customer at the centre and connecting their experience to the design of the middle office through to the back office, which we consider imperative for effective and value adding change to an organisation.

Structure of a Modern Connected Council[1]

Customer Experience and Engagement	Customer insights are used to drive the design of the underlying service delivery model, address the needs and preferences of the community.
Service Delivery	Customer centric service design is need-based, innovative and seamless across the end to end customer journey.
Service Framework	Organisational structure and operations are allocated to support service opportunities as they are identified.
Enabling Processes and Functions	Processes and organisational functions support a seamless customer experience and leverage better practice to maximise employee engagement in value-add assignments.
Finance / Asset Mgmt. / HR & Payroll / CRM / Property & Rates / Project Mgmt. / Procure-ment	Solution is user friendly and aligned to the needs of each business function
ICT Enterprise Solution	'Fit for purpose' systems and infrastructure provide a foundation to support the delivery of modern customer services and optimise organisational efficiency.

How to Build a Connected Council

▶ **Identify and build meaningful community engagements:** Develop a 'one-council' experience, addressing the whole-of-person – from initial interaction through to ongoing relationship and engagement.

▶ **Review customer service design**: Services are defined and designed from the customer's perspective, considering their needs, wants and journeys, rather than organisational functions**.**

▶ **Define roles to support service delivery:** Roles and responsibilities are defined to support end-to-end service delivery across all functions.

▶ **Optimise business processes**: Processes are integrated across the front, middle and back office to eliminate silos and fragmentation. Organisation and operational design focuses on reclaiming time from old processes and re-allocating it to activities that drive value for the council.

▶ **Align technology to business needs:** Systems are configured to enable best-practice processes while ensuring Council's business needs are met

▶ **Lay the ICT foundations:** Systems, applications and infrastructure are selected for their ability to address challenges now and to support future goals and ambitions. Connectivity, security and scalability are key considerations.

[1] KPMG proprietary framework that is supported by Local Government specific reference models and accelerator tools. Application of this framework has been proven as fit for purpose for Local Government nationally and internationally (e.g. UK and Canada).
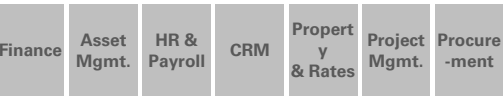
Connected Council | Recommendations overview

Five tactical recommendations and six strategic recommendations were developed for the Corporate Relations Service out of this review. Dissatisfaction expressed by customers through the project's community consultation cannot be fully addressed at the Corporate Relations Service level, and as a value-add, we have outlined additional transformational recommendations to address this dissatisfaction.

Owned by Corporate Relations

Owned by Council

Structure of a Modern Connected Council

Customer Experience and Engagement

Service Delivery

Service Framework

Enabling Processes and Functions

Finance	Asset Mgmt.	HR & Payroll	CRM	Property & Rates	Project Mgmt.	Procure -ment

ICT Enterprise Solution

TACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS
Constitute low effort to implement, deliver high value to enable the transitional state of the function.

TR-1 | Include a new section in the weekly Community Update 'Submissions & Feedback' summarising recent consultations outcomes and related action plans.

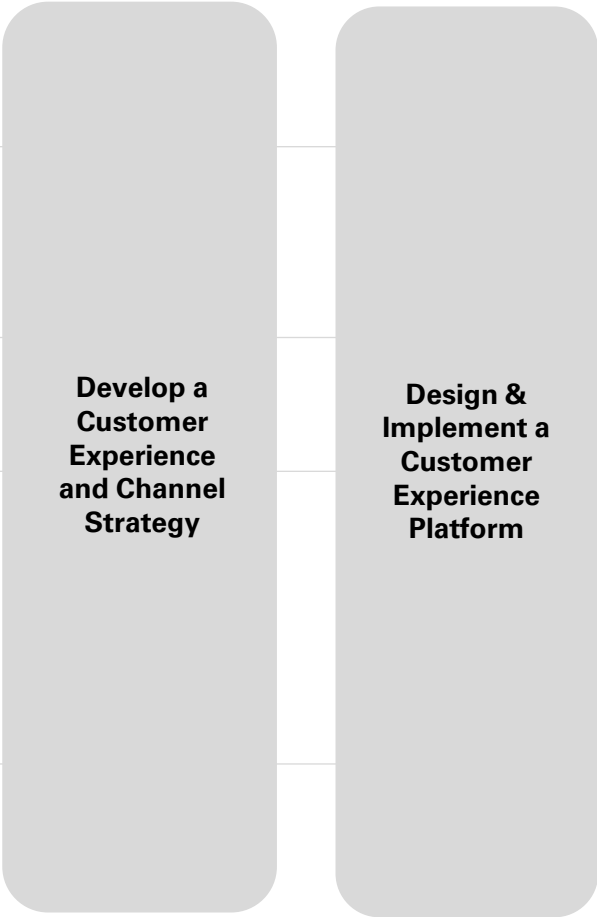**TR-3 |** Implement standard practice guidelines for hyperlinks and cross-referencing in communications content.

TR-2 | Centralise all graphic design work into a single internal or outsourced role to release capacity.

TR-4 | Review and uplift the project Consultation & Communication Plan template to enhance its functionality.

TR-5 | Streamline stakeholder-heavy approval processes to allow for a more agile approach considering the level of risk for different types of communications channels and content

STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS
Constitute high value, higher effort to implement, focus on developing a future-ready service

SR-2 | Map your stakeholders & understand their needs

SR- 1 | Crisis settlement & mid-term approach

SR- 5 | Uplift Communications & Community engagement strategies

SR- 3 | Redesign the Corporate Relations services

SR- 4 | Establish a Corporate Relations governance framework

SR-6 | Develop a council-wide social media approach

TRANSFORMATIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Develop a Customer Experience and Channel Strategy

Design & Implement a Customer Experience Platform

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Tactical recommendations

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HIGH LEVEL APPROACH

TR-1 Include a new section in the weekly Community Update 'Submissions & Feedback' summarising recent consultations outcomes and related action plans.

The community does not feel as though their inputs to the Council are acted upon or used to inform any Council policies or strategies. This has lead to frustration with and disengagement from community engagement forums.

- In the Weekly Community Update, add a section following 'On Exhibition' called 'Submissions Feedback' (or to that effect) which summarises the key submission points of recently closed exhibitions. Highlight the instances where these submissions have informed strategies or project plans.

TR-2 Centralise all graphic design work into a single internal or outsourced role to release capacity

An estimated 10% of the total Corporate Relations service capacity is currently being absorbed by requests for graphic design assistance from other Council business units, to adjust or reformat standard templates for specific announcements. This is equivalent to ~$26k of productivity (based on service salaries). This is not an optimised usage of the service capability, given graphic design is not their area of expertise.

There are current branding templates that have been developed, however are either not used appropriately or do not meet stakeholder needs, resulting in the graphic design demand.

In addition to this ad-hoc internal work, the Council spent ~$48k on outsourced graphic design in FY21. A dedicated part-time graphic design resource, responsible for all graphic design, will likely match or reduce the Council's overall graphic design costs while increasing the capacity of the Corporate Relations service.

- Document instances of graphic design occurring internally and externally across all Council business units and determine the total financial value of the graphic design work (including the time spent across Council on doing graphic design). Estimate the increase in capacity to provide core Council services in those business units. Estimate the training costs associated with upskilling certain teams with graphic design.
- Review the current standard templates and determine if they are fit-for-purpose or the level or redesign needed.
- Estimate the Council-wide FTE requirement and cost to meet annual graphic design needs and perform a cost benefit analysis to determine the most cost effective option:
  - a) Consolidate graphic design responsibilities into a single permanent part time resource
  - b) Outsource graphic design to a single supplier on contract/retainer
  - c) Roll out Canva and implement a training program to upskill all relevant staff

TR-3 Implement standard practice guidelines for hyperlinks and cross-referencing in communications content

Stakeholders have expressed difficulty locating the most relevant and up-to-date information for news, services and events on the Council website. Increased use of hyperlinks in emails, media releases and social media posts to direct users to related information has been requested by the community to assist with accessing information.

- Develop hyperlinks and cross-referencing standard practice guidelines for each form of communications.
  - Define appropriate use of in-text references / hyperlinks to Council webpages or documents
  - Define appropriate use of post text references / hyperlinks to Council webpages or documents
- Implement the new standards across all Council communications.

Tactical recommendations

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HIGH LEVEL APPROACH

TR-4 Review and simplify the project Consultation & Communication Plan template to enhance its functionality

Detailed community Consultation & Communication plans are currently developed for Council projects, however the information is not presented in a way that it is easily consumed by Council stakeholders. Stakeholders have indicated the document is hard to follow, and that it poses a cumbersome requirement in not differentiating between simple projects and multi-year extensive programs of work. Given the level of detail, the outcomes can be unclear and prevent senior Council staff with providing the appropriate input and review.

- Review the Consultation & Communication Plan Template to validate the existing content requirements.
- Include additional sections for an executive summary (maximum 5 pages) and a communications plan (including calendar) that details how the community will be informed of the project progress and how their feedback has been incorporated
- Break the document into functional sub-documents to be issued to relevant stakeholders (e.g. communications calendar to Corporate Relations, executive summary to Council executive)
- Ensure that key staff (such as those developing the plan and conducting consultations) have undertaken the appropriate training (e.g. IAP2 Foundations in Public Participation training) and therefore have the appropriate capability to undertake consultation in accordance with the standards set by the Corporate Relations service.

TR-5 Optimise stakeholder-heavy approval processes to allow for a more agile approach considering the level of risk for different types of communications channels and content

Delays in communications releases, are being caused by an approvals process that involves between four and six stakeholders for business unit-requested communications. Similar inefficiencies are experienced with the Executive-requested communications.

- Define and agree on a reduced number of stakeholder approvals for routine or pre-planned communications
- Define and agree on the stakeholder approvals and escalation process for critical communications
- Define and enforce maximum turn-around times for communications approvals

Strategic recommendations | Crisis settlement

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KEY FINDINGS TO ADDRESS

Specific findings identified through this review which should be addressed as part of this recommendation

S1.1 Acknowledge and own the narrative on Council's current political climate

In the last three months, and despite prominent bad press, the Council has stayed largely silent on its current political situation. The community has interpreted this as a lack of honesty and transparency, leading to further erosion of trust. With the announcement of the public inquiry, there is now added urgency for Council to take ownership of the narrative, and actively and deliberately manage the broadcasting of the right messages, to the right stakeholders, using the right channels.

S1.2 Introduce regular and direct senior leadership engagement with the community (e.g. speaking on radio, attending community meetings)

The proactive and direct interactions of the Council's Administrator and new General Manger with the community have been received positively. Stakeholders have a desire to hear regularly from Council senior leadership and have indicated that this would help to rebuild trust between the community and Council.

RECOMMENDATION OVERVIEW

SR-1 | CRISIS SETTLEMENT & MID TERM APPROACH

Outcome — *What will this recommendation achieve?*

This recommendation will mitigate further deterioration of Council brand and further erosion of trust with the community by taking ownership of the narrative related to its current political environment and delivering crisis settlement.

Business Impact — L M **H**

Effort — L **M** H

Approach — *How could we implement this recommendation?*

Develop a crisis settlement plan
- Identify the key community issues, public narrative and key community voices including influential individuals and community groups. Maintain a live issues register.
- Run an Executive team workshop to define the Council's position and narratives addressing community concerns under current climate.
- Identity and define Wingecarribee Council's top tier stakeholders and develop targeted messaging approaches for these target audiences
- Design a four week communications plan, outlining key deliverables, target audiences, milestones and optimal channels to reach stakeholder groups. Formalise a streamlined communications review and approval process.

Implement the crisis settlement plan
- Develop communications content per the implementation plan. Tailor the messaging for different channels and audiences. Initial correspondence to take ownership for the current situation and engage with community.
- Establish a regular cadence of subsequent communications
- Establish a community listening and sentiment capture process, including a feedback portal

Develop a medium term crisis management approach
- Reflect on the lessons learnt from the crisis settlement period to refine the narrative objective for the following 6-9 months
- Identify the key stakeholder groups to be engaged. Develop a high level message tree outlining the general message to be communicated to all stakeholders and targeted messages for each of the key stakeholder groups.
- Develop a phased communications plan outlining key milestones for progressing narrative points and defining proactive communications distribution dates, channels and stakeholder for each.

Dependency — *What are some key considerations and dependencies when implementing this recommendation?*

- Consider potential overlap with the public inquiry stakeholder consultations and the need to manage stakeholder fatigue
- Requires awareness of the public inquiry consultation timelines

In-source or out-source

Partially or fully outsource

Strategic recommendations |Stakeholder mapping

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Specific findings identified through this review which should be addressed as part of this recommendation

S2.1 Develop a centralised database of Corporate Relations stakeholders and their needs

Council staff, across a number of business units, are currently performing 'Corporate Relations' services with specific stakeholder groups (e.g. small businesses, region visitors). A central and complete view of these stakeholders and their needs is required to enable governance of core messaging and enhance customer experience through internal collaboration and knowledge sharing,

S2.2 Define the communications and community engagement needs of ALL stakeholder groups

The Corporate Relations service currently has a prominent focus on residents as the core service stakeholders, and limited targeted interaction with other stakeholder groups. Residents' needs are currently assumed and not well understood based on our community research.

There is no Council-wide view of stakeholders, which can result in different parts of the Council managing stakeholder interests in a conflicting manner (e.g. the residents' need to keep the streets quiet, and the small business's need for tourists). There is also assumed duplication of effort across Council, as individual business units would likely duplicate activities in the communications and community engagement service with their targeted stakeholder groups.

RECOMMENDATION OVERVIEW

SR-2 | MAP YOUR STAKEHOLDERS & UNDERSTAND THEIR NEEDS

Outcome — *What will this recommendation achieve?*

It will establish an understanding of actual (not assumed) stakeholder needs across Council, which is a critical element for addressing the current community dissatisfaction. It will establish common stakeholder needs across groups, and through service design, have the potential to reduce duplication of effort in meeting them.

Business Impact — L **M** H

Effort — L **M** H

Approach — *How could we implement this recommendation?*

Confirm Corporate Relations stakeholders
- Confirm completeness and accuracy of the stakeholder list developed in the Community Engagement Strategy, ensuring appropriate focus is given to stakeholders other than residents
- Classify stakeholders into meaningful groups with similar demographics, and further into segments or profiles

Understand stakeholder needs through developing personas
- Identify stakeholder representatives to engage through a panel, to help understand needs
- Develop a view of stakeholder needs, reflecting on what the Corporate Relations service needs to help the stakeholder with
- Prioritise stakeholder needs, based on importance and urgency and/or volume
- Assess applicability of stakeholder needs, to groups/segments and/or profiles and develop common persona elements
- Define stakeholder personas, outlining persona description, needs, frustrations, working styles, aspirations with Corporate Relations service design and preferred engagement channels

Dependency — *What are some key considerations and dependencies when implementing this recommendation?*

- Requires cross-Council collaboration
- Stakeholder fatigue might need to be managed due to a potential overlap with public inquiry stakeholder consultation

In-source or out-source

In source or partially out-source

At the heart of genuine engagement are WSC's stakeholders, and the different needs they have. These are varied, sometimes conflicting and deeply personal.

Some examples could be….

Resident

Raj

Tourist

Jane

Bob

Mary

Property owner

Small business owner

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An illustrative example | Helping Mary's small business flourish

Customer personas are fictitious, specific and concrete representations of Council's stakeholders. They are a practical tool to capture stakeholder characteristics and service expectations and requirements and are developed to allow Council to firstly empathise with the personas' situations, and then design services and activities around them.

For illustrative purposes

What's important to me?

I'm passionate about my ideas and my business; each customer that walks through my shop doors is the reason I do what I do.

What do I want?

I want support and mentoring to help my business reach its potential and navigate the longer-term impacts of the pandemic.

Mary

" *My customers are what keeps me going* "

How will I feel?

"I'm open to pivoting with my business, as I have done this past year; but I need a sense of certainty of my future income stream."

How can WSC help?

"Business support forums that connect me with like-minded small business owners to share, learn and reflect."

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Strategic recommendations | Service redesign

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KEY FINDINGS TO ADDRESS

Specific findings identified through this review which should be addressed as part of this recommendation

S3.1 Within the community engagement service, define the process for 'closing the loop' with the community of the inputs collected during consultations and the resulting impacts on Council decisions

Consistent feedback was gathered from the community survey and focus panels that the community does not feel that their feedback or inputs are heard or actioned by the Council. This has led to a sense that participation in community engagement forums is pointless and will not ultimately impact the decisions of the Council.

S3.2 Identify and formalise where Corporate Relations services sit across Council

Communications and community engagement services are delivered by Council-wide business units. Delivery of these services is fragmented and not holistically governed, information and messaging is sometimes inconsistent and duplication of effort is likely present.

Events management and internal communications are documented as Corporate Relations services, but are not formally owned or delivered by any business units.

S3.3 Ensure simple and concise provision of information

Information is often delivered to stakeholders (internal and external) in long dense documents, making it hard to consume information and creating a barrier to engagement. The community expects the Council to communicate in simple and concise style, to increase content accessibility and engagement with the broader community.

RECOMMENDATION OVERVIEW

SR-3 | REDESIGN THE CORPORATE RELATIONS SERVICES

Outcome — *What will this recommendation achieve?*

It will ensure that services are designed in a stakeholder-centric way, and support outcome-focussed delivery. Such services will clearly identify and work to address customer pain points, with a focus on genuine, humanised engagement. The redesigned services will increase stakeholder satisfaction both internally and externally.

Business Impact L M **H**

Effort L M **H**

Approach — *How could we implement this recommendation?*

Conduct stakeholder journey mapping
- Invite stakeholder representatives to contribute to prioritised stakeholder journey mapping
- Develop journey maps including: description of customer journey, factual positive and negative experiences along the journey, channels and functions involved, services consumed by the stakeholders, moments and experiences that matter and final view of service delivery challenges

Prioritise the services
- Prioritise services based on strategic importance and complexity and community experience impact

Undertake service redesign
- For prioritised services outline the service blueprint, including high level process, technology, data, service, and people.
- Define specific service attributes such as include name, description, service inputs / outputs, service dependencies, related services, service availability (who can request the service and when), service owner, service delivery manager, delivery channel/s and service level agreement/s)
- Conduct detailed process design as required, including the triaging process for service requests. Define function and customer responsibilities.
- Define technology requirements for service delivery and service channel architecture if any
- Define the required capabilities and conduct change impact assessment. Consider outsourcing where appropriate

Develop performance metrics to measure service delivery
- Define critical success factors (what do we need to do well) for each service, in a easy-to-understand language
- Define SMART KPIs that will underpin critical success factors, and assign targets
- Assign KPI business owners who will be measured on agreed targets
- Empower business owners to own and ensure the integrity of the data used for the KPI measurement

Dependency — *What are some key considerations and dependencies when implementing this recommendation?*

In-source or out-source

- Outcomes of SR-1 Map your stakeholders & understand their needs are an input into this recommendation
- SR-4 Establish the Corporate Relations governance framework can be delivered in parallel with this recommendation
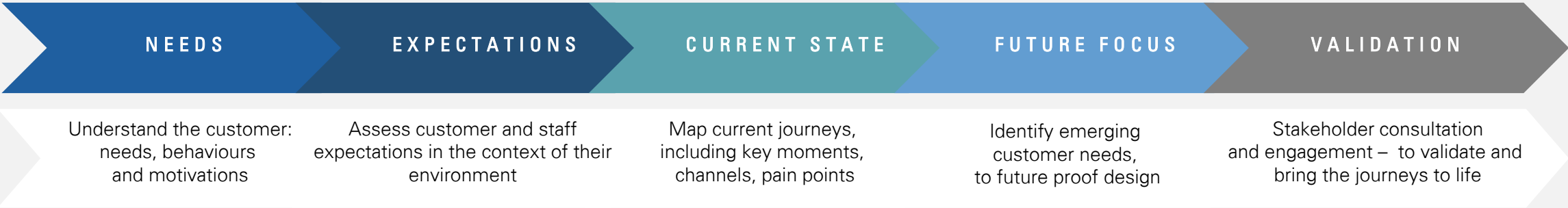
Partially or fully outsource

Understanding customers' journeys

To guide an effective customer and employee-centric service delivery, you require deep insight into the Council's customers and staff - who they are, what they are experiencing and what they expect. KPMG's Journey Mapping is one example of a methodology that can facilitate deep knowledge of their engagement, and overlay this with the crucial contextual information.

KPMG Journey Mapping is built on design thinking—a **holistic, collaborative and people-oriented approach** to creative problem-solving. Our process identifies problems within the larger context of **relationships and challenges**, and it uses an exploratory, collaborative approach to help design **future focused solutions**.

We also take a **motivation based approach** to ensure that we are capturing both "how" and "why" people act – **connecting the key motivational drivers and business goals**. With a much better understanding of why people do what they do, we can better design more seamless, innovative and customer-centric experiences.

NEEDS	EXPECTATIONS	CURRENT STATE	FUTURE FOCUS	VALIDATION
Understand the customer: needs, behaviours and motivations	Assess customer and staff expectations in the context of their environment	Map current journeys, including key moments, channels, pain points	Identify emerging customer needs, to future proof design	Stakeholder consultation and engagement – to validate and bring the journeys to life

Janine, low interaction, digitally literate.
"I don't want to spend unnecessary time going through Council processes to deal with small issues."
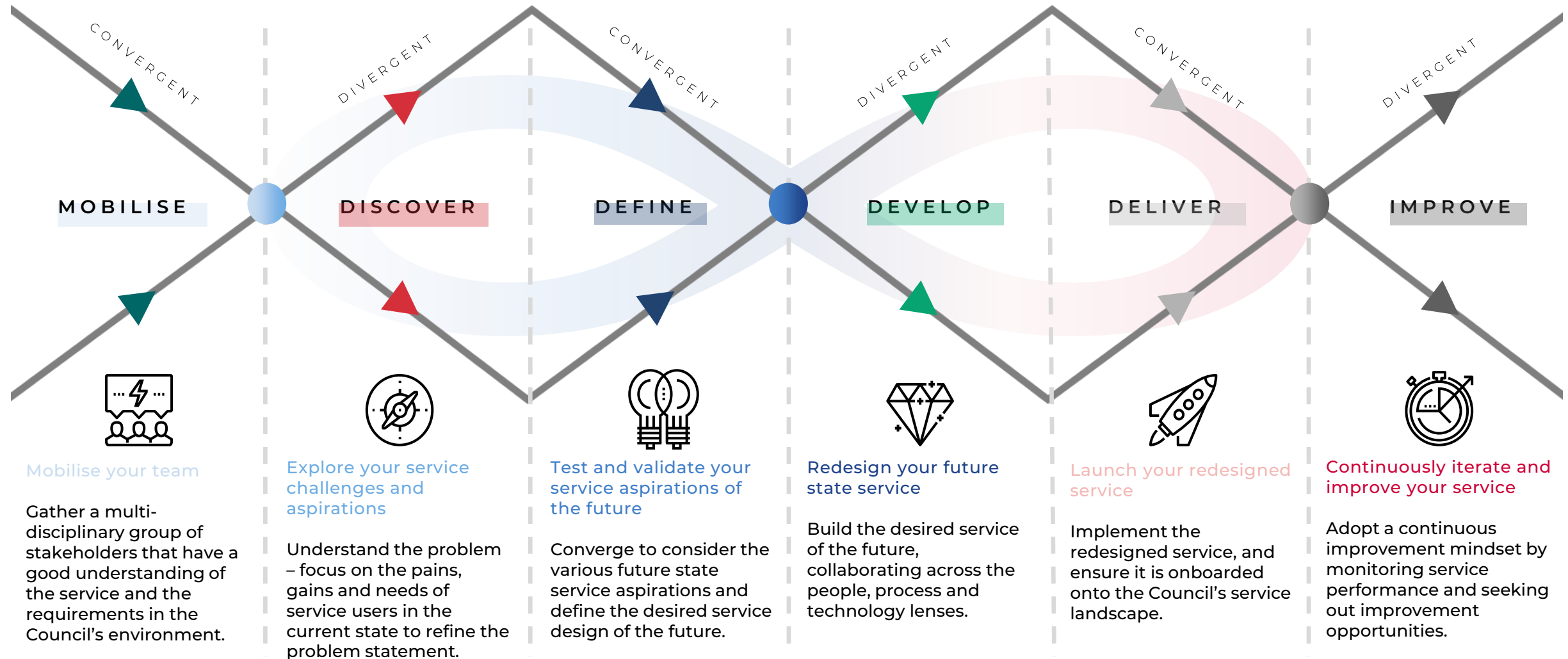
Paul, Customer Support, digitally literate.
"I feel like I step back into a time warp when I go to work, the systems are clunky and disjointed. I use Excel all the time as a means of getting stuff done"

Redesigning your services

This powerful evidence-based learnings from stakeholder (community and employee) journeys feed directly into service redesign. The below approach shows the phases of a typical service redesign process to enable meaningful service transformation..

CONVERGENT — DIVERGENT — CONVERGENT — DIVERGENT — CONVERGENT — DIVERGENT

MOBILISE — **DISCOVER** — **DEFINE** — **DEVELOP** — **DELIVER** — **IMPROVE**

Mobilise your team

Gather a multi-disciplinary group of stakeholders that have a good understanding of the service and the requirements in the Council's environment.

Explore your service challenges and aspirations

Understand the problem – focus on the pains, gains and needs of service users in the current state to refine the problem statement.

Test and validate your service aspirations of the future

Converge to consider the various future state service aspirations and define the desired service design of the future.

Redesign your future state service

Build the desired service of the future, collaborating across the people, process and technology lenses.

Launch your redesigned service

Implement the redesigned service, and ensure it is onboarded onto the Council's service landscape.

Continuously iterate and improve your service

Adopt a continuous improvement mindset by monitoring service performance and seeking out improvement opportunities.

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Strategic recommendations | Governance framework

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KEY FINDINGS TO ADDRESS

Specific findings identified through this review which should be addressed as part of this recommendation

S4.1 Introduce strategic capability in Corporate relations team at manager level

The Corporate Relations service is highly reactive and operations focused. The team does not currently have the capability or capacity for strategic initiative development or execution. The current strategies are largely not fit-for-purpose and they lack delivery planning.

S4.2 Establish website content governance

There is no formal owner of the official WSC website. This has led to a website that is challenging to navigate and much of the information is difficult to locate on or between websites or missing completely.

RECOMMENDATION OVERVIEW

SR-4 | ESTABLISH A CORPORATE RELATIONS GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK

Outcome — *What will this recommendation achieve?*

It will ensure the Corporate Relations services that are currently delivered across Council in a siloed and fragmented manner, are instead delivered and governed cohesively, with consistent communications and coordinated employee efforts.

Business Impact — L [M] H
Effort — [L] M H

Approach — *How could we implement this recommendation?*

Establish a governance framework for the Corporate Relations services

- Develop an appropriate governance structure that will enable effective operations under the current federated service delivery model
- Establish responsibility in the Corporate Relations team for the website content governance
  - Set up a Website governance group to establish the guiding principles for the website content. Attendees should include, at a minimum, a Corporate Relations representative/s, Customer Service representative/s, IT representative/s and the Online Services Officer (or equivalent). This group should govern any material content changes, with the respective business units maintaining the content ownership.
- Define service governance forums, meeting cadence and focus areas. Some suggestions include
  - Executive leadership group that is accountable for the strategic direction of the Corporate Relations service, taking into account various organisation triggers for service introduction, amendment and/or retirement. This group's decision making focus would be on organisation-wide service needs and strategy, service design and customer experience and critical success factors for reaching organisational goals
  - Service leadership group (cross-Council) that is responsible for the end-to-end lifecycle of the service, taking ownership of executing decisions by the Executive. This group's decision making focus would be on service delivery management, knowledge management, service uplift and key performance indicators. It would act as a service specialist, and provide advice to the Executive
  - Stakeholder panel/s representing the voice of the community, to inform all levels of service governance and provide input on customer needs and changes needed to services, service design and continuous improvement
- Articulate terms of reference for each forum, objectives and scope, membership by org. role, decision inputs and outputs and standing agenda
- Formalise governance arrangements to set clear expectations, including delegation of authority, key protocols and escalation pathways for decision making (incl. crisis situations)
- Conduct consolidation of Council branding across customer facing business units under a single vision. Work in partnership with the Tourism business unit to identify opportunities to leverage common ground between brands. (see slide 47 for approach detail)

Dependency — *What are some key considerations and dependencies when implementing this recommendation?*

In-source or out-source

In-source or partially outsource

- Requires alignment with the overall Council governance framework
- Opportunity for service governance agenda items to plug into the existing governance forums (e.g. Executive Leadership governance meetings), to minimise complexity
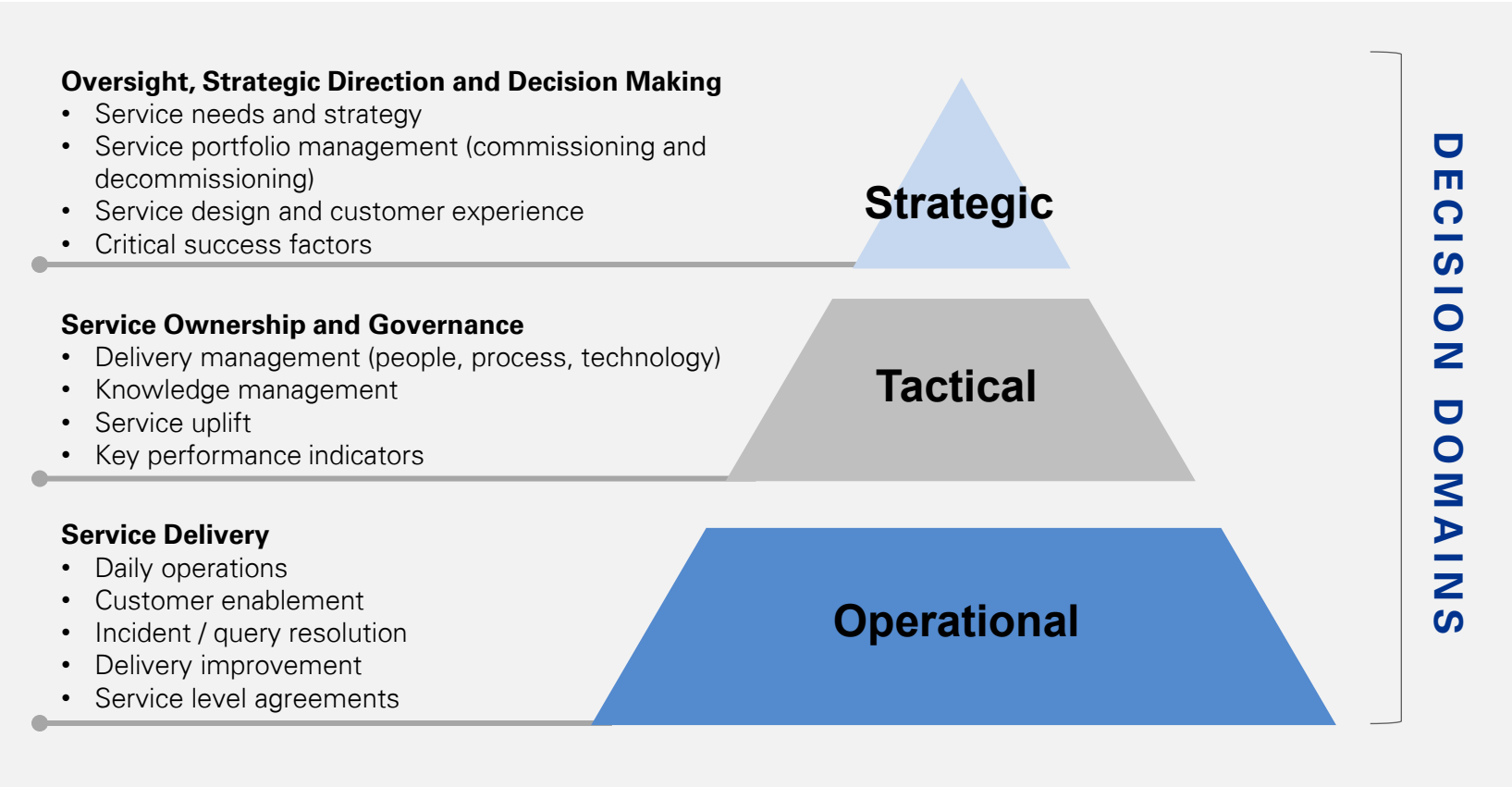
Developing a governance framework

A governance framework must clearly identify the decisions that need to be made to efficiently guide strategy, operations, and investments, then develop and implement mechanisms to quickly and effectively make those decisions.

A governance framework defines:

⟩ Who makes directing, controlling, and executing decisions, including defining the ultimate authority?

⟩ How the decisions will be made, including escalation and arbitration procedures?

⟩ What information is required to make the decisions?

⟩ With what frequency decisions must be made or revisited?

⟩ What decision making mechanisms should be required?

⟩ How blockers will be handled?

⟩ How decisions are communicated to concerned parties?

⟩ How the governance results should be reviewed and improved?

Across three decision domains:

Oversight, Strategic Direction and Decision Making
- Service needs and strategy
- Service portfolio management (commissioning and decommissioning)
- Service design and customer experience
- Critical success factors

Strategic

Service Ownership and Governance
- Delivery management (people, process, technology)
- Knowledge management
- Service uplift
- Key performance indicators

Tactical

Service Delivery
- Daily operations
- Customer enablement
- Incident / query resolution
- Delivery improvement
- Service level agreements

Operational

DECISION DOMAINS

Consolidation of brand

A review of Council's current brands needs to be undertaken to consolidate brands with distinct brand value propositions. This will serve to reinforce the main Council brand. It is important that the well established and positively viewed 'Destination Southern Highlands' brand is not diluted outside the Shire. However, opportunities for a consistent partnership model between the two brands need to be explored and executed, such that the local population understands the full scope of Council's services.

Step 1. Consolidate brands under a single vision

1. Compile a list of all Council brands and understand the current brand proposition for each

2. Group all the current brands based on commonality in their brand value propositions

3. Assess whether the community perception reflects the current brand proposition and/or whether redevelopment is needed

4. Roll brands with the same brand proposition into one to reinforce the overarching brand. Standalone business unit brands should be avoided, unless their brand proposition is sufficiently distinct from the rest of Council, such as the Tourism Southern Highlands brand

2. Branding partnership between the renewed Wingecarribee Shire Council brand and Destinations Southern Highlands

It is important that the well-established and positively viewed 'Destination Southern Highlands' brand is not diluted outside the Shire. However, opportunities for a consistent partnership model between the two brands need to be explored and executed, such that the local population understands the full scope of Council's services.

Wingecarribee Shire Council

Destinations Southern Highlands
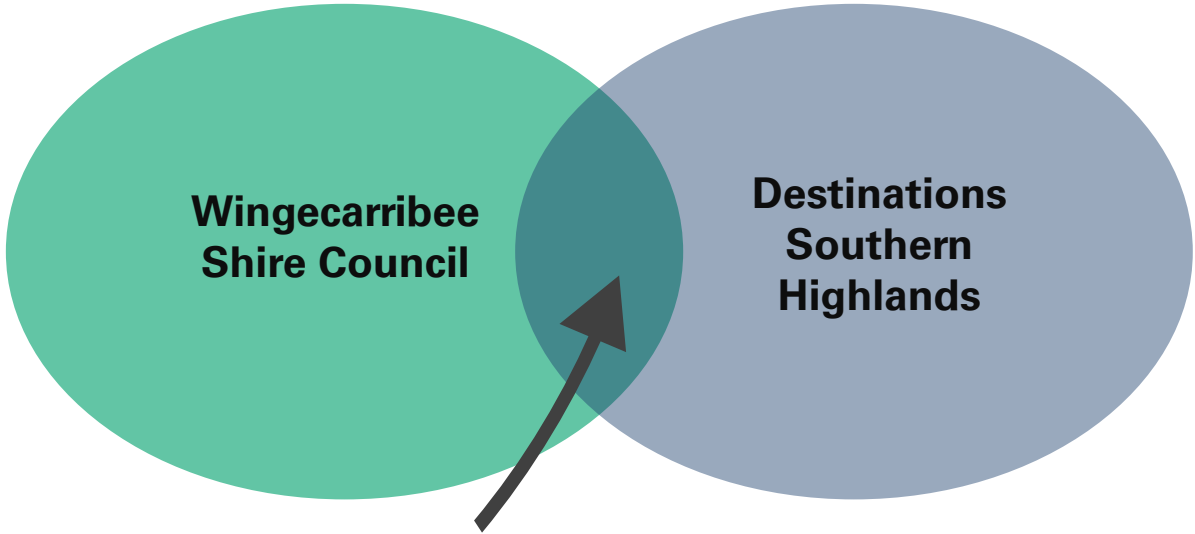
Define opportunities for a consistent partnership model. An example might be co-branding tourism initiatives for local community audience e.g. through adding "powered by Wingecarribee Shire Council" to the Destination Southern Highlands marketing material

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Strategic recommendations | Strategy uplift

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KEY FINDINGS TO ADDRESS

Specific findings identified through this review which should be addressed as part of this recommendation

S5.1 Redevelop the Communications and Community Engagement Strategies

Current strategies clearly frame the organisational approach to Communications and Community Engagement, and outline high-level organisational responsibility. However, there is a high number of actions compared to the team size, and they generally do not lend themselves to implementation planning.

S5.2 Develop a core communications narrative for Council and messaging across channels (Facebook posts, media releases, newsletter, other channels)

A review of negative media releases found that 62% are issued proactively, therefore there is sufficient opportunity for WSC to set the narrative on these releases, however no narrative has currently been defined. Additionally, Council is not currently using social media to position their narrative around negative media releases.

S5.3 Review core purpose and cadence of each method of communications (media releases, social media, newsletters) and allocate service capacity accordingly

The community had indicated a strong preference for information via newsletters. There is opportunity to reduce the volume of media releases (currently 1 every ~2 days) by refocusing on core issues and distribute 'operational' updates via social media and e-newsletters

RECOMMENDATION OVERVIEW

SR-5 | UPLIFT COMMUNICATIONS & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Outcome — *What will this recommendation achieve?*

It will overturn the trend of increasing dissatisfaction with the Council by offering a contemporary, fit-for-purpose lens on current communications and community engagement activities. It will provide the Executive with the confidence that the function is focussing on the areas that are crucial for rebuilding the community trust.

Business Impact L M **H**

Effort L M **H**

Approach — *How could we implement this recommendation?*

Redevelop the Communications and Community Engagement Strategies
- Define the strategy aim for the Communications and Community Engagement strategies and align the strategy objectives to the aims
- Building on the Corporate Relations Service Review analysis, identify initiatives for each objective that are high priority. Define the key actions for implementation of each of these initiative and develop and implementation roadmap. Identify owners for each of the initiatives and determine the resourcing effort required.

Develop communications and engagement narrative and align to council activities
- Utilising past community research, identify the key topics or issues of critical importance to the community. Determine any current or planned council activities of projects that are addressing these.
- Building on these topics, develop the core message to the community that the Council would like to establish through its communications and engagement over a 12 month period

Develop 12-month communications and engagement plan
- Identify and define the main categories of communications to be distributed by council (e.g. major projects updates, event promotion, service information). For each category:
  - Identify the purpose of communications, the frequency required,
  - Identify internal stakeholders who will be impacted and work with them to develop a content plan
  - Develop a channel approach for distribution of communications, considering the target audience for the category and their needs and preferences.

Dependency — *What are some key considerations and dependencies when implementing this recommendation?*

- Outcomes of SR-1 Map your stakeholders & understand their needs are an input into this recommendation

In-source or out-source

Partially or fully outsource

Strategic recommendations | Social media approach

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Specific findings identified through this review which should be addressed as part of this recommendation

S6.1 Investigate Social media scheduling and analytics software options to enhance coordination of social media channels across Council
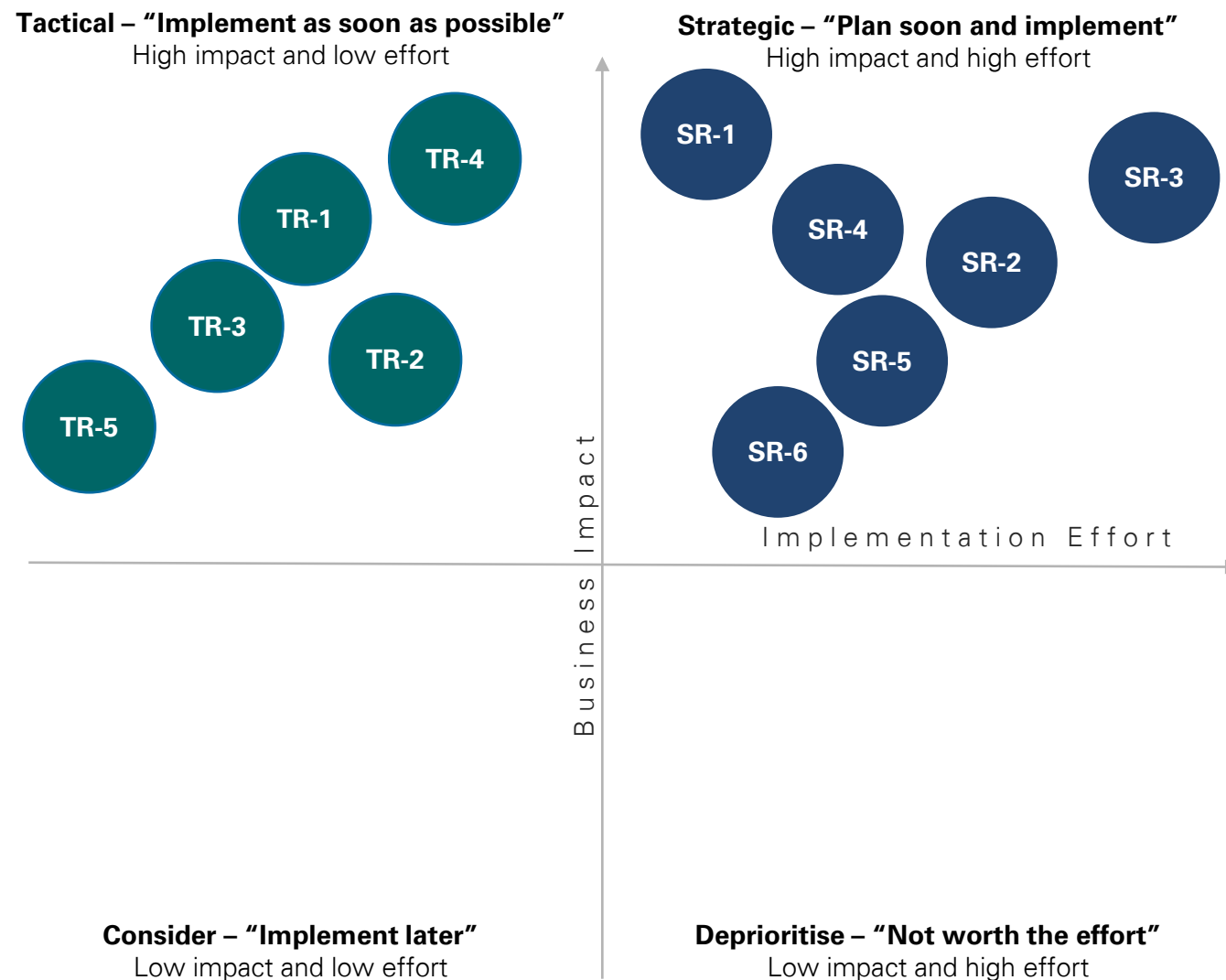
WSC currently has over 20 social media accounts managed by various business units. There is no coordination of the content distributed or of stakeholder insights gained on each channel. Content posting presents an administrative burden within the Corporate Relations service, and there are likely efficiencies to be gained from a scheduling software being deployed across Council.

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RECOMMENDATION OVERVIEW

SR-6 | OPTIMISE SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE

Outcome — *What will this recommendation achieve?*

It will formalise Council-wide social media approach to assign clear ownership for each platform to oversee and optimise messaging, and will provide modern strategies and guidance on how authorised staff can effectively utilise their social media channels.

Business Impact L **M** H

Effort **L** M H

Approach — *How could we implement this recommendation?*

Validate the relevance of social media policy and uplift to include proactive direction
- Define and agree on direction for proactive or crisis engagement methods for approved stakeholders, including: tone, content, cadence, timing of posts, and appropriate customer interaction (e.g. responding to comments)

Identify owners for each social media platform
- Assign a single owner for each of the social media platform. These individuals will:
  - Work closely to ensure messaging is consistent across Council's social media presence
  - Identify opportunities to share and repost information between social media channels to maximise reach
  - Develop a clear understanding of the needs and expectations of the target audiences within their platform

Perform rapid spec & select for a tool to manage social media
- Define the social media posting coordination requirements across council and select a fit-for-purpose social media management tool accordingly. Example tools include: Hootsuite, Smarp and Buffer

Develop a data analytics capability for social media
- Define the critical success factors and key performance indicators for social media engagement
- Perform baselining of sentiment for each social media stakeholder group
- Identify and apply key metrics to assessing the engagement level and reach of each social media channel (page, account, etc)
- Utilise social media data analysis to define approaches to increase engagement and improve sentiment
- Develop a requirements specification

Dependency — *What are some key considerations and dependencies when implementing this recommendation?*

In-source or out-source

Insource or partially outsource

- Outcomes of SR-1 Map your stakeholders & understand their needs are an input into this recommendation
- Requires alignment with the outcomes of SR-5 Uplift communications and community engagement strategies

Proposed recommendation prioritisation

A total of 11 recommendations (5 tactical, 6 strategic) have been prioritised by KPMG based on the estimated level of business value and implementation effort.

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Tactical – "Implement as soon as possible"
High impact and low effort

Strategic – "Plan soon and implement"
High impact and high effort

TR-4, TR-1, TR-3, TR-2, TR-5

SR-1, SR-4, SR-2, SR-3, SR-5, SR-6

Business Impact

Implementation Effort

Consider – "Implement later"
Low impact and low effort

Depriortise – "Not worth the effort"
Low impact and high effort

Prioritisation matrix

- **Business Impact**: represents the relative business value or client/stakeholder impact
- **Implementation Effort**[1]: represents the relative effort required to implement a recommendation

List of recommendations

Strategic recommendations

SR-1 Crisis settlement
SR-2 Stakeholder mapping
SR-3 Service design
SR-4 Governance framework
SR-5 Strategy uplift
SR-6 Optimise social media

Tactical recommendations

TR-1 Submissions section update for e-Newsletter
TR-2 Graphic design sourcing approach
TR-3 Hyperlinks & cross-referencing in content
TR-4 Simplify the project Consultation & Communication Plan
TR-5 Optimise communications content approvals

[1] Resourcing for each recommendation has been estimated based on our industry experience from similar engagements. Critically, it is considered in isolation of any ongoing initiatives outside of the review.

Proposed roadmap

Strategic recommendations identified through this report have been sequenced into a high level roadmap to guide execution activities and agreed with key stakeholders. Tactical recommendations have not been included, as they can be delivered in a shorter timeframe and with minimal prioritisation of priorities.

	2021			2022				Delivery capacity[1]	Proposed owner
	Q4			Q1			Q2		
Month	10	11	12	1	2	3	4		

SR-1 | Crisis settlement
— Crisis settled
— Mid-term crisis management plan developed

Immediate crisis settlement — Rapid design & implementation — R

Mid-term crisis management — Design — Implement (close Jun 2022) — A — Coordinator Media & Communications / CRS Manager

SR-2 | Stakeholder mapping — ~5 personas developed & needs understood — A — Coordinator Community Engagement / CRS Manager

SR-3 | Service redesign — Customer journeys mapped — Prioritised services redesigned, KPIs defined — A — Interim General Manager / CRS Manager

Customer journey mapping

Service redesign

SR-4 | Governance framework — Governance framework defined — G — Interim General Manager / CRS Manager

SR-5 | Strategy uplift — Strategies uplifted & 12 month plan defined — A — Interim General Manager / CRS Manager

SR-6 | Optimise social media — Approach defined, tool selected — G — Coordinator Media & Communications or Business Communications Officer

Christmas closedown

[1]Delivery capacity legend:

G		Can be initiated and delivered with internal functional capability and some re-prioritisation of functional workload
A		Requires external delivery expertise in a partnership model and some re-prioritisation of functional workload
R		Cannot be delivered with current resource capacity and expertise

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Section 6:

Value add – transformative initiatives

The WSC community expects modern customer service

The WSC community is looking to the Council for a modernised community engagement approach that delivers the fast, convenient, secure, personalised, consumer-centric services that are revolutionising every corner of commerce today. Treating the community (and other stakeholders) like valued customers is critical to rebuilding trust, however Council's current siloed service delivery and technology means that Council is unable to have a 'single view of customer'. This is restricting WSC's ability to provide needs-based, flexible and accessible information and services to the community.

The WSC community expects simplicity and convenience when interacting with Council Services:

There appear to be no service level agreements with the community. –
Resident Association Representative

Recommendation: Develop and implement a service level agreement that defines appropriate timelines for responding to inquiries or submissions, and the frequency of updates until closure

Telstra sends text messages when they are doing things in the area. Council provides nothing - until it is finished.
– Resident

Recommendation: Develop and implement a process to ensure impacted stakeholders are notified prior to development / works starting using targeted channels

Lots of older people don't have access to the websites.
– Resident

Recommendation: Enable council stakeholders to opt into letterbox communications or participate in educational sessions that may increase their confidence in using digital communications channels

I am not aware of a self service option to see the status of requests. When I call the Council I get good service but not in a timely manner. I would like to be able to find the status of issues when I need them please.
– Resident

Recommendation: Implement systems and processes that can support channels for self service information

It should not matter who we go to see for what advice we get – Resident

Recommendation: Enable sharing of information internally between staff, especially within the one service

I don't know whether to look at the WSC website or the media website.
– Resident Association representative

Recommendation: Ensure up-to-date information regarding projects and developments can be easily located on the website

The above quotes represent are representative of themes identified through the community engagement in this project. Addressing these is beyond the scope of the Corporate Relations service, and requires a whole-of-Council investment to transform processes and systems to enable a modern customer experience across services.

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Transformational initiatives

Three transformational initiatives are recommended for consideration in order to address the broader dissatisfaction of customers identified through the community consultation in particular. These initiatives will help WSC to interact with its customers in a more seamless and optimised way, which will minimise current frustrations caused by access to information and visibility of service requests.

Recommendation: Ensure up-to-date information regarding projects and developments can be easily located on the website

Recommendation: Enable sharing of information internally between staff, especially within the one service

Recommendation: Develop and implement a service level agreement that defines appropriate timelines for responding to inquiries or submissions, and the frequency of updates until closure

Recommendation: Implement systems and processes that can support channels for self service information

Recommendation: Develop and implement a process to ensure impacted stakeholders are notified prior to development / works starting using targeted channels

Recommendation: Enable stakeholders to opt into letterbox communications or participate in educational sessions that may increase their confidence in using digital communications channels

Develop Customer Experience and Channel Strategy

A holistic customer approach does not exist in a council-wide form today. To begin WSC's Customer Experience and Customer Channel modernisation journey the following foundations must be developed:

- A clear understanding of WSC's customer experience and channels maturity and capability and identified opportunities for accelerating success and delivering more customer-centric outcomes for the customers, businesses and community.
- Defined current state review of customer experience and channels, and key considerations for target state design. This will support the future development of a Customer Service and Customer Channel strategy approach for WSC.
- Target state customer journey maps defining customer personas, customer/community cohorts, WSC's future aspiration for customer experience and the performance measures to support the implementation of each journey.

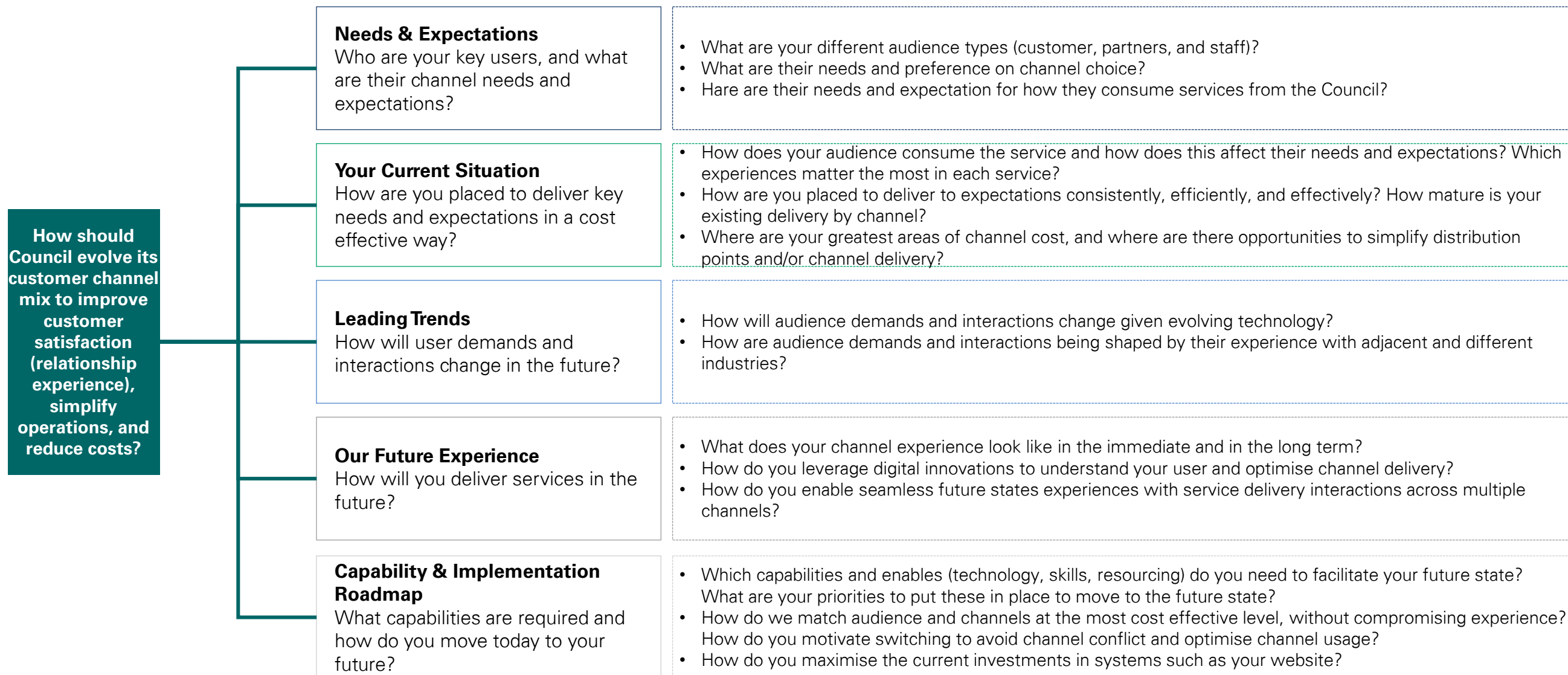## Design & Implement customer experience platform

A Customer Experience Platform (CXP) will enable Wingecarribee Shire Council to be more effective and efficient in interacting with their client channels to meet or exceed their expectations and as a result **increase satisfaction and build trust.** Building on the customer experience and channel strategy the required tools and will be selected and implemented that enable an optimised customer experience:

- **Develop detailed specifications for a CRM tool**. Develop guiding principles for the design and development of the customer experience platform. Consulting with all key stakeholders across the council, develop the key requirements needed from a CRM to achieve the customer experience target state design. Ensure that the CRM tool meets these functional and technical requirements as well as the established guiding principles.

- **Implement CRM**: Working with an implementation partner conduct discovery session with key stakeholders and use outputs to perform detailed solution design. Identify any additional tools or platforms required to support the customer experience platform (e.g. website analytics tool, integration platform). Build and test the solution, ensuring user acceptance testing is performed by a wide range of impacted end-users. Perform change management and training across all impacted stakeholders. Deploy the new CRM and website.

- **Functionally re-design and uplift the Wingecarribee Shire Council website utilise new CRM functionality.** Considering the CRM tool, map the existing pdfs and word document forms on the website to the new CRM functionality. Building on the forms development and prioritisation work previously undertaken by the Online Services Officer, understand what can be rebuilt to utilise the new CRM functionality.

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Developing an effective Customer Experience and Channel Strategy

An effective council-wide customer experience and channel pulls together understanding of customer needs and expectations, the current context and leading market trends to establish Wingecarribee Shire Council's ambitions for customer experience and a roadmap to achieving them.

How should Council evolve its customer channel mix to improve customer satisfaction (relationship experience), simplify operations, and reduce costs?

Needs & Expectations
Who are your key users, and what are their channel needs and expectations?

- What are your different audience types (customer, partners, and staff)?
- What are their needs and preference on channel choice?
- Hare are their needs and expectation for how they consume services from the Council?

Your Current Situation
How are you placed to deliver key needs and expectations in a cost effective way?

- How does your audience consume the service and how does this affect their needs and expectations? Which experiences matter the most in each service?
- How are you placed to deliver to expectations consistently, efficiently, and effectively? How mature is your existing delivery by channel?
- Where are your greatest areas of channel cost, and where are there opportunities to simplify distribution points and/or channel delivery?

Leading Trends
How will user demands and interactions change in the future?

- How will audience demands and interactions change given evolving technology?
- How are audience demands and interactions being shaped by their experience with adjacent and different industries?

Our Future Experience
How will you deliver services in the future?

- What does your channel experience look like in the immediate and in the long term?
- How do you leverage digital innovations to understand your user and optimise channel delivery?
- How do you enable seamless future states experiences with service delivery interactions across multiple channels?

Capability & Implementation Roadmap
What capabilities are required and how do you move today to your future?

- Which capabilities and enables (technology, skills, resourcing) do you need to facilitate your future state? What are your priorities to put these in place to move to the future state?
- How do we match audience and channels at the most cost effective level, without compromising experience? How do you motivate switching to avoid channel conflict and optimise channel usage?
- How do you maximise the current investments in systems such as your website?

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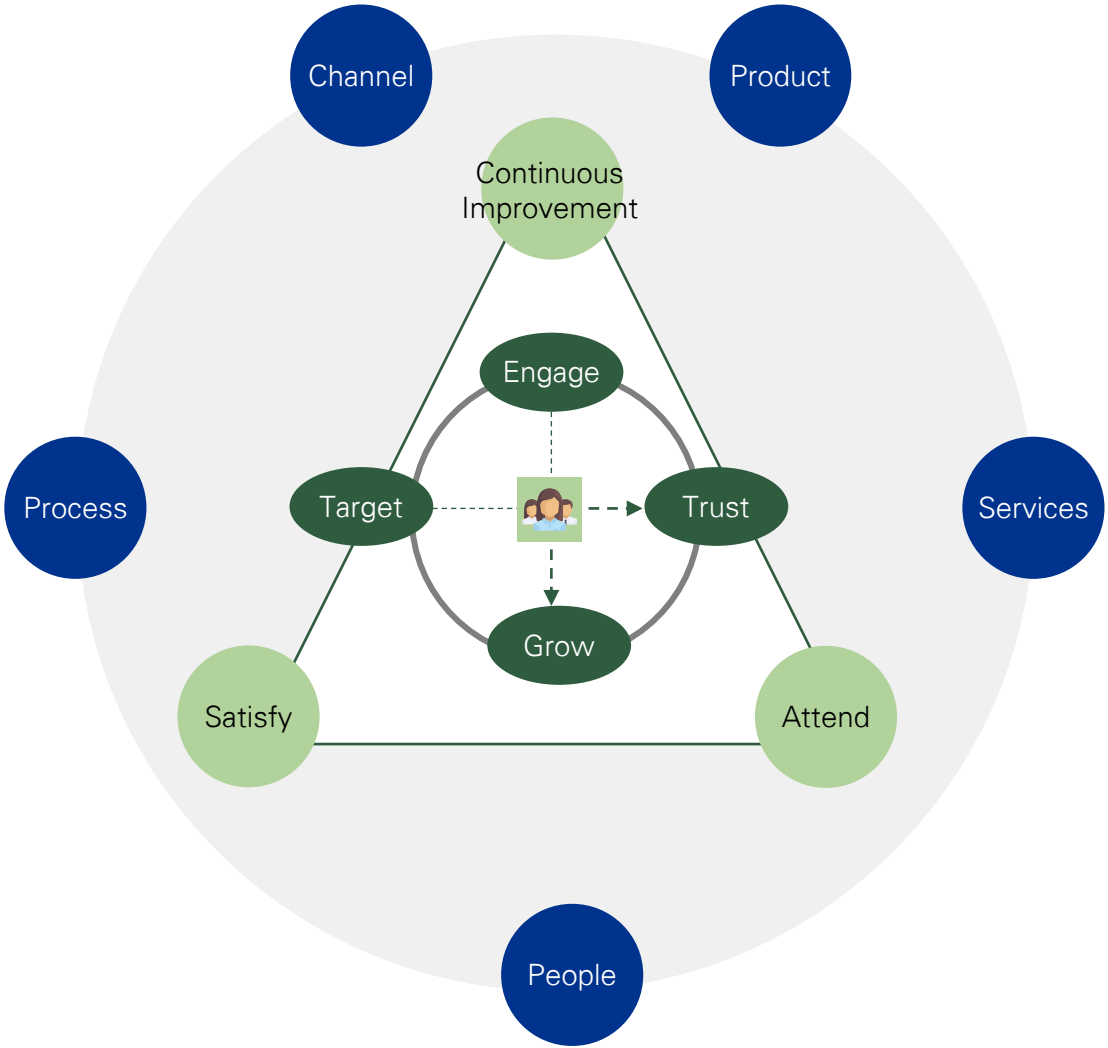APPENDIX

Building a Customer Experience Platform

A Customer Experience Platform (CXP) will enable WSC to be more effective and efficient in interacting with their client channels to meet or exceed their expectations and as a result, increase satisfaction and build trust. It is a strategy on its own that requires process design and supporting technological capabilities to achieve.

Customer Experience Platform | Overview

- A CXP is an ecosystem that will assist WSC in managing all interactions with its stakeholders.

- The CXP encompasses all of WSC's customer facing touchpoints, (CRM and Website), supported by one or multiple systems. It transacts with your ERP as the system of records, ideally via an integration layer, which will allow for the seamless transition of customer information between these platforms.

Customer Experience Platform | Benefits

1. **A personalised experience for Council stakeholder.**

   - WSC would benefit from providing a personalised experiences for their stakeholder, providing real-time progress and updates on projects in delivery to build community trust and satisfaction.

2. **Consistent communication and messaging across all channels.**

   - The CXP will allow for a holistic view and execution of communications across WSC's various channels.

3. **A connected ecosystem, that supports the end-to-end customer experience.**

   - A key pain-point which was uncovered during the Discovery phase of this engagement was the lack of a single source of truth for all customer related information.

   - The CXP will consolidate all customer information from the various touch points, into a single view which will allow WSC to more efficiently build and maintain quality relationships with their customers.

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Key project decisions and consultation overview

Community consultation "close the loop" summary

Current state detailed strategy analysis

Current state detailed capability findings

Survey results on online vs offline engagement preferences

Key engagement decisions & consultation overview

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KEY DECISIONS

STEP 1: CURRENT STATE

- Project methodology confirmed to be Connected Council (KPMG), with opportunity for WSC to call out any specific ACELG elements if required
- Agreed review would focus on the current Corporate Relations focus areas and stakeholders (i.e. residents only). However, insights on the approach to broader stakeholder communications and community engagement activities to also be developed through conducting internal stakeholder engagement
- Established that no customer data is available internally to support the view of residents' dissatisfaction of provision with Council information. Hypothesis for the dissatisfaction was formed through internal consultation, and tested in community consultation

STEP 2: IDEATE

- Four Corporate Relations guiding principles co-developed and agreed through ideation workshop with senior stakeholders
- Agreed approach for comparative analysis to include an analysis of publicly available data to understand strategic service focus, and a review of position descriptions to compare service capacity
- Comparative council data set agreed as five similar councils

STEP 3: DOCUMENT

- Internal communications and community events services deprioritised for final report as focus areas for the review in light of minimal current state service levels within Corporate Relations

STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

11	26	2	18	1	407
Internal workshops / interviews conducted	Internal stakeholders consulted	Community focus panels	Focus panel participants	Community survey	Survey respondents

Stakeholders consulted

CONSULTATION	PARTICIPANTS
Tourism Discovery Interview **10 August**	• Izabella Lane – *Coordinator Tourism* • Trish Bow – *Marketing / Digital Officer*
Corporate Relations Service Discovery Workshop **16 August**	• David Sommers – *Coordinator Media & Communications* • Michelle bell – *Business Communications Office* • Charmaine Cooper – *Coordination Community Development* • Leesa Stratford – *PA to Mayor*
Corporate Relations Internal Customers Discovery Workshop **17 August**	• Adam Bell – *Asset Liaison Officer (Roads)* • Cath Brennan – *Coordinator Community Development* • Cecilia Kemp – *Coordinator Environment & Health Policy Officer* • Greg Bray – *Manager Open Space, Recreation & Building Maintenance* • Jamil Ashraf – *Project Engineer (Civil)* • Jan Campbell – *Coordinator Economic Development* • Maureen Boyd – *Human Resources Business Partner* • Melissa Lefterys – *Coordinator Children's Services* • Michael Park – *Coordinator Strategic Land Use Planning* • Ned Tripkovic – *Group Manager Capital Projects* • Phoebe Ward – *Waste Education Project & Policy Officer* • Rachel Forte – *Coordinator Assets (Parks & Buildings)* • Renae Patterson - *Coordinator Customer Experience* • Saskia Sharp – *Online Services Officer* • Stephanie Bright – *Team Leader Business Support Officer* • Trish Bow – *Marketing / Digital Officer*
Customer Experience Discovery Interview **17 August**	• Renae Patterson – *Coordinator Customer Experience*

CONSULTATION	PARTICIPANTS
Online Content Discovery Workshop **18 August**	• Saskia Sharp – *Online Services Officer*
Ideation workshop **24 August**	• Claire Digger – *Acting Group Manager Corporate & Community* • Danielle Lidgard – *Acting Deputy General Manager Corporate, Strategy & Development Services* • Marissa Racomelara – *Interim Deputy General Manager* • Richard Mooney – *Acting Deputy General Manager Operations, Finance & Risk*
Economic Development Discovery Interview **17 August**	• Jan Campbell - *Coordinator Economic Development*
Communications & Community Engagement strategy review **17 August**	• Claire Digger - *Acting Group Manager Corporate & Community* • Danielle Lidgard – *Acting Deputy General Manager Corporate, Strategy & Development Services*
General Manager Interview **23 August**	• Lisa Miscamble – *General Manager*
Community Engagement Discovery Interview **6 September**	• Charmaine Cooper – *Coordination Community Development*
General Manager Interview **9 September**	• Lisa Miscamble – *General Manager*

Community consultation | Summary of purpose, approach and outcomes

To build on the findings from the 2021 Community Research report a set of key outstanding questions was developed following consultations with the corporate relations team and their internal customers. These questions were examined through an online survey and two community focus groups which received a high level of engagement.

The 2021 Community Research Report identified five key drivers of overall satisfaction with Council. Three of the five drivers are services provided by the Corporate Relations function.

Performance of Councillors

Council's level of communication

Council provision of information to residents

Opportunities to participate in Council decision making

Enforcement of development and building regulations

Following internal Council consultation, we identified the key questions that needed to be answered to improve communications and community engagement. These are:

- What information does the community want more of? What would the community like less of?
- Does the community want information to be delivered differently?
- Is the information the community is receiving relevant to them?
- Is the information provided to the community timely?
- What is preventing the community from participating in Council decision making?

Survey open from 26 August to 31 August

407 Respondents completed the survey on 'Your say Wingecarribee'

Community focus panel held on 31 August with Resident Association representatives

Community focus panel held on 6 September with residents

Summary of findings

- The community wants more information from the Council on key issues including, the current Council administration, ongoing and planned major works, and future strategy and direction of the Council
- The community wants ongoing updates from Council when engaging in, or being impacted by, council services
- The community would like more information to be shared via newsletters. They would like options to select and subscribe to newsletters on topics that are important to them
- The community often finds the provision of information to be too late (without enough warning of the impact)
- The three main barriers to community participation in decision marking are: (1) community members are unaware of consultations happening, (2) they are not sure their inputs have an impact, or (3) the form of engagement does not suit all community members. This can be due to lack of time, inconvenient location or the mode of engagement

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Community consultation | Summary of next steps

As core finding of the community consultation was the need to close the loop with the community (1) how their inputs have informed Council actions and (2) ongoing project updates to communicate how the actions are progressing. A template for this activity has been developed, with WSC to complete an update according to the level of commitment Council is comfortable providing to the community.

We seek to improve your experience of Council's communication, information provision, and decision making opportunities. Working with you, we will address these consultation findings through the following projects:

1. *Project 1*

2. *Project 2*

3. *Project 3*

Example of commitment to updating the Community:

The projects will be established and implemented over the next *TBA* months.

Progress updates will be published in the Council Newsletter quarterly. These updates will outline:

- Established project goals

- Implementation actions,

- Any opportunities for further consultation

- Measured outcomes

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Communications Strategy analysis

Following a desktop document review and validation session with the Corporate Relations teams, each Communications Strategy actions has been reclassified into one of three categories: 'Initiative', 'BAU activity or 'Outcome', and the status of those defined as initiatives has been indicated.

Strategy aim: To manage the Wingecarribee Shire Council brand and ensure Council messages are communicated accurately, effectively, proactively and consistently

OBJECTIVE	ACTION	CATEGORY[1]	STATUS
01. Ensure Council has proactive, deliberate and sustained communication with its audiences across divers communication channels	Implement a proactive and prioritised media strategy – focused on the areas of importance identified in the Community Satisfaction Survey and W2031	Initiative	In Progress
	Ensure information on all key decisions, projects, events and issues is communicated through a mixture of online and traditional tools	Outcome	NA
	Continue to identify and explore emerging communications methods and channels in-line with changing technology and community needs.	BAU Activity	NA
	Establish a process for submitting information to the Communications team for dissemination through various channels	Initiative	Not Started
	Resource the Communications team to ensure the actions in this strategy can be delivered	Initiative	In Progress
	Provide assistance for elected members in managing their own communication and engagement activities.	BAU Activity	NA
02. Clearly communicate what Council delivers. Through consistent messages and an engaging visual presence	Enforce the principles of the Style Guide and use of key messages in all communication	BAU Activity	NA
	Implement plain language communication across the organisation	Initiative	Not Started
	Ensure risk/crisis communication plans are in place to respond appropriately to a range of scenarios	Initiative	Not Started

OBJECTIVE	ACTION	CATEGORY[1]	STATUS
03. Ensure Council staff have the tools they need to be reputation ambassadors	Maintain a proactive program of internal communication	BAU Activity	NA
	Strengthen internal communications process, with an emphasis on improving links between Customer Services, Communications and Community Engagement staff	Outcome	NA
	Implement and review policies for media (including social media) and community engagement	Initiative	In Progress
	Ensure key staff are trained in delivering effective media interviews	Initiative	Not Started
	Review the structure of the Communications team to ensure it is best placed to deliver the Communication Strategy and meet organisational needs	Initiative	In Progress
	Create awareness of what the Communications team does and the many channels available to staff	Initiative	Not Started
	Ensure key elements of communication and engagement, including the Style Guide and this strategy, form part of new staff inductions	Initiative	Not Started
	Include communication competency as a key performance indicator for all key staff	Initiative	Not Started
04. Strengthen Council's partnership with the community through effective engagement	Celebrate community engagement successes	BAU Activity	NA
	Actively promote community engagement activities	BAU Activity	NA

[1]For the purpose of this analysis:
- **Initiative** refers to a one-off project or activity that can be implemented
- **BAU Activity** refers to an ongoing task that is either an established process or should be established in the future
- **Outcome** refers to a description of an outcome where no clear task or action s defined

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Community Engagement Strategy analysis

Following a desktop document review and validation session with the Corporate Relations teams, each Community Engagement Strategy actions has been reclassified into one of three categories: 'Initiative', 'BAU activity or 'Outcome', and the status of those defined as initiatives has been indicated.

Strategy aim: None defined

OBJECTIVE	ACTION	CATEGORY[1]	STATUS
01. Manage a proactive program of community engagement, ensuring all sectors of the community are included	**1.1** – Face to face engagement ~ Conduct information sessions, drop in kiosks or shopfronts to promote and engage with the community	BAU Activity	*NA*
	1.2 - Technology ~ Use technological advancements to reach further into the community and ensure feedback gathered is integrated into Council projects and decisions.	BAU Activity	*NA*
	1.3 - Inclusive and accessible ~ Ensure a broad mix of engagement channels are used including events, newspaper advertising, media releases, radio, website, public meetings, surveys and individual consultations in order to make public participation in decision making convenient.	BAU Activity	*NA*
	1.4 – Stakeholder Database ~ Maintain a database of community contacts for representative groups, venues and communication opportunities.	BAU Activity	*NA*
02. Ensure engagement at an appropriate level is built into all key projects and Decisions	**2.1** – Project planning ~ Implement a process to determine the level of engagement appropriate for each project and the techniques to be used.	**Initiative**	In Progress
	2.2 - Community engagement coordinator services ~ Implement a formal internal process for requesting the services of Council's Community Engagement Coordinator, to ensure community engagement work can be prioritised and appropriately resourced.	**Initiative**	Not Started
	2.3 – Councillor and Committee briefings ~ Provide information about the tools and techniques used to undertake community engagement so recommendations and/or resolutions are appropriate.	BAU Activity	*NA*

OBJECTIVE	ACTION	CATEGORY[1]	STATUS
03. Ensure Council staff have the tools they need for effective communication	**3.1** - Staff training ~ Ensure Council staff are appropriately trained in community engagement techniques and are informed about community engagement policies and guidelines.	BAU Activity	*NA*
	3.2 – Council reports ~ Ensure the 'community engagement' section in the Council Business Paper template is completed for each key decision and project.	BAU Activity	*NA*
	3.3 - Report on the outcome; Ensure the outcome of each community engagement activity is reported to participants in an appropriate way. This may include individual letters/emails or broad media releases or social media posts as required.	BAU Activity	*NA*
04. Strengthen Council's partnership with the community through effective engagement	**4.1** - Community engagement database ~ Create and maintain a database of community engagement activities to ensure valuable information about community engagement projects is collected for future reference.	BAU Activity	*NA*
	4.2 - Surveys on engagement and communication ~ Regularly seek feedback from the community on appropriate channels for engagement and communication, and refine activities accordingly.	**Initiative**	Not Started

[1]For the purpose of this analysis:
- **Initiative** refers to a one-off project or activity that can be implemented
- **BAU Activity** refers to an ongoing task that is either an established process or should be established in the future
- **Outcome** refers to a description of an outcome where no clear task or action s defined

Current state analysis | Detailed capability findings (1/4)

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Theme	Current state insights and findings	
Insight-driven strategies and actions	• **Lack of information sharing |** Data and information is not routinely shared between business units for the purposes of understanding cross-organisational impacts and devising strategies. This is limiting the ability to capitalise on service improvement opportunities, and further reinforces siloed operations. • **Lack of data governance |** There is no established approach for data collection and governance within Corporate Relations or across Council. Current biennial community research is performed without consideration of how the outcomes of the research can be leveraged to develop actionable next steps or support decision-making. • **Ad-hoc data collection |** Stakeholder data has not been embedded into processes or workflows. Measured metrics are not linked to any specific target KPIs (what good looks like) and so provide limited insights • **Technology limitations |** Data is stored across many disparate systems. Data extraction and analysis is performed manually as there is no integrated data analytics platform.	*There are significant flaws in the community research that was undertaken. Improving the community research would be a good starting point.'* – Internal customer
Innovative Services	• **Strategic documents not fit for purpose |** Strategic service documents are largely rolled-over at review cycle, with no proper consideration of business needs and contemporary practices. Implementation activities, if defined, are not assigned responsibility, and there is limited execution. • **Reactive services |** Service is focussed on responding to a high volume of Executive and/or Councillor and to a lesser extend business-unit media release requests (~15 releases a month). There is very little proactive content planning, and consideration of how channels across the business should be used to expand reach. • **Inconsistent service delivery |** No standardised processes to engage the service mean that different business units receive different level of support (from no support on one end of the spectrum, to support that involves the service undertaking specialist research in order to develop content). • **Graphic design |** Significant business demand exists for graphic design services in Corporate Relations, and two team members spend up to 15% of their time on this. Graphic design is not their area of expertise, however it is not outsourced due to budget constraints.	*"There is no time for working strategically. I'm often told this is the level I should be working at but I am trying to deliver BAU and support the business. The administrative and graphic support burden is heavy."* – Corporate Relations team member

Current state analysis | Detailed capability findings (2/4)

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Theme	Current state insights and findings

Experience Centricity by Design

- **Crisis communication |** There is limited focus on owning and driving the narrative around the Council's current political climate, in the context of repositioning Council and its purpose, and rebuilding trust. Service focus instead, is on tactical information provision such as announcements on Interim Administrator appointment.
- **Narrow view of stakeholder |** The service lists a broad set of stakeholder, but primarily focuses on residents. Other business units such as Destination Southern Highlands focus on other groups, with limited Corporate Relations collaboration. The service does not presently have authority (reporting lines, governance oversight or otherwise) over other business units to drive a unified approach.
- **Community engagement |** There are limited or no opportunities for the stakeholder to truly provide feedback (and feel heard) on Council direction and activities. There is limited understanding of customer needs in this space. Some of the stakeholders do not understand why and when their contribution is sought, and what impacts this has.
- **No single view of customer |** Data collected by customer facing service providers (Customer Service, individual business units) throughout Council is not formally synthesised and shared to develop insights into customer segments and their concerns and needs.

Problems include lack of proper consideration for needs of outlying villages especially for funding. Mayor did not even know Balmoral was in the shire after the bushfires! – External customer

Seamless interactions

- **Duplication of capabilities and tasks |** Communications, community engagement and events management are being performed by various stakeholders throughout Council on an ad-hoc basis, often without the knowledge of the Corporate Relations team, leading to duplication of effort, and inconsistency in approach.
- **Conflicting messaging |** Communications can be published externally without informing relevant teams. This results in poor customer experience, for instance, when customers contact the Customer Service for clarification of information, and the team is not informed.
- **Impact is not measured well |** there are some measures of engagement (e.g. e-newsletter open rate), but there is no documented view of what good looks.

"Communication goes out to customers about specific events without background information being provided to Customer Service and how to direct further enquiries" – Internal customer

Current state analysis | Detailed capability findings (3/4)

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Theme	Current state insights and findings
Responsive operations	• **Lengthy approvals process |** There is a lengthy approvals process for business unit requests with sign-off required by 4 to 6 stakeholders (the requestor, their manager, their group manager, the General Manager and occasionally the CFO and a third party if relevant to them). This impacts the timeliness of the communications. • **Workflows are not formalised |** There is some understanding of the Corporate Relations service offering, but no formal processes or procedures to guide the Council on when and how to engage the service, and set expectations around timelines, roles and responsibilities. This reinforces the reactive service delivery. • **No prioritisation process |** There is no formalised request prioritisation process for external communications and this results in requestors competing for service support. Priority is sometimes assigned base on requestor seniority rather than the objective importance of the request.
Aligned and empowered workforce	• **Service expectations are unclear |** There is lack of clarity within the Corporate Relations team on the strategic direction for the service and refined expectations under new leadership. • **Limited role autonomy |** Many layers of approvals for routine communications signals to the service staff a lack of trust in their judgment and negatively impacts morale. • **Lack of cooperation between business units |** Some business units are reluctant to engage the corporate services team for communications and community engagement support preventing unified messaging to customers across the Council and impacting the quality of the customer experience. There is no centralised events management service within the Council, limiting the ability for business unit to coordinated an optimise events engagement. • **Services are not well understood |** There is a lack of clarity in some areas of the Council around the services provided by the Corporate Relations team and the value they add.

We have competing demands. We are supporting multiple projects at the same time, all "urgent" – Corporate Relations team member

"Some staff avoid working with us - perhaps they feel restricted in what they can do within framework of style guide, policy etc" – Corporate Relations team member

Current state analysis | Detailed capability findings (4/4)

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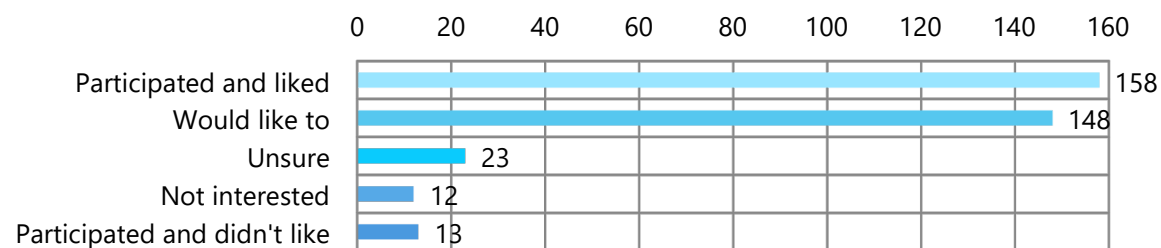| Theme	Current state insights and findings	
Digitally enabled technology architecture	• **No single source of truth |** Council information is stored in a number of disconnected systems. There is no integration infrastructure for a fit-for-purpose intranet to support a 'single source of truth' for operational and strategic knowledge management either internally or externally. This has created information sourcing challenges for both staff and the community. • **No effective monitoring of community sentiment |** Some customer engagement data is captured via social media channels, however there is no customer sentiment analysis. • **Limited CRM capabilities |** Customer request are currently managed in two separate systems and digital workflows to complete requests do not consider the end-to-end customer journey (e.g. road repair requests are marked at 'resolved' once a repair has been scheduled, before it has been completed). • **No content owner for the main Council website |** There is no clearly defined owner of content on the official Council website. Multiple staff and business units independently upload and maintain content with no oversight of content recency or relevance. Additionally, content is not aligned between the main website and the six supplementary Council websites. This has led to difficulty for both customers and staff in locating and validating information.	*"As a resident & business owner I have struggled obtaining information that I need. For example, I needed a form to put a chalkboard outside my shop couldn't find it on the website. When I approached customer services they also couldn't find it"* – Internal customer
Integrated partner and alliance ecosystem	• **Graphic design is done by Corporate Relations |** Business units currently engage the Corporate Relations team to support graphic design for template changes and development. This is outside the defined scope of Corporate Relations formal training and responsibilities and is impacting the quality and timeliness of other services. There is opportunity for outsourcing of this service to a provider on retainer. .	*"A lot of time is spent on adjusting templates for internal customer needs. It takes longer because we are not 'professional' graphic designers"* – Corporate Relations team member

Survey results | Online vs offline engagement preferences

Survey participants were asked to indicate 'Which of the following community engagement activities conducted by Council have you participated in or would like to?' for a series of community engagement options. Participants generally indicated a preference for online options, with the exception of workshops where online and face-to-face had equal preference. However, as this data was collected in an online forum this is potentially a causal factor in the skew towards online preferences.
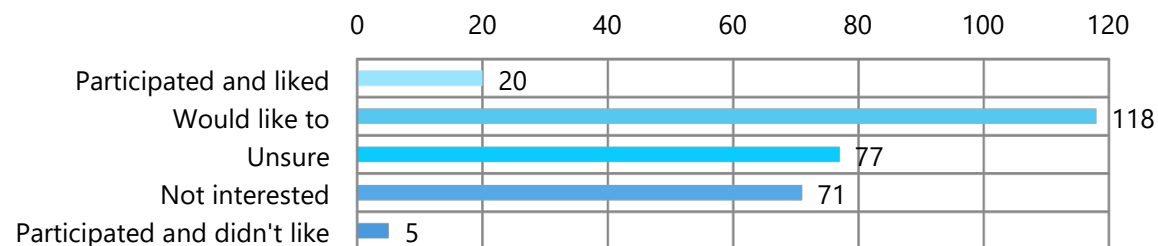
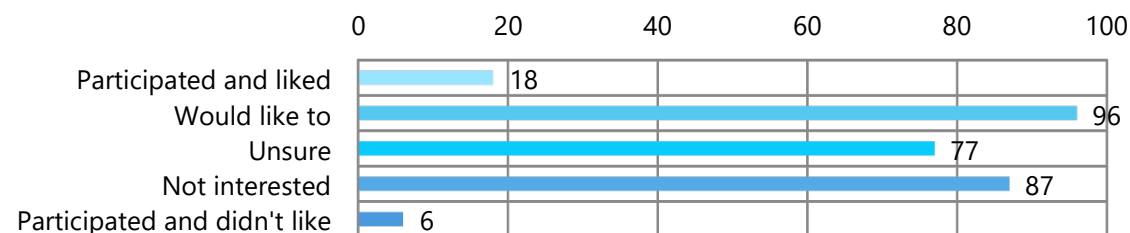## ONLINE ENGAGEMENT

Survey - online version

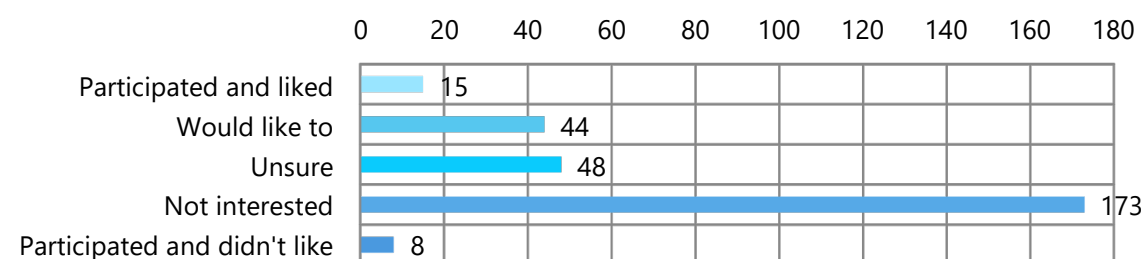| Category	Value
Participated and liked	158
Would like to	148
Unsure	23
Not interested	12
Participated and didn't like	13

Online meeting or QandA session

Category	Value
Participated and liked	20
Would like to	118
Unsure	77
Not interested	71
Participated and didn't like	5

Workshop - online

Category	Value
Participated and liked	18
Would like to	96
Unsure	77
Not interested	87
Participated and didn't like	6

OFFLINE / IN-PERSON ENGAGEMENT

Survey - via telephone

Category	Value
Participated and liked	15
Would like to	44
Unsure	48
Not interested	173
Participated and didn't like	8

Drop-in info session or kiosk

Category	Value
Participated and liked	37
Would like to	86
Unsure	67
Not interested	84
Participated and didn't like	9

Workshop - face to face

Category	Value
Participated and liked	26
Would like to	92
Unsure	81
Not interested	89
Participated and didn't like	4

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CURRENT STATE ANALYSIS

VOICE OF THE COMMUNITY

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

RECOMMENDATIONS

TRANSFORMATIONAL INITIATIVES

APPENDIX
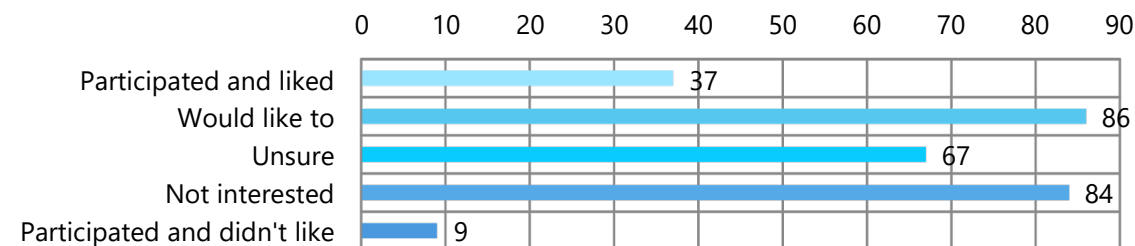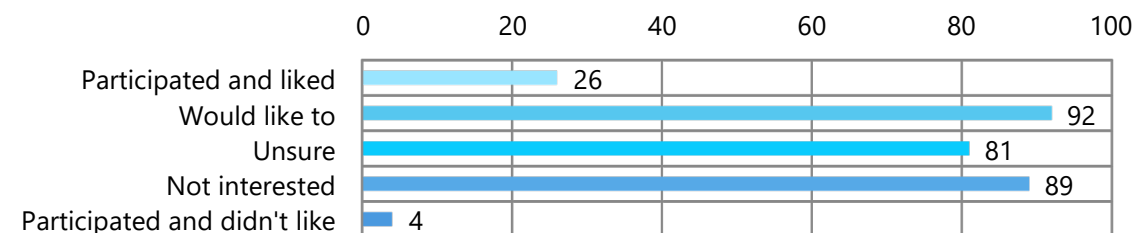
Key contacts for this report

Liz Watts

Partner, NSW & QLD Local Government Lead

KPMG

E: ewatts@kpmg.com.au

Tamara Djokic

Associate Director

KPMG

E: tdjokic@kpmg.com.au

kpmg.com.au

kpmg.com.au/app