

Foreword from the Chair



The Infrastructure Advisory Committee provides advice and guidance on the development of strategies, and identifies challenges and opportunities in relation to built and natural facilities and systems within the Newcastle LGA. The committee has an overarching focus on improving community interaction with our infrastructure and facilities, aiming to ensure that inclusivity and accessibility are at the forefront of design and infrastructure management. The committee also provides a valuable opportunity for City of Newcastle (CN) Councillors and staff to build collaborative relationships with key government and private stakeholders, resulting in improved outcomes including knowledge sharing of best practice strategies and transparency for the Newcastle community.

At the first meeting for the year on 6 February 2024, committee members agreed to continue with the same three strategic focus areas from 2023, recognising they are still significant areas of growth and infrastructure development/renewal for the Newcastle LGA:

- Coastal Management - Environment and Built Infrastructure,
- Integrated and Accessible Transport, and,
- Sports Infrastructure.

The committee was briefed on and discussed key projects planned or in delivery across the LGA, including; sporting facilities, parks and playspaces, local centres, Newcastle Ocean Baths, Bathers Way, walking and mobility plan, roads and footpaths, fleet transition, and more.

One such example of a major project was the Newcastle Ocean Baths. In February 2024 the committee reflected on the reopening of the baths, after the successful first stage pool area renewal project. During the July 2024 meeting, the committee received a further update on this project, as community engagement and design of the second stage works had commenced.



Newcastle Ocean Baths pool - reopened after Stage 1 of the renewal project

Special thanks to the committee's stakeholder members, who provided valuable presentations and insights throughout the year. Stakeholder participation and input is critical to achieving improved outcomes for the local Newcastle community and wider region, and allows for stakeholders to work in collaboration.

During the year, Transport for NSW provided a detailed update on major projects in the region, including the M1 Extension to Raymond Terrace, Hexham Straight project, and the Rankin Park to Jesmond section of the Newcastle Inner City bypass.

Keolis Downer advised they had successfully onboarded new bus drivers to meet service levels (materially refreshing their staff), and were also engaging in a number of community initiatives, such as the open day celebration of the 100-year anniversary of the Hamilton depot, and public safety campaigns.

Hunter Water provided updates on the proposed new desalination plant in neighbouring Lake Macquarie LGA, their IPART pricing submission, and an overview of their 'hotspots' program. While Hunter Water routinely achieves its IPART operating licence performance targets, the hotspots program aims to improve services for a small number of highly impacted customers across Newcastle and the wider Hunter region.

After another big year of infrastructure delivery across our city, I'd like to pass on sincere thanks to all Committee members and guests for their time and effort to ensure Newcastle's infrastructure development continues in a way that benefits our entire community.

Membership



Lord Mayor
Cr Nelmes



Cr Winney-Baartz
Chair



Cr Richardson
Deputy Chair



Cr Wark
Councillor Member



John Merrell
Community Representative



Emmanuel Genlot
Keolis Downer



Bryn Hernandez
Ausgrid



Corinne Thompson
Transport for NSW



Robert Main
Hunter Water

Objective of the committee

1. To provide advice on development of strategies to ensure Council has robust infrastructure management practices and policies.
2. To provide advice on capital works and maintenance program performance including roads, structures and drainage infrastructure.
3. To provide advice on the protection and enhancement of natural infrastructure including waterways, floodplains, coastal, biodiversity, air quality, natural areas, habitat corridors, and efficiency and integrated water management.

Summary of key items of business considered

Date of meeting	Business item
Tuesday 6 February 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Endorsement of strategic focus areas for 2024• Endorsement of the 2023 Annual Report• Endorsement of the 2024 Forward Program• Brief and discussion on key projects and programs, including;<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Local Centre upgrade program○ Newcastle Ocean Baths (Stage 1)○ Bathers Way South Newcastle Beach
Tuesday 30 July 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Brief and discussion on key projects and programs, including (combined April & July Agenda);<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Sporting facilities○ Parks & playspaces○ Newcastle 500 remediation○ Roads & footpaths○ Stabilisation works at Memorial Drive, The Hill○ Western Corridor road upgrades○ Walking & mobility plan○ Fleet transition• Resolved to reduce the number of meetings in 2024 due to the upcoming election in September.• Resolved that the 2024 annual report would be endorsed 'out of sessions'.

Standing agenda items include:

- Adoption of draft minutes and actions arising
- Sports Infrastructure Working Party update
- Stakeholder updates
- General business

Summary of key achievements

The committee has continued to build on the strong interagency partnership that was established at its formation in 2022. This partnership enables collaboration and cross agency sharing of information along with input from our community representatives. The committee receives regular updates from stakeholder representatives on key issues and upcoming projects. This has enabled a forum where strategic projects from CN, other government agencies and businesses are discussed, input is provided, and cross agency collaboration is facilitated.

In 2024, the committee meetings provided an avenue for CN and stakeholders to collaborate and knowledge share to reach better outcomes for the community, such as exploring sustainable water usage in CN renewed buildings, and improved processes for works around stakeholder assets.

The Sports Infrastructure Working Party (SIWP) was established under the Infrastructure Advisory Committee in June 2022. In 2024 the SIWP held 4 meetings. This forum enables CN to more effectively collaborate with external stakeholders regarding proposed sporting infrastructure upgrades and contributes to the successful implementation of the city's ten year [Strategic Sports Plan](#).

Chaired by Cr Peta Winney-Bartz, the working party established an Expressions of Interest (EOI) process in 2023, with the intent to streamline the grants applications for sporting clubs and make it easier for CN and the SWIP to assist and provide comment during the application process and provide owner's consent.



Throughout 2024, the benefits of the new EOI system were realised, with grant funded works underway or completed at several sporting facilities, such as Darling Street Oval (new grandstand pictured) and Passmore Oval.

The SWIP provided guidance and comment on the projects at these locations, which have now reached completion and have materially

improved the amenities for all users, with significant improvements for women and girls taking part in sport. The new facilities have experienced high levels of use by local sporting clubs, and the SWIP has received overwhelming positive feedback

Other SIWP agenda items include updates and discussion on grants and projects, implementation of the Strategic Sports Plan, and review of masterplans.

Summary of performance and governance

Date of Meeting	Quorum achieved	Members in attendance	Agenda circulated to members, published on CN's website	Declaration of conflicts of interest listed as agenda item	Minutes circulated to members, adopted by the committee, and published on CN's website
Tuesday 6 February 2024	Quorate	Cr Peta Winney-Baartz, Councillor Member (Chair) Cr Deahnna Richardson, Councillor Member (Deputy Chair) Emmanuel Genlot - General Manager, Keolis Downer Robert Main - Group Manager Planning & Engineering, Hunter Water Corporation John Merrell - Community Representative	Yes	Yes	Yes
Tuesday 2 April 2024 - Meeting Cancelled (Content combined with July Agenda)		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Tuesday 30 July 2024	Quorate	Cr Peta Winney-Baartz, Councillor Member (Chair) Cr Deahnna Richardson, Councillor Member (Deputy Chair) Emmanuel Genlot - General Manager, Keolis Downer Robert Main - Group Manager Planning & Engineering, Hunter Water Corporation John Merrell - Community Representative Corinne Thompson - Senior Manager, Community and Place Partner, Transport for NSW	Yes	Yes	Yes* Adopted outside of sessions