

Information for Prospective Candidates on Becoming a Councillor

2024

Introduction

Welcome to this Powerpoint for Prospective Candidates. Its purpose is to provide basic information on Fairfield City Council and the important role it plays within the Fairfield community.

Also, it introduces you to how Local Government in NSW works and the role and responsibilities of being a councillor and who to contact if you are considering standing for election.

Briefing Overview

This presentation provides information on the following topics:

- Local Government – What is it?
- Roles and Responsibilities of Mayor, Councillors and General Manager
- What resources are available to Councillors?
- Making Decisions
- About Fairfield City Local Government Area
- About Fairfield City Council
- How to become a candidate – Returning Officer

Local Government

What is it?

There are 3 arms of government within Australia consisting of Federal, State and Local Government.

The Federal Government is responsible for the conduct of national affairs. Its areas of responsibility are defence and foreign affairs; trade, commerce and currency; immigration; postal services, telecommunications and broadcasting; air travel; most social services and pensions.

State Government is responsible for everything not listed as a Federal responsibility. Major State responsibilities include schools, hospitals, conservation and environment, roads, railways and public transport, public works, agriculture and fishing, industrial relations, community services, sport and recreation, consumer affairs, police, prisons and emergency services.

Local Government is concerned with matters close to our homes, such as building regulations and development, public health, local roads and footpaths, parks and playing fields, libraries, local environmental issues, waste disposal and many community services.

About Local Government

How do Federal, State and Local Government relate?



Federal Government

Foreign Affairs	Defence
Trade relations	Immigration
Pensions	



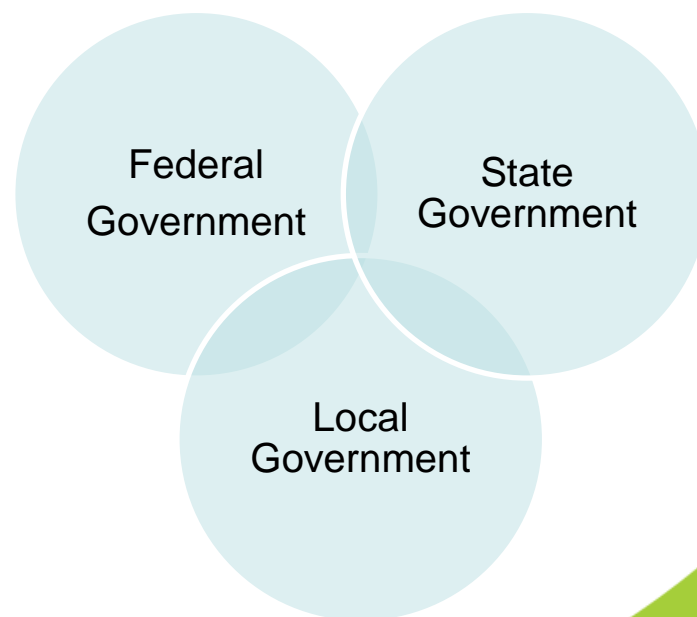
State Government

Public Hospitals	Transport
Public Schools	State Roads
Emergency Services	

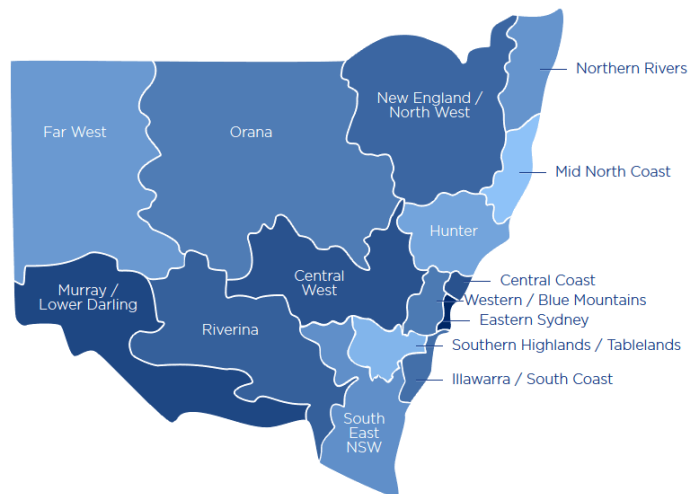


Local Government

Planning	Local roads
Parks	Libraries
Waste	Enforcement



About Local Government in NSW



128 Councils and 14 County Councils

+55,000 people employed

+\$198b in assets (of which \$176.3b is infrastructure)

NSW Local Government consists of 128 Councils and 14 County Councils. These employ over 55,000 people providing a wide range of services to their local communities. Councils own in excess of \$198 billion in assets of which \$176.3 billion consists of infrastructure such as roads, bridges, community halls, leisure centres, buildings etc.

What can Local Government do?

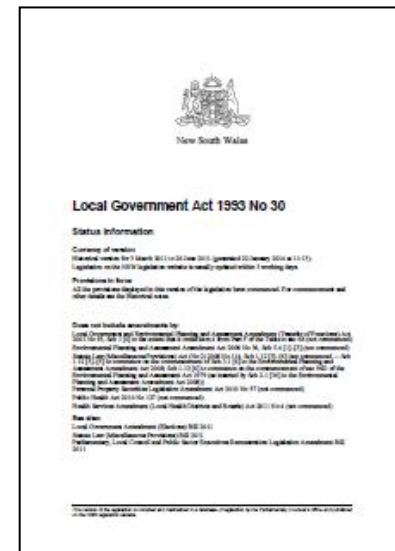
Legislative Framework

Councils are essentially ‘creatures of statute’ in that they can only do what legislation permits them to do or not do. There are 67 Acts which apply to the functions and responsibilities of NSW Councils. The primary Act is the Local Government Act 1993 which sets out the governance framework for councils. This act is very specific about the roles of Councillors and clearly stats the rights and responsibilities of elected members.

67 different Acts administered by **27** different State agencies

- *Local Government Act 1993*
- *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*
- *Roads Act 1993*
- *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997*
- *Swimming Pools Act 1992*
- *Companion Animals Act 1998*

http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/nsw/consol_act/lga1993182/



What does Local Government do?

Councils provide a wide range of services to their local community making them multi-faced businesses providing for the day-to-day needs of residents within their Local Government Area.



**Planning &
Sustainable
Development**



**Providing &
Maintaining
Infrastructure**



**Protecting
the
Environment**



**Providing
Community
Services &
Development**

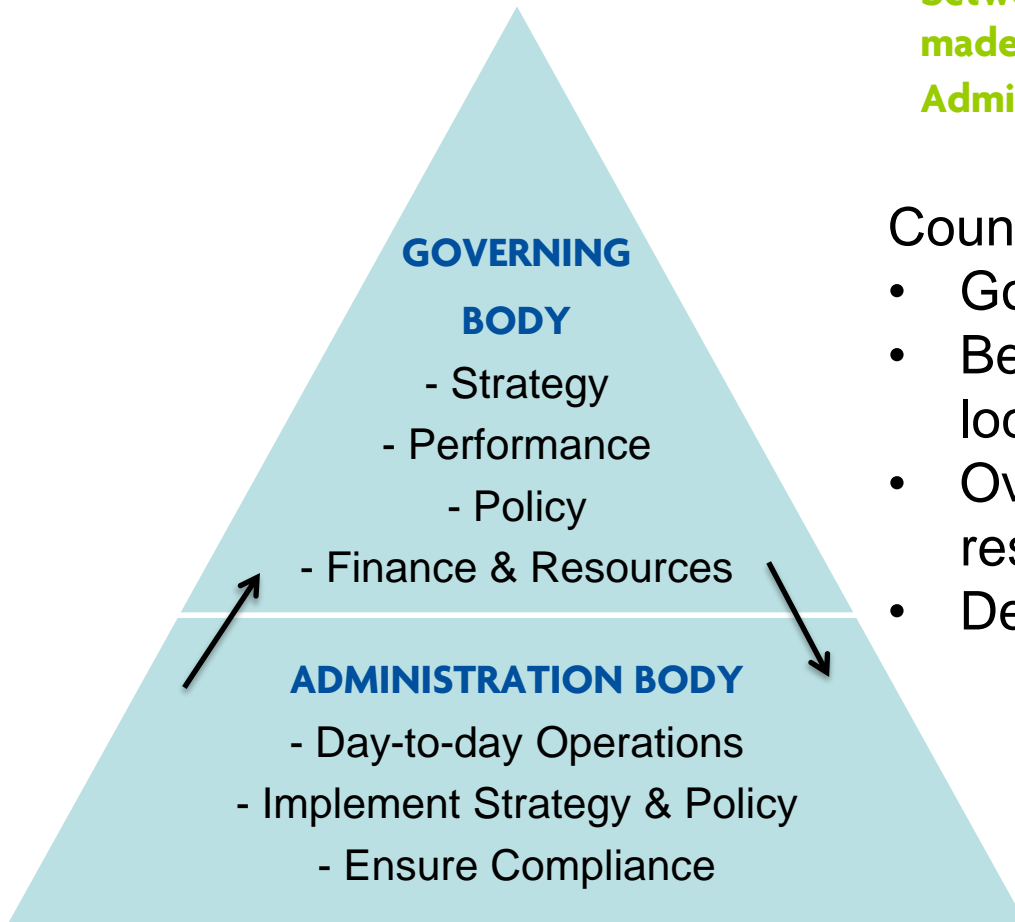


**Safeguarding
public health**



How does Local Government work?

Governance Structure



The Local Government Act separates the powers between Council (the Governing Body) which is made up of the Elected Members and Council (the Administration Body) which is made up of the Staff.

Council's role is to:

- Govern local government affairs
- Be responsible for the performance of local government's functions
- Oversee the allocation of finances and resources
- Determine local government policies

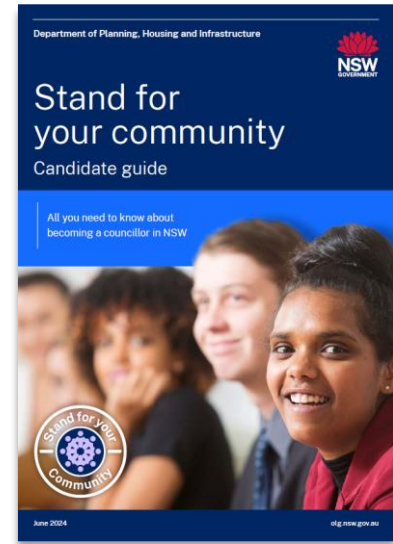
Becoming a Councillor – Candidate Tool

The Office of Local Government (OLG) has developed a Candidate Tool to provide basic information for anyone considering standing for election. This information can be found on the OLG website

<https://www.olg.nsw.gov.au/public/local-government-elections/become-a-councillor/>

OLG has also produced a ***Stand for your community – Candidate Guide***

If you are considering standing as a Candidate look at these important resources to get a good understanding of the roles and responsibilities of being a Councillor



Role and responsibilities of the Mayor, Councillors and General Manager

Governing body

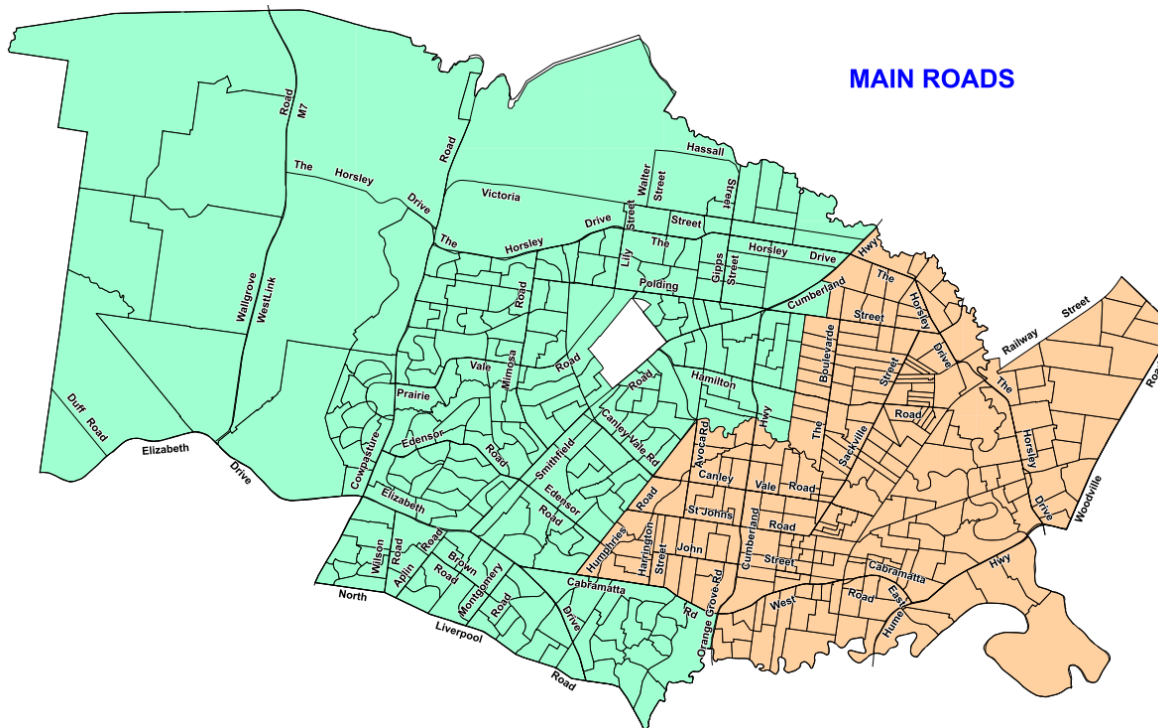
Fairfield City Council

The Governing Body of Fairfield City Council consists of the following:

Made up of 13 elected representative including:

- A popularly elected Mayor
- 6 Councillors from each of the 2 Wards

Parks Ward



Fairfield/Cabravale Ward

What is the role of the Mayor?

Leader of the community – Popularly Elected



Same as Councillors plus:

- Preside at meetings of the council
- Carry out civic and ceremonial functions
- Spokesperson of the Council
- Exercise urgent policy making functions
- Exercise other functions, as determined by Council

What is the role of a Councillor?

As a member of Council:

- Provide a civic leadership role in the development of the Community Strategic Plan, Delivery Program and Operational Plan
- Direct and control the affairs of Council in accordance with relevant acts
- Govern finances
- Determine public policies
- Review performance of the Council and its delivery of services
- Participate in decision-making processes at meetings

As an elected person:

- Represent the interests of electors, ratepayers and residents
- Provide leadership and guidance to the community
- Facilitate communication between the community and the Council

Councillors responsibilities?

What it means to be a Councillor



- Attending meetings – most Tuesday nights
- Being informed – making big \$\$ decisions
- Voting at meetings
- Being aware of local issues
- Planning for the future

Councillor's Accountability?

Accountability to the community

Councillor accountability is established through the Code of Conduct. The Code sets out the ethical standards and general conduct obligations expected from elected members.

Food for thought:

*People who are prompted to stand because of **one particular local issue** need to appreciate that they will be responsible for a much wider range of issues, if elected*

Model Code of Conduct

- Ethical Standards
- Abide by Council Policies
- Public Access to Information
- Disclosure of financial interest
- Disclosure of interest affecting impartiality
- Follow decisions made by Council at Committee / Council meetings
- Cannot get involved in day-to-day operations of the Council

What it takes to be a Councillor

Many Councillors report that they spend 10-15 hours each week on council activities. This time commitment depends upon the size of the council and the issues that arise. Councillors are expected to attend all council meetings. Council does provide an Induction Program for Councillors and also provides for training and development as required.

Skills in:

- Communication
- Problem solving and analytical
- Teamwork
- Time management
- Understanding financial and reporting requirements
- Engage with your community
- Understand Legislation
- Understanding Social Justice Principles
- Asking questions
- Representing the whole community (not just the Ward that elects you)
- Ethical and accountable behaviour

Challenges of being a Councillor

Being a Councillor does have its challenges. Set out below are what some of these are:

- Time Commitment:** Community consultation, preparing for meetings, reading and being informed
- Decisions:** Some decisions are not popular
- Balance:** Individual constituents needs with those of the community
- Team:** Decisions are made as a collective group of Councillors
- Knowledge:** Expected to know and make decisions on a broad range of issues which are often technical
- Legislation:** Governed by legislations which establish the decision making rules
- Involvement:** Cannot make decision on things that you have a personal interest in
- Competing Priorities:** Public interests vs personal interests

Role of the General Manager and Staff

The General Manager is the Chief Executive Officer of the organisation who is responsible for implementing the policies and decisions adopted by Council. Under the Local Government Act the General Manager is the senior employee of the Council and is the only member of staff selected and appointed by the Council

General Manager

- Ensuring the efficient and effective operation of the Council's organisation and the implementation of decisions of the Council.
- Assisting the Council with the development and implementation of the Strategic Plans and Policies
- Running the day-to-day operations of the Council
- Appointing Staff
- Directing and dismissing staff
- Exercising functions which are delegated by the Council

Staff

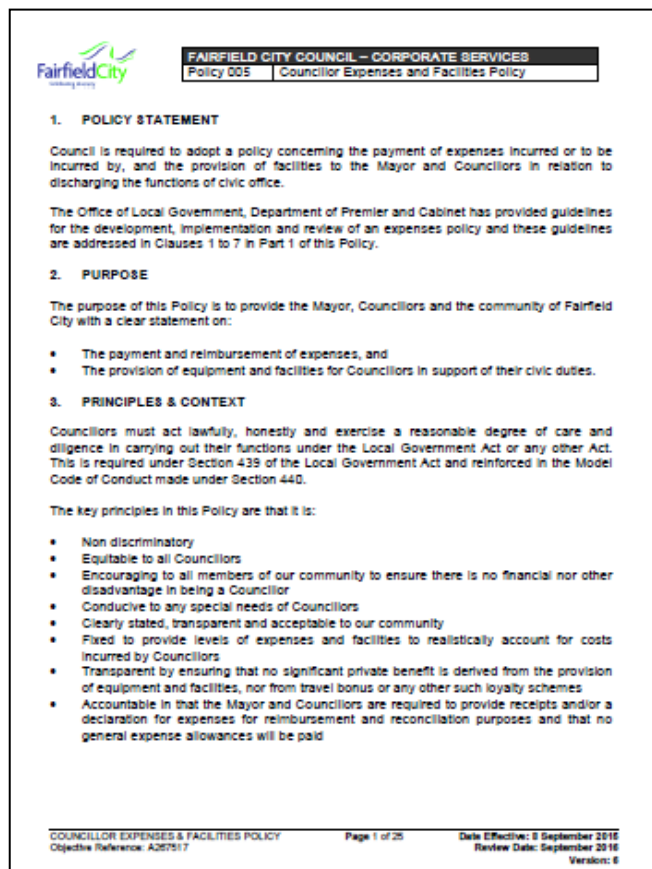
- Day-to-day operations of the Council, to implement Council policies and other decisions, as directed by the General Manager

What resources are available to Councillors?

To ensure that Councillors can perform their duties adequately a range of resources are made available to them. The following slides outline what these are.

What fees are provided?

Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policy



In accordance with Section 248 of the Local Government Act, Council must fix its annual fees for Fairfield that is classified as a big metropolitan council.

- In 2024, Fairfield Council Councillors will be entitled to receive \$33,810 per year and the Mayor \$98,510 per year.

What expenses are provided?

Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policy

Expenses covered may include:

- Training and development
- Conferences and seminars
- Travel
- Phone calls and internet use associated with councillor duties
- Child care associated with councillor duties

What equipment is provided?

Councillor Expenses and Facilities Policy

If required:

- Councillors' room and parking
- Mobile phone
- Printer/Photocopier
- Stationary: business cards and letterhead
- IT: laptop device

NOTE: If a Councillor has their own technology Council will work with them to make information available on these devices if required. Councillors have the ability to claim a rebate on these use of these devices.

What training and development is available?

- Fairfield City Council will provide comprehensive induction for all successful candidates
- **Councillor Professional Development Program** will be developed for each Councillor based on individual needs, skills and knowledge
- Resources are also provided by the Office of Local Government
- Courses are provided by Local Government NSW (LGNSW) and others

Making Decisions

The majority of a councillor's work involves making important decisions about a council's direction and development. It is critical for all councillors to have the skills and information needed to make well-informed decisions that benefit the council and the whole community.

Council decisions are made at Council and Committee meetings.

- **Ordinary Council** meets on the 4th Tuesday of the month
- Both **Services** and **Outcomes** committees meets on the 2nd Tuesday of the month

On the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of the month there are **Councillor Briefings** – which provide opportunities for presentation and Q&A on policy development and complex matters that will come before Committee or Council.

Traffic Committee meets bi-monthly

Sister City Committee Meets as required

Advisory Committees and **Business Engagement Committees** occur at varying time – for instance Youth Advisory Committee meets monthly while the Mayor's Crime Prevention Committee occurs quarterly. Nominations for these are considered by Council at the September meetings each year.

Council's Committee Structures

Meetings operate under a Code of Meeting Practice



About Fairfield City Local Government Area



102km²
27 Suburbs

A snapshot – Fairfield City

A Snapshot of Fairfield City

209,030

Estimated population 2020



249,523

Projected population 2041

18.36%
projected increase from estimated 2020 population

Fast Facts

A DIVERSE COMMUNITY



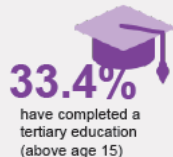
HOUSING CHOICE



STRONG ECONOMY



A RESILIENT COMMUNITY



Source: Fairfield City Council Community Profile compiled by .id the population experts.

Cabrogal people of the Darug nation are the traditional custodians of Fairfield City

The best thing about living in Fairfield is the multiculturalism

Fairfield is one of the most disadvantaged metropolitan LGA



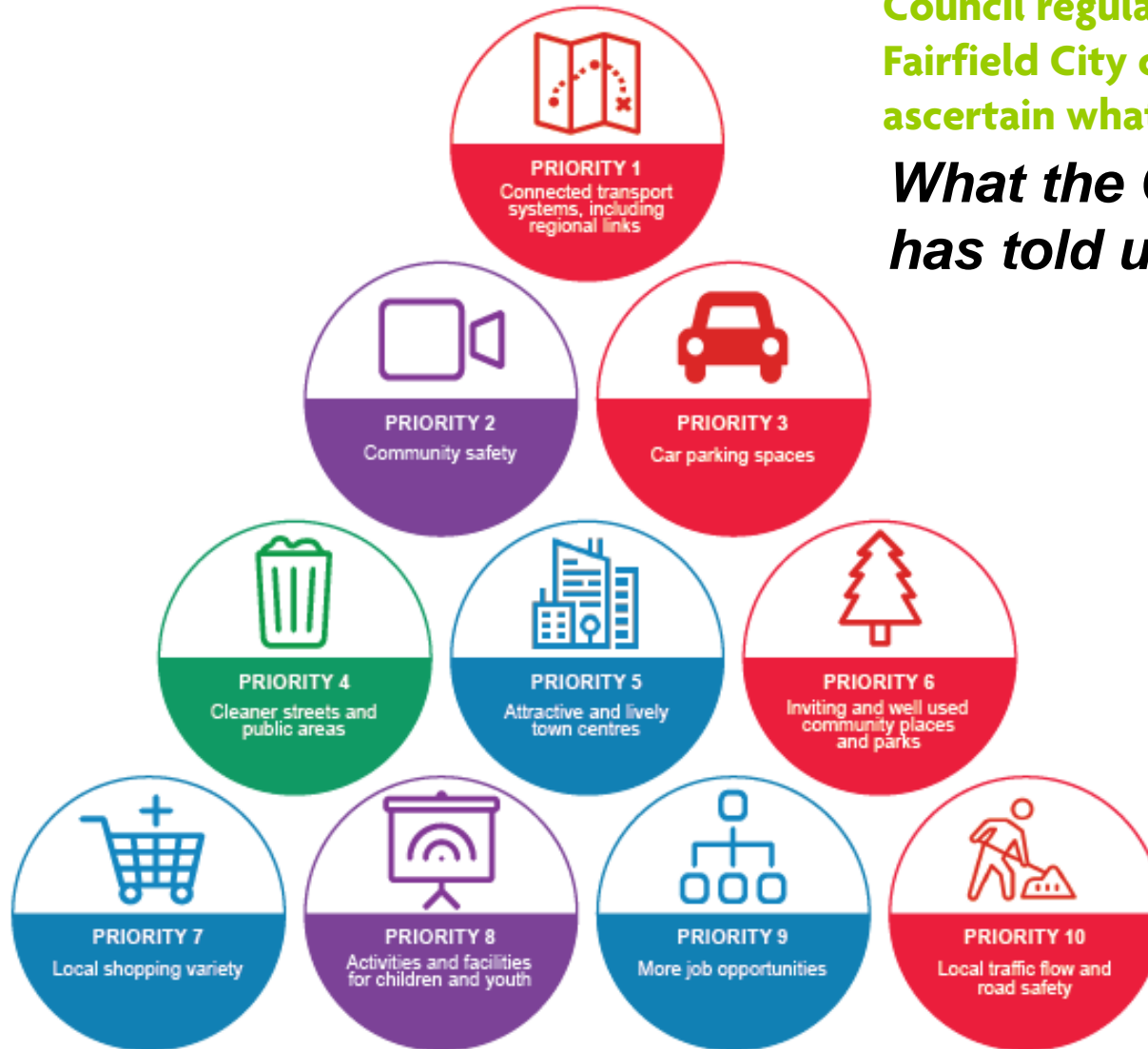
Community's Vision

We are Fairfield City – a welcoming, safe and diverse community where we are proud to belong, invest and prosper

Top Ten Community Priorities 2022-2032

Council regularly consults the Fairfield City community to ascertain what their priorities are.

What the Community has told us



About Fairfield City Council

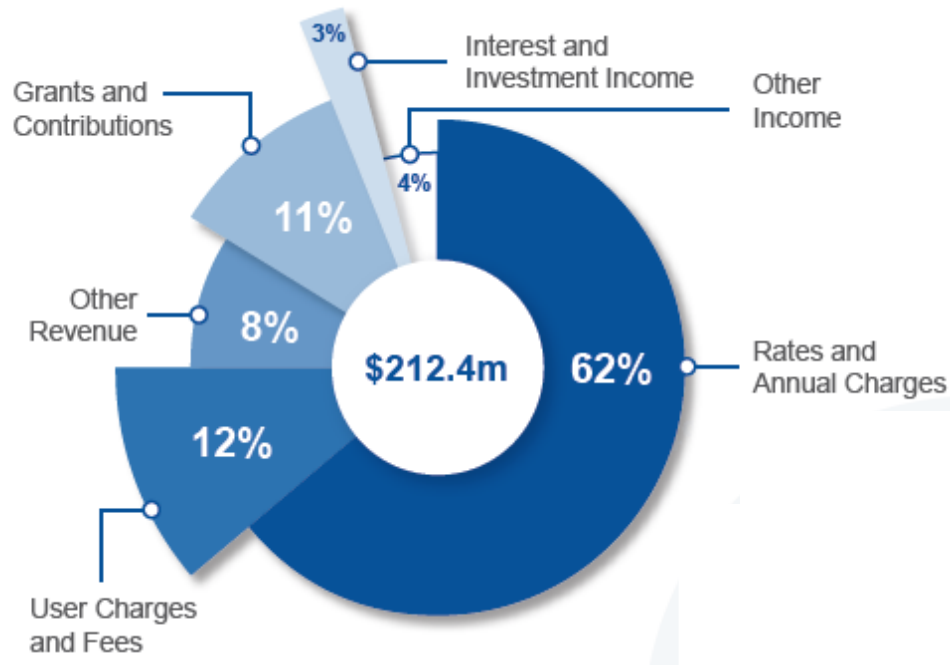
A snapshot of Fairfield City Council – Income and Expenditure

2024/25 Operating Income and Expenditure (overview)

- \$212.4 million in income – 62% rates
- \$212.3 million in expenditure
- \$83.416 million capital investment
- \$0.103 million operating surplus

Where does the money come from?

How is Fairfield City Council funded?



- Rates and Annual Charges
- Fees and Charges
- Financial Assistance Grants
- Borrowings and Investment
- Various Grants
- Commercial Enterprises

Integrated Planning and Reporting



Integrated Planning & Reporting is an important initiative introduced by the NSW Government. It is based upon the concept of community planning where the community sets the strategic direction via a Vision and long term aspirations which is set out in a Community Strategic Plan. FCC addresses these via 5 Themes which are set out in the following slides.

Theme 1 Community Wellbeing

Goal	Fairfield City Council Services
A safe community	Museum and Gallery Property and Community Facilities Social and Cultural Development Environmental and Public Health Showground and Golf Course Children and Family Services Street and Public Amenities Cleaning CCTV – Camera Program Compliance, Investigation and Enforcement Waste Management Leisure Centres Library Services
A proud diverse community of many cultures that is valued and celebrated	
Healthy and active community	
An inclusive city with access to opportunities and facilities for our community	
Strengthen relationships and partnerships within our community	

Theme 2 Places & Infrastructure

Goal	Fairfield City Council Services
An accessible and liveable city	Asset Management – Civil and Built Place and Economic Management
Inviting and well used open spaces	Building Control and Compliance Construction and Contracts Management Infrastructure, Construction and Maintenance
Community assets and infrastructure are well managed into the future	Asset Management – Open Space Strategic Land Use Planning Development Planning City Connect Bus Social and Cultural Development Emergency Risk Management Catchment Management Major Projects Built Resources Surveying

Theme 3 Environmental Sustainability

Goal	Fairfield City Council Services
A sustainable natural environment	Catchment Management Waste Education and Environmental Sustainability Sustainable Resource Centre
An environmentally aware and active community	
Environmental compliance standards are met	

Theme 4 Strong & Resilient Economy

Goal	Fairfield City Council Services
Range of resilient businesses	Place and Economic Management Waste Management Property Development Fund Social and Cultural Development
Attractive and lively city	
Diverse employment and job opportunities	

Theme 5 Good Governance and Leadership

Goal	Fairfield City Council Services
Decision-making processes are open and transparent	Access to Information Corporate Business Improvement Civic and Councillor Services Integrated Planning and Reporting Information Technology Information and Records Management Human Resources and Payroll Governance Customer Service Procurement, Fleet and Stores Communications Social and Cultural Development Insurance
A well engaged and informed community	
Fairfield City is financially sustainable and responsible	

How to become a Candidate?

All local government candidates have obligations under *The Electoral Funding Act 2018* NSW. Visit the **NSW Office of Local Government** and the **NSW Electoral Commission** websites for more information about becoming a Councillor.

Key Dates

Monday 5 August	6.00pm	Nominations Open Postal Vote Applications open
	6pm	Close of Rolls
Wednesday 14 August	12noon	NOMINATION DAY - Close of nominations Registration of Electoral Material commences
Thursday 15 August	2pm	Ballot Paper draw
Monday 19 August	6.00pm	Candidate Information Session with Returning Officer
Friday 6 September	5pm	Registration of Election Material closes
Saturday 7 September		Pre-poll voting opens – 4 venues
Monday 9 September	5pm	Postal vote applications close
Friday 13 September	6pm	Pre-poll voting closes
Saturday 14 September	8am-6pm	ELECTION DAY
Friday 27 September	6pm	Return of Postal Votes closes

Returning Officer

Election Manager

Name: Richard Kidd, Australian Election Company

Contact number: 1800 224 420

Address: Unit 10, 18-20 Cessna Drive Caboolture QLD 4510

Email: rkidd@austelect.com

Returning Officer

Name: Milan Kuban

Contact number: 9598 8660

Email: Fairfield.ro@austelect.com

Deputy Returning Officer

Name: Allan Wilcox

Contact number: 9598 8660

Email: Fairfield.ro2@austelect.com

Election Office

Cottage at the rear of Fairfield Showground
443 Smithfield Road Prairiewood NSW 2176



QUESTIONS

**For further details contact
Governance on 9725 0226**