



Policy Owner: Director Community and Library Services

Category: Operational

Direction: 4. Our Social Vitality

1. STATEMENT OF INTENT

- 1.1 To provide a community information service to support residents, workers, organisations and visitors to North Sydney local government area.
- 1.2 To raise awareness of local services, programs, events, activities and facilities, and enable access by all members of the community.
- 1.3 To support the objectives of North Sydney Council's community plans, particularly regarding targeted population groups and respond to community need as expressed in consultation with the community.
- 1.4 To make use of pre-existing infrastructure and gathering points (bus stops) to strengthen the dissemination of community information.

2. ELIGIBILITY

- 2.1 All individuals and community groups have equal access to information without discrimination
- 2.2 The Community Noticeboard Program is provided for non-commercial services operating in the North Sydney local government area and Council gives priority to Council and Community Centre events and information, local community events, community services and non-profit groups.
- 2.3 Posters, flyers and notices advertising commercial products, goods and services, private businesses, personal for sale items, wanted items, notices of an overtly religious or political nature and private messages are generally not accepted. Exceptions are made for information deemed to be of value to target groups, as identified in Council social and strategic plans and associated policies.

3. DEFINITIONS

- 3.1 Website - Council's website www.northsydney.nsw.gov.au

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- 3.2 LINC'S Community Information Database - is a commercial online database product.
- 3.3 Community Centres - for the purposes of this Policy are Crows Nest Centre, Kirribilli Neighbourhood Centre, North Sydney Community Centre.

4. PROVISIONS

4.1 Community Noticeboard Program

Council has a longstanding commitment to ensuring broad coverage of publicity for community events and activities via the Community Noticeboard Program.

4.1.1 General Display

Council maintains information display facilities at the Customer Service Centre, in Ted Mack Civic Park, and Stanton Library.

Information must be passed to the Community Information Officer or the Community Information Librarian for evaluation prior to display. Information which meets the criteria for display may be prioritised according to identified community need and demand for services. Council regrets it is unable to guarantee space to any organisation.

4.1.2 Bus Shelter and Free-Standing Noticeboards

Council maintains a network of up to 60 bus shelter and free-standing community noticeboards in the local government area for the purpose of advertising Council and Community Centre events and information, local community events and activities, community services, non-profit organisations, facilities and groups.

Notices are changed at six-weekly intervals (approximately) throughout the year. Strict deadlines apply to the submission of notices for consideration. Applicants must adhere to the deadlines and are advised to apply as early as possible to the Community Information Officer.

Information is evaluated by the Community Information Officer, with priority given to Council events and notices, local community events, and non-profit groups and services. Information which meets the criteria for display may be prioritised according to demonstrated community need and demand for services. Space is limited and Council regrets that it cannot always guarantee space.

4.2 Council's Website

Council maintains comprehensive information about council and community services, programs, events and facilities on its website. The site is managed by Council's Communications and Events Department, in collaboration with other Departments. The Community Information Officer is responsible for the maintenance of the online Local Information Network for Community Services (LINCS) database, and the production, collation and annual review of Community Development Department information.

4.3 Community Information Database

Council participates in the LINCS database of community information in partnership with over 50 other Sydney metropolitan councils, state government departments and non-government organisations. The database is designed to fulfil the needs of residents, visitors, Council and local employees, by supplying information appropriate to a range of different requirements.

This information is made available in a number of different ways including through internet access through via Council's website, free public online access at Stanton Library and the Customer Service Centre the publication of online target directories, leaflets and mailing lists for Council requirements, and in response to enquiries by telephone, letter or in-person. Entries are categorised according to the LINCS indexing system to ensure a standard that is compatible with other community information services. Organisations wishing to be included in the database should forward information to the Community Information Officer for evaluation and classification. Non-profit organisations are given priority, with some exceptions made for private organisations where there is a particular demonstrated community need.

4.4 Publications

Council's Community Development Department produces a suite of brochures, updated on an annual basis (at least) via the LINCS database where services are contacted to update information ensuring accuracy and currency. Publications are made available free of charge to members of the North Sydney community. The demand for community directories and other targeted printed material is regularly reviewed to ensure information is targeted to sections of the community with identified need.

4.5 Referral Service

Council's Community Development Department (and to some extent Stanton Library and the Community Centres) provide an information and referral

service. The service is available to residents and visitors to North Sydney face-to-face referral, telephone contact, through the community information database, and in response to correspondence. An assessment is made in response to each enquiry. Simple requests are dealt with immediately, while more detailed requests may be re-contacted or mailed printed information. Complex requests are referred to the relevant Officer within the Department for assistance. Requests for community information are aimed to be responded to within five working days.

5. RESPONSIBILITY/ACCOUNTABILITY

- 5.1 Council's community information service is provided by the Community Development Department, in collaboration with the Library Services Department (Stanton Library), the Communications and Events Department and the Customer Service and Records Department as well as the Community Centres.
- 5.2 Council's Community Information Officer is responsible for to collecting, assessing, maintaining and distributing community information to the local community which is accurate and up to date.

6. RELATED POLICIES/DOCUMENTS/LEGISLATION

The Policy should be read in conjunction with the following Council policies and documents:

- Community, Cultural and Recreational Facilities Policy
- Access to Information Policy
- Web Access and Email Policy (staff policy)

The Policy should be read in conjunction with the following documents/legislation:

- Community Information in Local Government Group (CILGG) 1999

Version	Date Approved	Approved by	Resolution No.	Review Date
1	2 August 2004	Council	794	2008/09
2	16 February 2009	Council	61	2012/13
3	18 February 2013	Council	61	2016/17
4	25 June 2018	Council	214	2020/21
5	10 October 2022	Council	324	2024/25