

# INNER WEST

Audit, Risk  
and Improvement  
Committee

2024 – 25

Annual Report



Inner West Council acknowledges the Gadigal and Wangal peoples of the Eora nation, who are the traditional custodians of the lands in which the Inner West Local Government Area is situated







## Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee

The Inner West Council (Council) Audit, Risk and Improvement Committee (ARIC) is a key supporting element of good corporate governance. Its establishment reflects the commitment of Council to industry better practice and high standards of accountability to the community it serves.

The ARIC has a key role in Council's governance framework by bringing a systematic and disciplined approach to examination of the effectiveness of audit, risk management, governance, and continuous improvement processes in Council.

The purpose of the ARIC is to provide independent assistance to Council by monitoring, reviewing and providing advice about Council's governance processes, compliance, risk management and control frameworks, external accountability obligations and overall performance.

The ARIC works under Terms of Reference (TOR) which align with the Office of Local Government Guidelines and industry leading practice.

In accordance with the TOR, the ARIC presents an Annual Report on its activities to Council. The ARIC also provides minutes of its meetings to Council and these minutes are available on Council's website.

### This report

This report is prepared in relation to the 2024-25 financial year.

This is the first full year the ARIC has been operating under new regulatory requirements which commenced on 1 July 2024.

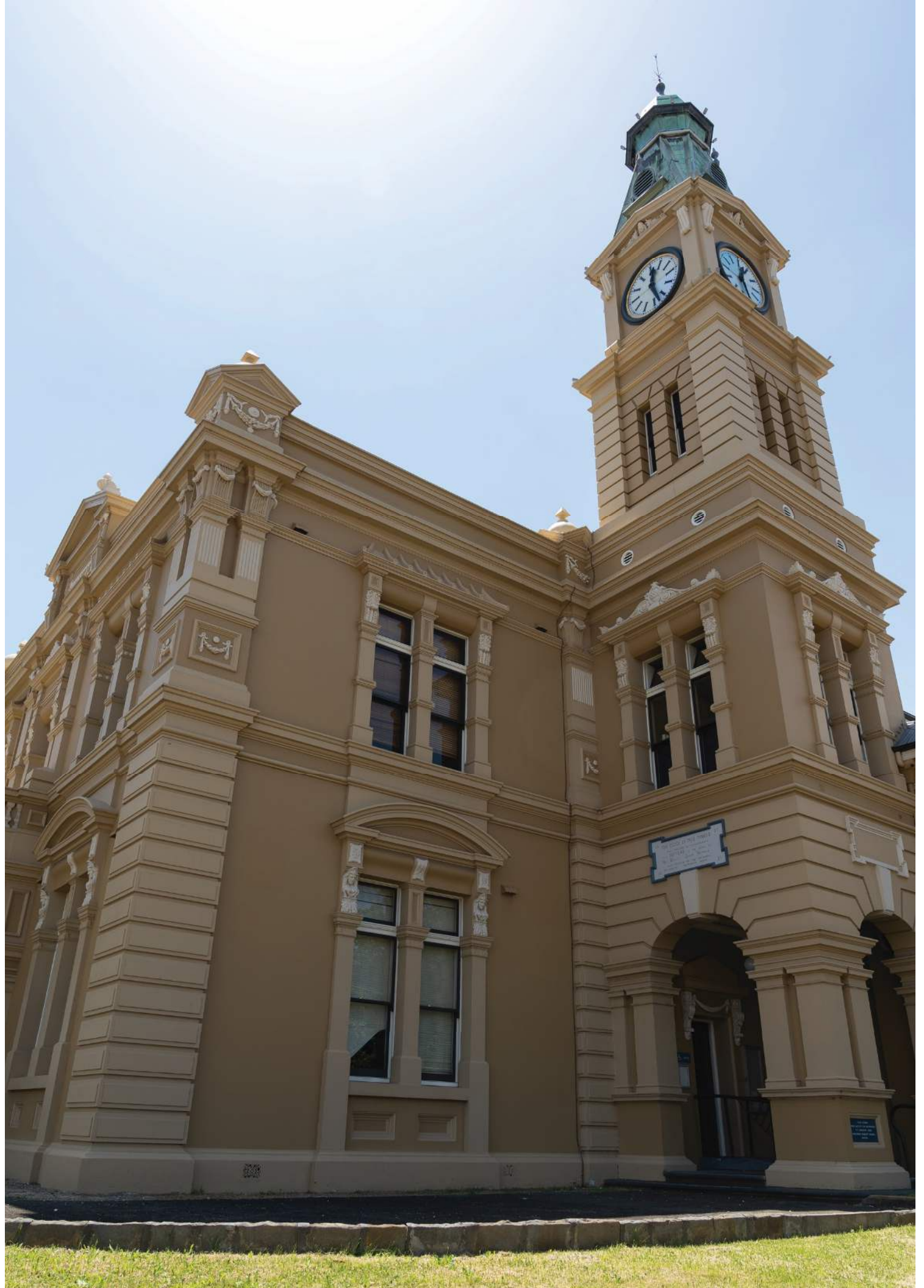
### Section 428A of the Local Government Act 1993

*This section of the Act requires: (1) A Council to appoint an ARIC. (2) The ARIC must keep under review aspects of Council's operations, specifically: compliance, risk management, fraud control, financial management, governance, implementation of the strategic plan, delivery program and strategies, service reviews, collection of performance measurement data by the Council and any other matters prescribed by the regulations. (3) The ARIC is also to provide information to the Council for the purpose of improving the Council's performance of its functions.*

*This report covers the activities of the ARIC in meeting its duties under section 428A (2) and (3) of the Local Government Act and its Terms of Reference for the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025 (the 2024-25 financial year).*

*It also meets requirements on Council and its ARIC under Division 6A of the Local Government (General) Regulation 2021 (Regulations) in relation to Auditing and Audit, Risk and Improvement Committees and the Office of Local Government's November 2023 Guidelines for Risk Management and Internal Audit for Local Government (Guidelines), which are in effect from 1 July 2024.*







## Chair's message

It is with great pleasure that I continue to serve on the Audit Risk and Improvement Committee (Committee or ARIC), having joined as an Independent Member in February 2023 and as Chair since June 2024.

This has been a transformative year for the Committee as we navigated the implementation of new regulatory requirements that commenced on 1 July 2024 under the Local Government (General) Amendment (Audit, Risk and Improvement Committees) Regulation 2023 and the Office of Local Government's Guidelines for Risk Management and Internal Audit for Local Government.

The Committee has remained focused on the continual improvement of risk management and governance processes across Council's operations.

Key activities during the 2024-25 financial year have included:

- **Regulatory Compliance:** Successfully implementing enhanced governance frameworks to meet new OLG requirements, including updating our Risk Management policy and procedures, adopting an Internal Audit Charter consistent with the model charter in the Guidelines, and updating our ARIC Terms of Reference to exceed minimum standards.
- **Financial Oversight:** Reviewing the draft annual financial statements, focusing on accounting policies and procedures, adjustments arising from the audit process, and recommending adoption of the annual financial report to Council.
- **Internal Audit Enhancement:** Reviewing and adopting the Internal Audit Charter and Internal Audit Universe, developing and adopting Strategic and Annual Work Plans for forward periods, and monitoring the progress and effectiveness of the internal audit function through five comprehensive audits conducted by KPMG.

- **Risk Management:** Reviewing Council's updated Risk Management Strategy, risk appetite and risk registers, along with Council's insurance strategy.
- **ICAC Response:** Overseeing Council's comprehensive response to Operation Hector recommendations, monitoring the implementation of 30 separate actions across 7 ICAC recommendations to strengthen governance and procurement practices.
- **Performance Assessment:** Conducting ARIC's Annual Performance Assessment to ensure continuous improvement in our service delivery.

During the year, we held five meetings including four regular meetings and one finance-related special meeting. The Committee considered 70 reports covering diverse areas from major capital projects and IT security to workplace health and safety performance and fraud prevention initiatives.

I would particularly like to acknowledge the significant work undertaken by Council's Governance and Risk team, including the completion of the Delegations Framework review, the Policy Harmonisation Project which has to date refreshed 50 policies in total, and the development of new Risk Management, Procurement and Fraud and Corruption Control Frameworks.

We are looking forward to building on the substantial collaborative work achieved in 2024-25, as well as continuing to engage with both internal and external audit teams in our commitment to excellence in governance.

I would like to thank the other Members of the Committee, our outgoing independent members who provided valuable service during transition periods, and the Management Team for their support in ensuring Inner West Council effectively discharges its responsibilities for financial reporting, risk management, internal controls, governance and internal and external audit.

**Ilona Meyer**  
Chair Inner West Council  
Audit Risk & Improvement Committee

## General Manager's message

This has, once again, been a significant year for Council in many respects including in relation to its cultural journey, governance and risk policy framework implementation, and in response to a changing regulatory landscape.

During the reporting period, Council undertook steps to embed the Australian Business Excellence Framework (Framework) into our business planning and evaluation processes, delivering on the next stage of Council's improvement journey.

The work was extended through Council's Leader's Day in June 2025, with over 200 of our leaders. We examined behaviour statements that align to our values of Integrity, Respect, Compassion, Innovation and Collaboration and linked them with the Framework and LG Capability Framework.

We undertook the 2025 Service Excellence Survey and the results have informed our 2026 business planning processes. This process started in June 2025 and will be finalised by August 2025.

Council participated in the LG Professionals NSW awards with a stunning performance. Council won the Award for Organisational Diversity and Inclusion for its Disability Traineeship and EmbraceAbility Mentoring program. This award recognises Council's delivery on its commitment to prioritising inclusive employment for people with disabilities in the Inner West. We were also finalists in 7 categories and highly commended in the Community Partnerships category for Inner West Aquatics in the community. This recognised our great work with Royal Life Saving NSW, various Trans and Gender Diverse partners, not for profits, local swim clubs making our aquatic facilities more inclusive, accessible and beneficial for all.

I'm also very proud to announce Inner West Council is a Gold Award Winner in the Australasian Reporting Awards for our 2024/25 Annual Report in the Public Administration category. This is our second consecutive Gold Award win for our Annual Report and a fantastic acknowledgement of the hard work that goes into producing such an impressive publication.

Council participated in the LG Professionals Australasian Management Challenge, with Council's team the Innervators winning the NSW event and competing in the national and New Zealand competition. While the top spot went to a team from Tasmania we are proud of their stellar efforts. The award celebrates innovative thinking, leadership, teamwork, and problem-solving at its best.

We have supported Council deliver on its strategic vision by undertaking an extensive program of capital projects and infrastructure delivery works this year. We have delivered the Camdenville Park upgrade and the Richard Murden Inclusive Playground. Rozelle parklands were handed to Council. The St Peters to Sydenham Station cycleway was built. The Dulwich Hill Station Precinct upgrade. The opening of the Pride Centre at Newtown Town Hall. A major renewal at Balmain Library and Town Hall. The Urban Forest Policy was adopted by Council in May 2025 and over 1,000 trees were planted as part of the annual planting program. Significant ongoing projects are the Greenway in corridor project and the Leichhardt Oval, Henson Park grandstand and Leichhardt Park Aquatic Centre upgrades.

Over the last two years we have also exceeded the targets in the Electric Vehicle Encouragement strategy. There are now over 170 public charging ports active across the Inner West, with thirty more on the way. Inner West presently has better access to public electric vehicle charging infrastructure than any other community in NSW. While our fleet vehicles continue to undergo significant transformation to adopt EVs and to make appropriate changes to our workshops and charging infrastructure as per Council's Fleet Transition Plan.

During the last half of the financial year, I announced and have been working through the details of an organisational restructure which increased the number of Directorates to five, namely Community, Planning, Corporate, Engineering and Property and Major Projects.

The restructure sets the organisation up to effectively deliver on Inner West Council's key priorities.

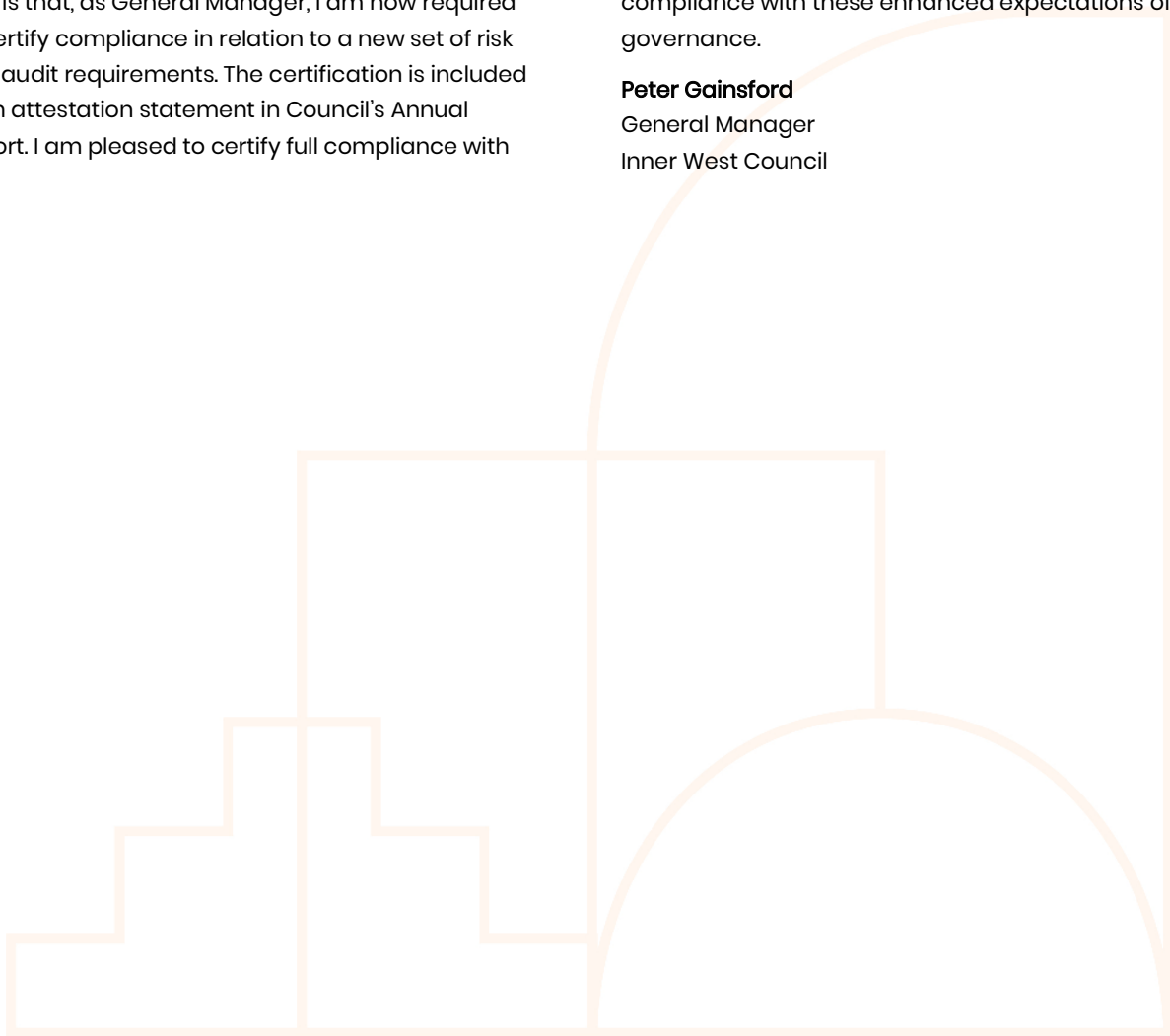
Council has undertaken a significant amount of work to enhance its corruption prevention systems and embed and mature its management of risk holistically across its operations.

During the reporting period, the regulatory requirements for, and expectations of, Council's ARIC changed significantly from prior years. A key change made to the *Local Government (General Regulation) 2021* is that, as General Manager, I am now required to certify compliance in relation to a new set of risk and audit requirements. The certification is included in an attestation statement in Council's Annual Report. I am pleased to certify full compliance with

the requirements in the attestation statement and wish to acknowledge the crucial role that the ARIC has played in delivering improvements in our monitoring and assurance environment. I look forward to continuing close collaboration with ARIC and achieving even more during 2026.

Councillors, the Chair, Committee members, and officers have collaborated closely to ensure compliance with these enhanced expectations of governance.

**Peter Gainsford**  
General Manager  
Inner West Council





## ARIC Governance

### New regulatory settings

On 1 July 2024 the *Local Government (General) Amendment (Audit, Risk and Improvement Committees) Regulation 2023* (Regulations) commenced. The Regulations were supplemented by the Office of Local Government's *Guidelines for Risk Management and Internal Audit for Local Government* (Guidelines).

Council has undertaken a significant programme of work to meet the Regulation and Guideline requirements.

This work encompasses all core requirements of the Regulation and all requirements of the Guideline in relation to the risk management, internal audit and ARIC related activities of Council.

Notably, ARIC and Council has implemented and maintained throughout the period:

- an updated Risk Management policy and procedure consistent with the new requirements
- an Internal Audit Charter consistent with the model charter in the Guidelines.
- an updated ARIC Terms of Reference (TOR), with the appropriate composition and underpinning strategic documentation governing the operations of the Committee.

Council has adopted measures within its TOR which exceed the minimum standards in the Model TOR. Council has also adopted requirements in the ARIC TOR which supplement the independence and eligibility criteria prescribed by the Regulation.

The TOR provide for the appointment of a Chair and three, rather than two, independent members. This is a mechanism to ensure Council's ARIC has the requisite range of skills and expertise, and to ensure the ARIC's future capacity.

The TOR also impose maximum limits on an ARIC independent member's participation in other similar Committees. This restriction is designed to ensure that independent members have sufficient capacity, time, and focus to devote to the operations of Council's ARIC.

### ARIC Annual Performance Assessment

The ARIC conducted an assessment of its and the Chair's performance, to ensure an effective, comprehensive and complete service is being provided.

A report on the review and continuous improvement initiatives was provided to the 20 March 2024 and 21 May 2025 ARIC meetings. This process is undertaken

annually and reports on learnings and continuous improvement opportunities from 2024-25 will be tabled in the upcoming financial year.

### Appointments

Ilona Meyer was appointed as the Chair of Council's ARIC at the Council meeting on 22 June 2024, following a period as the Acting Chair from 27 July 2023.

Councillor Philippa Scott was appointed as the Councillor Member for the remaining period of the Council term at the 22 June 2024 Council meeting.

Local government elections were held on 14 September 2024, to elect all councillors to serve until September 2028.

Following this, at the Council meeting held on 22 October 2024, Councillor Scott was appointed as Councillor Member to the ARIC.

During the financial year, a number of expression of interest (EOI) processes were undertaken to fill independent member vacancies.

To ensure compliance with regulatory requirements, on 3 September 2024, Council (re) appointed two independent members, Emily Hodgson and Heather Smith, to serve for the last half of the 2024 calendar year, while EOI processes were underway. We are grateful to Emily and Heather for returning to assist Council during this period.

On 18 February 2025, Council appointed Belinda Lawn and Chris Davies as Independent Members of Council's ARIC, meeting the requirements of 216C of the Regulation.

Council is undertaking further EOI processes to select and appoint the third independent member position provided for under its TOR.

## Committee members

### *Independents*



#### **Ilona Meyer**

Acting Chair (from 27 July 2023) and  
Chair (from 25 July 2024)

Ilona brings over 25 years experience as a Non-Executive Director and General Counsel in the healthcare, defence and emerging technologies sectors.

She has held executive roles within private and public companies, gaining extensive experience in providing advice and managing legal & compliance teams through digital transformation, complex commercial transactions, mergers & acquisitions, implementation of risk management frameworks, as well as navigating high profile litigation and regulatory disputes. Ilona is also a Non-Executive Director and Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee for Micro-X Limited (ASX:MXI); and Member of the Nominations Committee of the International Paralympic Committee (IPC).

Ilona is an admitted Solicitor and Barrister to the NSW Supreme Court and High Court of Australia, Associate Member of the Institute of Internal Auditors Australia and recognised as a Top 100 Brilliant Woman in AI Ethics 2024; and Top 100 Governance Professional in 2023 and 2024.



#### **Belinda Lawn**

Independent Member

Belinda brings over 30 years' experience in human resources, risk management, strategy and governance to the Inner West ARIC.

She most recently worked as an Executive Director for the NSW Department of Customer Service where she was Chief People Office and led the Governance, Risk and Assurance function.

Belinda is also an independent member of the Woollahra Council and the Audit and Risk Committee for the Office of Children's Guardian.

Belinda leads Confiance Consulting where she consults on a wide range of services including investigations, human resources, risk and compliance.



#### **Chris Davies**

*Independent Member*

Chris brings over 20 years' experience in risk management internal audit, governance and fraud control to the Committee, across a variety of sectors including local government, infrastructure, national security, sport and recreation, social services and health.

His experience includes being a member of the Willoughby City Council ARIC and Fair Work Commission Audit Committee and has held the position of Head of Risk and Internal Audit with a large government commercial agency.

He is a member of the ARIC in his own personal capacity and is currently a management consultant with a global consulting company that provides advisory service on major infrastructure projects.

## Committee members

### Councillor



**Philippa Scott**  
Councillor

Philippa Scott is a lifelong Inner West local and an experienced governance, policy and management professional, committed to social justice.

In 2021, she was elected as a Labor Councillor for the Leichhardt Ward of the Inner West Council. She was Deputy Mayor for the 2022-2023 term. Philippa is a Board Director of Local Government NSW, the peak body for local government, and has served as a Board Director of Metro Assist, a migrant resource centre serving the Inner West and Canterbury-Bankstown LGAs.

Before politics, Philippa worked as a governance and policy manager in the not-for profit and university sectors for over ten years.

Philippa holds a combined Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Laws degree from the Australian National University, a Master of Laws (Honours) degree from UTS and a Master of Education degree from the George Washington University in Washington D.C. She is the Chair, Major Capital Projects Committee and Member, Sydney Eastern City Planning Panel.

### Outgoing Independent members



**Mark Sercombe**  
Independent Member  
(concluded December 2024)

Mark is a technology, risk and assurance specialist with significant expertise in cyber security and systems. He brings experience in auditing, finance, risk, governance and business improvement practices. He has been a member of audit and risk committees since 2017 after establishing an assurance and risk advisory firm in 2014. Mark was a Partner with Deloitte for seventeen years. Mark lectures part time in accounting information systems at the University of Sydney's Business School.

Mark holds a Bachelor of Economics, is a Fellow Chartered Accountant with credentials in internal audit (CIA, PFIIA) and information systems audit (CISA, ISO 27001 Lead Auditor).



**Heather Smith**  
Independent member  
(concluded December 2024)

Heather's career spans service operations, human resources, IT, risk and finance. Through her career spanning public, private and for purpose (not-for-profit) sectors Heather has focused on finding pragmatic, implementable solutions to respond to organisational strategy challenges or change.

She has brought together diverse teams to align innovation with action, achieving stakeholder and organisational goals.

The breadth of her experience provides the ability to appropriately question the performance, reports and opportunities highlighted by internal audit.



**Emily Hodgson**

Independent member

(concluded December 2024)

Emily Hodgson is the Chief Financial Officer at the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation (ANSTO) since October 2021.

Emily formerly served as ASIC's Chief Financial Officer for eight years.

Originally an auditor with KPMG and PWC, Emily holds a Bachelor of Commerce with a major in accounting from the University of Newcastle.

Emily is also a non-Executive Board Member at Women's Community Shelters.



## Year in review

Five (5) meetings were held during the 2024-25 financial year.

These included four (4) regular meetings and (1) Finance related special meeting, as follows:

- 17 September 2024
- 10 October 2024 (Financial)
- 6 December 2024
- 5 March 2025
- 29 May 2025

### Attendance

Committee Member	Meeting Date				
	17 Sept	10 Oct	6 Dec	5 Mar	29 May
Ilona Meyer	•	•	•	•	•
Clr Philippa Scott		•	•		•
Belinda Lawn				•	•
Chris Davies				•	•
Emily Hodgson	•	•	•		
Heather Smith		•	•		
Mark Sercombe	•	•			

Other regular (non-voting) attendees to ARIC meeting include:

- General Manager
- Director Community
- Director Corporate
- Director Infrastructure
- Director Planning
- Senior Manager Governance & Risk
- Risk and Audit Manager
- Governance Manager
- Chief Financial Officer
- Chief Information Officer
- KPMG Engagement Partner (Internal Auditors)
- KPMG Associate Director (Internal Auditors)
- Internal Ombudsman Shared Service (IOSS)
- Director and Audit Leads, Audit Office of NSW.

### Disclosures of Interests

Disclosures are recorded at the start of each meeting and annually for all ARIC members. Consistent with new requirements in the draft and now final Guidelines, Council also classifies external ARIC members as 'designated persons' who must complete and submit 'returns of interest'.

### Audit of Financial Statements

The External Audit of the Financial Statements for the financial year ended 30 June 2025 was conducted by the Audit Office of NSW.

The ARIC considers the findings and recommendations of the Audit Office and assesses Council's performance implementing those findings and recommendations.

The ARIC considers and provides input and feedback on the draft Financial Statement to management and the Audit Office.

### Internal Audit Charter

Council adopted a revised Internal Audit Charter on 9 April 2024 which is consistent with the model charter in the Guidelines. The Charter includes an analysis of Council's internal audit universe across its five core business directorates. The Charter is a living document and planning tool used by Council and its ARIC to ensure areas of potential risk across Council are adequately considered and factored into internal audit planning.

The Committee noted the Internal Audit Universe attachment to the Charter will be aligned to a new organisational structure at the end of the financial year.

### Internal Audit

Internal Audits at Council during the period were conducted by KPMG. The KPMG Engagement Partner and Associate Director for Council attend each ARIC meeting, provide a status report against the agreed Internal Audit Plan, and audit findings. KPMG also conduct independent reviews of Council's delivery of completed audit actions and performance reports to support the review of the effectiveness of the Internal Audit function, at the appropriate time. During the financial year, KPMG conducted five internal audits, being:

- Payroll Leave
- People and Culture
- Payroll
- Data Management Health Check
- Fraud and Corruption Control (multiple reports).

## **Key Governance and Risk operations and projects**

### ***Delegations framework and register review***

During the period Governance and Risk completed the project to review Council's delegations Framework and update all delegations across Council. The management of delegations requires ongoing effort as structural and operational changes are undertaken and as people fill different roles across Council, with just under six hundred being actioned over the year.

### ***Policy harmonisation project***

Council undertook a holistic review of its policies and has substantially delivered a policy harmonisation project. At the commencement of the financial year, Council had reviewed, redeveloped and formally adopted or rescinded 38 policies and had 19 scheduled to be reviewed during the 2025/25 financial year. At the conclusion of the financial year, Council had adopted 12 policies and had presented for adoption or exhibition a further 11 with another 9 under development.

The count above does not include procedures or operational management standards (OMS) which are adopted by the General Manager and Executive and which govern internal operations. There has been a substantial body of work undertaken to ensure Council's internal operations are reviewed and continuously improved to meet current operational needs and expectations of good practice.

### ***System support to manage Council's obligations***

During the period, Council selected a system to assist manage and report on compliance with its key governance, risk, compliance and audit obligations. Work to deploy this system will occur during the upcoming financial year.

### ***Risk Management, Business Continuity, Incident Management framework refreshes***

Council's team reviewed relevant policies and procedures constituting its risk management framework during the period. Its approach to strategic risks is embedded and has assisted guide significant control and business continuity and incident and crisis response capability improvements during the year.

Significantly, a refresh of Council's operational risk registers was undertaken over the period. All service areas across Council participated in a careful re-

examination of our operational, safety, data and privacy, fraud and corruption control and work and public health and safety risks across the organisation. This helps ensure our risk management and control monitoring, continuous improvement and assurance activities reflect the current operational environment and ensure our control environment is effective and meets current needs.

Training of our Incident Management Team is a standing activity and includes certification in the Australian Inter-service Incident Management System, which enables Council to respond confidently to emergencies within the LGA. During the year, Council responded to a number of incidents which either were, or could have escalated to, higher risk situations. These include potential cyber or data security issues, a number of incidents during the summer storms involving the public, as well as the notifiable work health and safety incidents discussed below.

Council's participation in the Local Emergency Management Organisation (LEMO) is led by the Infrastructure (now Engineering) Directorate. The LEMO was activated twice during the financial year. A fire in Marrickville where Council provided assistance to emergency services and affected persons. And in relation to a storm event in January 2025, where there was a declared statewide emergency.

### ***Work Health and Safety***

Council continues implementing its Work Health Safety and Wellbeing (WHS&W) strategies enabling a positive and safe workplace culture through effective leadership, systems and processes.

On 3 December 2024 Council adopted a new WHS&W Policy to reaffirm and reinvigorate its framework for the management of the work health, safety and wellbeing (including psychosocial dimensions) of its workers, services providers, volunteers and visitors to Council workplaces. Supporting the policy, Risk WHS and Wellbeing teams commenced a comprehensive refresh of all Council's WHS&W suite of operational management standards. Work to refresh these documents will continue during the 2026 financial year.

Council restructured its approach to WHS&W Committees and formalised that approach in revised WHS&W Committees Terms of Reference, which establish a 'Peak' management committee and



Directorate WHS Committees. This structure has assisted Council to better prioritise and action safety continuous improvement across its operations.

There were four notifiable safety incidents during the period. Each incident was investigated informed by the ICAAMS methodology and control improvements to prevent recurrence implemented. These improvements are most significant in relation to a waste transfer station managed by Council, which has and continues to undergo significant safety and operational improvements to prevent falls from height at the site. In addition, there was a notifiable incident in March 2025 reported by the principal contractor for the Greenway walking corridor. An excavator slid from an elevated work platform and rolled onto the light rail track. While no one was injured, light rail services were impacted but restored early the following day.

Our safety experts collaborated with multiple Directorates and service areas to review the technical documents which govern the safe working practices of our field staff undertaking higher risk frontline service delivery activities. Over sixty documents were reviewed with staff and specialist advisors collaborating to establish a revised and streamlined set of operating documents to suit different levels of risk and the current site and operating conditions where the work is performed.

Through this project, Council has focussed its job and compliance monitoring, quality assurance and audit activities on the higher risk activities and established more proportionate, up to date and practical procedures to ensure our workers have and know how to use the right equipment, vehicles and plant for the work, and are properly trained and instructed in the environments and tasks their work now encompasses.

Council also replaced its safety incident management system. The new system (BeSafe) went live in May 2025. The new system provides additional functionality including location tagging of incidents and better supports remote worker incident reporting, enhancing our ability to support and respond to incidents in the field swiftly and effectively.

#### **Fraud and Corruption Control and reporting to ICAC**

Council continued to strengthen its fraud and corruption risk management framework in alignment

with audit recommendations and guidance from external integrity agencies.

The fraud and corruption risk register has been integrated with the broader operational risk register, ensuring consistent documentation, oversight, and treatment of fraud and corruption risks across all service areas. Oversight of these activities is maintained through regular reporting to the ARIC.

Significant progress has been made in relation to audit actions from the Independent Commission Against Corruption (ICAC) and on actions arising from reports of Council's internal auditors.

Council is implementing the recommendations from ICAC's Operation Hector report, which examined the awarding of contracts by Transport for NSW and Inner West Council. All seven recommendations were accepted by Council, and a comprehensive plan comprising of 30 actions was tabled to ICAC.

As at 18 July 2025, 19 of these actions have been completed and closed, with progress tracked through Council's audit action tracking system. For the remaining open actions, Council has completed the initial commitments it made. However, further continuous improvement opportunities have been identified to embed and support fraud and corruption control initiatives. These continuous improvement actions will be implemented over the 2026 financial year.

Council also continues to implement findings from KPMG's internal audit of its Fraud and Corruption Control Framework. Conducted in two phases, the audit included detailed data analytics over financial and procurement data from July 2017 to June 2023. Management actions from both phases are being implemented and monitored, with no matters identified to date that require escalation to the General Manager or external regulatory authorities.

#### **Insurance**

During the year, Council undertook a request for tender, to ensure its commercial policies of insurance services provider represents the best value to Council. Council adopted the recommendation of the tender evaluation panel and re-appointed Statewide Mutual Scheme until 30 June 2031.

The Claims team reports quarterly to management and the ARIC on the progress of its public liability and motor

vehicle claims, as part of initiatives to drive continuous improvement in its service delivery.

Council has implemented a Claims webpage providing key information to the public about how-to lodge claims against Council, including reporting incidents and factors that may be considered relevant to their claims.

#### **ARIC Recommendations and Audit Actions**

The process to update and resolve outstanding ARIC Recommendations and Council wide Audit Actions with relevant departments will always be ongoing.

The resolution of ARIC recommendations and Audit Actions are relevant to Council's continuous improvement initiatives.

During the 2024-25 financial year, ARIC Recommendations remained actively tracked and completed promptly, with typically only one or two matters requiring completion beyond the ARIC meeting following the Recommendation being made (noting some recommendations are ongoing in nature).

In its December 2024 management letter, the Audit Office NSW raised 5 current year matters and noted 3 prior year matters not yet resolved by management. It confirmed the completion of 3 external Audit Actions during the period with 2 issues not yet due.

Council examined the completion of 21 internal audit actions during the financial year. At the May 2025 meeting prior to financial year end, Governance and Risk reported it has just over one hundred and seventy six internal audit actions and 10 external audit Actions under monitoring.

A significant activity towards the end of the period was adjusting the cycle of review and commissioning an internal audit of closed audit actions. That internal audit has confirmed Council's approach is consistent with international practice standards expectations.

During calendar year 2023, significant progress had been made to address longstanding actions. That activity paused while Council focussed on refreshing and maturing its risk management and control activities and re-establishing the rhythms of its meetings and reporting cycles to meet the new ARIC Strategic Work Plan and Annual Plan and to prioritise implementation of its fraud and corruption control activities.

Work evaluating legacy audit actions was deferred to the close of EOFY with closure of further actions to be

vetted and tabled to ARIC meetings during the 2025-26 financial year. Council will continue to focus on these matters until they are fully resolved.

#### **Presentations and Reports**

Seventy reports were tabled to the ARIC over its five meetings during the 2024-25 financial year. Reports and presentations covered:

- Council's Community Strategic Plan, Delivery Program, Operational Plan and Service Delivery Program
- Customer Service projects
- Budgetary and financial updates
- Council investments portfolio (Investments Reports and Investments Policy Updates)
- Major capital projects
- Procurement strategies, practices and controls
- Information technology including projects, IT security, data protection and privacy matters
- People and culture and Workplace Health and Safety performance and initiatives
- Risk management including matters such as business continuity, incident management, fraud and corruption prevention
- The policy harmonisation project and resulting new and updated policies and procedures
- Performance, trends, initiatives and recommendations of the IOSS
- Internal Audits, their progress, findings and any implementation plans arising
- Council's adherence to OLG Guidelines requirements and matters requiring endorsement to meet those,
- Progress reports on ARIC Resolutions and findings and recommendations made by IOSS, the Internal and External Auditors.

## The Internal Ombudsman Shared Service

The Internal Ombudsman Shared Service (IOSS) for InnerWest, City of Parramatta and Cumberland City Councils commenced in September 2017. The IOSS consists of the Internal Ombudsman, Assistant Internal Ombudsman and Complaint Assessment and Administration Officer.

The activities of the IOSS encompass: prevention activities including providing probity advice, policy review and assistance with policy development, for example in relation to Child Protection Guidelines and Domestic and Family Violence Policy; education and training, for example in relation to complaint handling, public interest disclosures, probity in procurement and presentations to the Local Government NSW Good Governance Forum and the Australian Institute of Internal Auditors; and the investigation of complaints

within the jurisdiction of the IOSS Governance Charter including in relation to delays and administrative conduct.

The work of the IOSS is reviewed by the IOSS Management Committee, consisting of the General Manager and the Chief Executive Officers of the member Councils.

The Internal Ombudsman attends every ARIC meeting for all the member Councils and provides a report at each meeting of its activities with the specific Council in addition to a summary of activities undertaken with the other Councils.

The IOSS also presents its Annual Report to each Council's ARIC and once the Annual Report is endorsed by the ARIC, it is provided to Councillors and then the community.

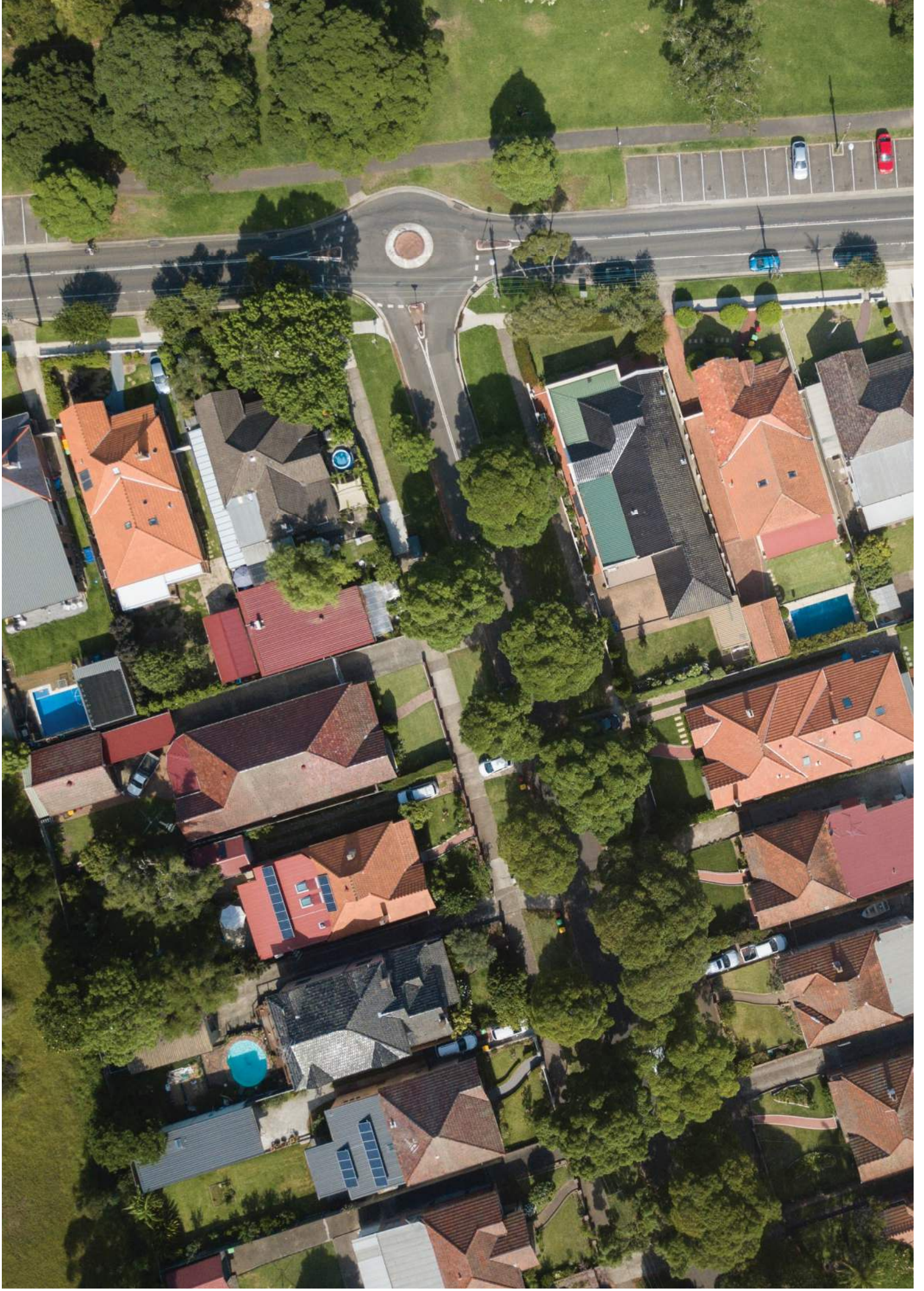




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### Translation Service

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### Υπηρεσία Διερμηνείας

Εάν έχετε ερωτήσεις αναφορικά με το παρόν έγγραφο και χρειάζεστε διερμηνέα, παρακαλούμε καλέστε την TIS National στο 131 450 και ζητήστε τους να καλέσουν το Inner West Council στο 9392 5000

### Servizio traduzioni

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### 翻译服务

如果您对本文件有任何疑问，需要传译员帮助，请拨打 TIS National 的电话 131 450，然后要求接通 Inner West Council 的电话9392 5000

### Dịch vụ Thông Phiên dịch

Nếu quý vị có thắc mắc gì về tài liệu này và cần có thông dịch viên xin gọi cho TIS National qua số 131 450 và nhờ họ gọi cho Inner West Council qua số 9392 5000

ةمجرتلا ةمدخ، يروف مجرتم بلا جاتحتو دنتسملا اذه لوح ةلئسا كيدل تناك اذا TIS National فتاهلا بلع ةمدخب لصتاف 450 مقر ب لاصتالا مهتم بلطاو 131 Inner West Council 5000 مقرلا بلع 9392

### Customer Service Centres

Petersham: 2-14 Fisher Street

Leichhardt: 7-15 Wetherill Street

Ashfield: 260 Liverpool Road

Phone (02) 9392 5000

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