

**ITEM A LORD MAYORAL MINUTE - DRUG COURT - WOLLONGONG**

Drug Courts are part of the current judicial system of the Local and District Courts in NSW. The first Drug Court was established at Parramatta in 1999 and there are currently three others operating at Toronto (Newcastle), Sydney CBD and Dubbo.

Eligible offenders are required to go through a specialised Court process, which provides them opportunities for rehabilitation while they are closely monitored. The re-offending rate for Drug Court participants is approximately 17 percent lower than the rate of re-offending for those not accepted into the program.

Over a 3-year trend, NSW as a whole has seen a downward trend in drug offences by 7.3 percent per year, however Wollongong LGA has seen an increase of 10.3 percent per year. The 2024 NSW Drug Summit recommended establishing the Drug Court to regional areas including Wollongong. The Wollongong and District Law Society is advocating for a Drug Court to be established in Wollongong to service the Illawarra and South Coast.

**RECOMMENDATION**

I recommend that Wollongong City Council:

1. Write to the NSW Attorney General expressing support for establishing the Drug Court to Wollongong.
2. Ask the Illawarra Shoalhaven Joint Organisation to advocate for establishing the Drug Court for the region.

**ATTACHMENTS**

There are no attachments for this report.