

## **6.8. DOUGLAS CHAMBER OF COMMERCE RESOURCE & PERFORMANCE AGREEMENT 2024**

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**DEPARTMENT** People and Community Services

### **RECOMMENDATION**

**That Council:**

- 1. Resolves to enter into a Resource and Performance agreement with Douglas Chamber of Commerce for \$20,000 over a period of 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2024, and**
- 2. Payment of the funding be made on signing of the Resource and Performance Agreement by both parties (50%) with the balance of the payment being subject to an assessment of a mid-term report and achievement of key milestones in the agreement.**
- 3. Delegates authority under section 257 of the Local Government Act 2009 to the Chief Executive Officer, to finalise all matters associated with the execution of the Resource and Performance Agreement.**

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### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The Douglas Chamber of Commerce (DCC) has recently undergone a change in management committee. The new committee is dedicated to proving value through providing opportunity, support and advocacy for local businesses across the Shire.

The DCC made a deputation to the August 2023 Ordinary Council Meeting, seeking financial support from Council for their program of activities.

Given the important position a local Chamber of Commerce maintains as an industry and advocacy association, it is recommended that Council reignites support for the Douglas Chamber of Commerce through a new Resource & Performance Agreement to assist the new committee to deliver valuable advocacy and support to businesses in the Shire.

This agreement is designed to assist the organisation undertake essential strategic planning, deliver important support to small business, and demonstrate meaningful progress towards becoming a self-sustaining association.

### **BACKGROUND**

At an Ordinary Council Meeting on 28 September 2021, Council resolved to enter into a Resource and Performance Agreement with Douglas Chamber of Commerce to assist the association to increase membership and deliver value to the business community through a series of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Total funding of \$40,000 was committed over a three-year period.

The agreement requirements were not fulfilled, with the Chamber failing to meet KPIs, failing to draw on the funding, and announcing a stand down of all committee members at the Douglas Chamber of Commerce Annual General Meeting on 29 September 2022.

## COMMENTS

With a new management committee forming at an Extraordinary General Meeting on 13 June 2023, the Douglas Chamber of Commerce is focused on delivering value to the business community and has been demonstrating momentum since. Noticeable successes include a 20% increase in membership since the new management committee was implemented, and the recent ticketed networking event at Palmer Sea Reef Golf Club which attracted 27 guests.

The Douglas Chamber of Commerce made a deputation to the 28 August 2023 Ordinary Council Meeting, seeking financial support from Council for their program of activities.

Given the past challenges Douglas Chamber of Commerce has faced in delivering on KPIs, a one-year agreement is recommended. This gives the Chamber an opportunity to demonstrate its value to the business community and demonstrate its progress towards a self-sustaining financial model.

On 4 November 2021 Douglas Shire Council together with Douglas Chamber of Commerce signed the Small Business Friendly (SBF) Program Charter through the Office of the Queensland Small Business Commissioner. Through the *Do It In Douglas* program, Council has continued to demonstrate support for small business through capacity building workshops, networking events and regular communications. The support of an active Chamber of Commerce through a collaborative partnership will drive further momentum and further demonstrate Council's commitment to the small business community.

## PROPOSAL

It is proposed that Council enter at 12-month Resource and Performance Agreement with the Douglas Chamber of Commerce with funding of \$20,000 (Ex GST) plus In-kind support for use of Council venues. The following funding terms are proposed:

- Funding Term 1 – 1 January 2024 to 30 June 2024 – \$10,000 + GST
- Funding Term 2 – 1 July 2024 to 31 December 2024 – \$10,000 + GST

It is recommended that the provision of funds for Funding Term 1 be provided upon signing of the Resource and Performance Agreement by both parties and Funding Term 2 be subject to an assessment of a mid-term report and achievement of key milestones.

It is proposed that the funding contributes to the paid position of a coordinator to run a program of events and initiatives as well as implement best practises across business-as-usual activities with the purpose of enhancing the local business environment in Douglas.

It is further proposed that KPIs are developed through negotiation between Douglas Chamber of Commerce and Council to include targets focused on increasing membership, demonstrating sufficient volume of activity, generating positive sentiment, and progress towards a self-sustaining financial model.

## FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The funding for the Agreement has not been allocated in the current financial year's budget and the funding amount would need to come from existing budget.

## RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Clear terms, conditions, KPIs, and reporting requirements will mitigate the inappropriate use of public funds. Regular activity reporting and mid-term review will help ensure the objectives of Council are met.

## SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

**Economic:** A strong and coordinated approach to economic development is essential to continue to rebuild the economy of the Douglas Shire post-Covid.

**Environmental:** Nil

**Social:** Business support is necessary in the Douglas Shire. Small businesses create local jobs, grow the local economy, and provide essential goods and services. But just as importantly, small businesses help create attractive, liveable communities. They also foster civic pride and help attract people and investment into the area.

## CORPORATE/OPERATIONAL PLAN, POLICY REFERENCE

This report has been prepared in accordance with the following:

### Corporate Plan 2019-2024 Initiatives:

#### Theme 2 - Fostering Sustainable Economic Growth

A robust economy is at the heart of a thriving community and enables investment in environmental protection. While our remoteness is a key attribute, it also presents challenges for attracting new business and investment. We must also meet the challenges of fierce competition in the tourism sector. Council will partner with industry to build, diversify and promote the Douglas economy. Council will design and deliver infrastructure, strategies and services that support the local economy and businesses.

**Goal 2 -** *We will work with partners to promote the Shire as the World's leading sustainable tropical destination and encourage business investment.*

**Goal 3 -** *We will develop strategies that seek to diversify the Shire's economic base.*

### Operational Plan 2023-2024 Actions:

New project arisen during the financial year.

## COUNCIL'S ROLE

Council can play a number of different roles in certain circumstances and it is important to be clear about which role is appropriate for a specific purpose or circumstance. The implementation of actions will be a collective effort and Council's involvement will vary from information only through to full responsibility for delivery.

The following areas outline where Council has a clear responsibility to act:

**Funder** Council often partly funds services, events or community organisations through grants, donations, subsidies and in-kind support. Council will apply robust governance to ensure that such funding is fair and appropriate.

## CONSULTATION

**Internal:** Finance

**External:** Establishing financial and in-kind support for the Douglas Chamber of Commerce is an action item in Council's Economic Development Strategy 2021-2024.

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Nil.

## ATTACHMENTS

Nil