

## **5.08. CHRISTMAS IN THE PARK MOSSMAN**

**REPORT AUTHOR:** Helen Coulthard, Community & Economic Development Officer  
Kerrie Hawkes, Executive Officer

**DEPARTMENT:** CEO Unit

### **RECOMMENDATION**

**That Council resolves to:**

- 1. accept formal notification from Douglas Shire Community Services Association Ltd dated 20 January 2016 advising their Board's decision not to host Christmas in the Park;**
- 2. coordinate Christmas in the Park, incorporating Carols by Candlelight; and**
- 3. delegate authority to the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer in accordance with the Local Government Act 2009 to finalise any minor amendments in relation to coordination of Christmas in the Park and Carols by Candlelight.**

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### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

A Resource and Performance Agreement, in place with Douglas Shire Community Services Association Ltd (DSCSA) from 1 September 2014 to 31 August 2017, provides for the delivery of Mossman's Christmas in the Park activity.

Council received a letter from DSCSA on 22 January 2016 advising its Board resolved not to host the Sugar Festival Ball and Christmas in the Park due to the demands placed on the organisation's resources.

This report identifies options for the future delivery of Christmas in the Park and provides a recommendation.

### **BACKGROUND**

Council sponsored a Front Street Mossman Christmas event under a 2009 to 2011 Resource and Performance Agreement (R&P) with Mossman Chamber of Commerce. When the Chamber folded, DSCSA was approached to auspice the funds to ensure the 2011 event proceeded. The event was held on a Saturday morning at George Davis Park instead of an evening in Front Street.

In 2012 Bamanga Bubu Ngadimunku Inc was funded to host the event, and held at Mossman Gorge Gateway. While successful, feedback indicated George Davis Park was the preferred venue and in 2013, the event returned to the Park, hosted by DSCSA.

On 26 August 2014 Council entered into an R&P with DSCSA, commencing 1 September 2014 to 31 August 2017, to deliver Mossman's Christmas in the Park with \$5,000 (GST Exc) cash and \$2,500 in-kind.

On 18 August 2015 Council resolved to amend the existing R&P, enabling not for profit stall holders to charge up \$5 for food, beverage and services and sell items for Christmas gifts. In previous years, all rides, items, food, and drink were free, encouraging the community, especially families with children, to attend.

The 2015 event was held Saturday 12 December, commencing 3pm, concluding with carols commencing 6pm.

On 22 January 2016 Council received notice from DSCSA advising of their Board's resolution not to host further Christmas in the Park events.

## COMMENT

Council officers received DSCSA's Outcome Report, acquitting funding for the 2015 event, noting written feedback. Verbal feedback was also sought from last year's event organisers, the Ministers' Association, and audience members to assist with future planning.

Even though items at Christmas in the Park were sold for nominal amounts, some participants did not bring money as everything was free in previous years. Keeping some elements free (eg: entry; amusement rides; song books; some park activities) and charging nominal fees (under \$5 in keeping with the August 2015 Council resolution) for other elements enables wide community participation and inclusion as well as the ability for not for profit organisations and charities to raise funds for community services (eg: SES Sausage Sizzle; DSCSA Snow Cones and popcorn; Mayor's Christmas Appeal LED taper candles for carols).

Media Releases, Facebook, website posts, and flyers will be disseminated across the Shire to avoid confusion with the free and "On Sale" aspects of the event and start times.

Feedback acknowledged Carols by Candlelight presented opportunities to showcase local talent, with suggestions to publicly advertise for individual performers, school/community groups (as singers, musicians and MCs) mid-year to enable time for auditions if required and for rehearsals to take place. This would allow for the delivery of a program that encapsulates community spirit; recognising those who voluntarily give their time and talent.

Holding the event on the first weekend of the school holidays, in the afternoon, incorporating carols was viewed favourably, although Christmas in the Park numbers were slightly down on the previous year as some were not aware of the change in start time.

A number of options are presented for the future delivery of Christmas in the Park with the preferred option being for Council to deliver this event due to the opportunity to work collaboratively with key stakeholders.

## DELIVERY OPTIONS

### Option One:

#### Internal delivery by Council

**For:** Delivery of the community activity by Council will not impact on a not for profit organisation's staff and volunteers (unless a not for profit organisation elects to hold a stall at the event).

Potential for Council officers to work the Ministers' Association, local churches and community groups, performers, musicians, schools and students to refine Christmas in the Park and Carols by Candlelight, and cross promote the Mayor's Christmas Appeal and buying local in the lead up to the festive season.

**Against:** Adjustment to Council staff resources to accommodate planning and coordination of Christmas activity.

### Option Two:

#### External delivery by a not for profit community organisation

**For:** Opportunity for the organisation to raise its profile and the services it delivers in the Shire.

**Against:** Coordinating the event takes staff and volunteers away from the organisation's core business, and the benefits received in return for their efforts in hosting the event may need to be analysed.

### Option Three:

#### External delivery by an event manager

**For:** Professional experience in planning, coordinating and delivering events.

**Against:** Existing budget may not attract commercial interest due to the emphasis on being a free/nominal cost community event and advertising, equipment hire, and associated event costs are to be covered by Council funds.

## PROPOSAL

The proposal is for Council to accept formal notification from Douglas Shire Community Services Association Ltd advising its Board's decision not to host Christmas in the Park and for Council to coordinate Christmas in the Park, incorporating Carols by Candlelight.

## FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The funding for the Resource and Performance Agreement was to be allocated in the annual budgets for the term of the agreement. These funds will still be allocated in the budget for Council to coordinate the event.

## RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

December's heat, humidity, and potential for rain may impact on attendance numbers.

Mossman Shire Hall will be booked as a wet weather alternative but will limit the number of stall holders, audiences/participants and not facilitate park rides and some of the outdoor activities. Sound and lighting equipment may need to be relocated for Carols by Candlelight. Fees might be incurred if bookings for amusement rides and equipment hire have to be cancelled.

## SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

**Economic:** Christmas in the Park and Carols by Candlelight will support local and regional organisations with stage, sound and lighting hire, advertising and promotion, amusement rides, food and drink sales. Promotion of local talent performing at Carols by Candlelight may increase visitation to Mossman from other areas of the Shire.

**Environmental:** Waste Services will be consulted to ensure sufficient bins are provided for litter from the event.

**Social:** The community event, with free entry, will enable inclusion and celebration with people of all ages participating.

## **CORPORATE/OPERATIONAL PLAN, POLICY REFERENCE**

This report has been prepared in accordance with the following:

### **Corporate Plan 2014-2019 Initiatives:**

#### **Theme 1 - Celebrating Our Communities**

*1.1.3 - Host and work in partnership with community groups to celebrate civic events and the achievements of our communities.*

*1.1.4 - Support and encourage a healthy, active and capable region through sporting, cultural and recreational opportunities, and community wellbeing initiatives.*

*1.1.5 - Support local non-profit community, sporting and cultural organisations to build their capacity.*

*1.1.6 - Encourage and promote volunteering opportunities throughout the Shire.*

*1.2.4 - Network, advocate and partner with stakeholders to achieve positive outcomes.*

*1.3.3 - Foster and support the role of local artists, writers and performers to encourage community vibrancy and wellbeing.*

*1.3.4 Provide and enhance community facilities and opportunities that cater for the arts, recreational and cultural pursuits.*

#### **Theme 2 - Building a Sustainable Economic Base**

*2.2.1 - Develop business initiatives to support commercial development and investment within the Shire.*

*2.2.4 - Promote and support - 'Buy Local'.*

#### **Theme 4 - Engage, Plan, Partner**

*4.1.2 - Undertake community engagement activities that are clearly identified and are appropriate in relation to the project.*

*4.2.2 - Provide leadership to secure beneficial social, environmental and economic outcomes for the Shire.*

## **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:

**Fully-Responsible** Delivering a program or activity for another organisation (usually another level of government).

## **CONSULTATION**

**Internal:** Frontline Services - Park and hall bookings;  
CEO Unit – Internal organisation of event;  
Chief Executive Officer, General Manager of Corporate Services,  
General Manager of Operations.

**External:** DSCSA - last year's Christmas in the Park and carols;  
Ministers' Association - Carols by Candlelight;  
Audiences – last year's carols.

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

The community will be informed about the event through promotion via Council's Facebook page, website, email networks and media releases to encourage local residents and businesses to support festive season activities across the Shire. Attendance numbers will be gauged and community feedback sought to improve the event where required.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1 - Letter from Douglas Shire Community Services Association Ltd dated 20 January 2016

