

5.5. IN-KIND ASSISTANCE POST COVID 19 EVENTS STRATEGY

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DEPARTMENT	People and Community Services

RECOMMENDATION

That Council;

1. Provide in-kind support for use of venues and waive application fees for events, as part of a post COVID-19 economic and event recovery strategy, to the amount of:
 - \$8,216 for Knockout Events - Wonderland Under the Stars
 - \$2,508 + \$1,500 security bond for Festival Amusements - Mini Fun Fair
2. Delegates authority under section 257 of the *Local Government Act 2009* to the Chief Executive Officer to finalise any minor amendments in relation to these applications.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Council is working to encourage event organisers to host events in the Douglas Shire in the post COVID-19 climate to encourage community and economic recovery. To offer assistance and remove financial hurdles it is proposed that Council offers in-kind support and waives application fees for the following events:

- \$8,216 – Knockout events for Wonderland Under the Stars (two events)
- \$2,508 + \$1500 security bond – Festival Amusements - Mini Fun Fair

BACKGROUND

As part of the Local Disaster Management Group an Economic Recovery Sub-group was established to look at ways to stimulate the economy once restrictions around COVID-19 were eased. A primary recommendation coming from the taskforce was to encourage event organisers to hold events in the Douglas Shire. Events bring economic benefits by way of increased visitor numbers, overnight stays and have the potential to benefit numerous businesses in the Shire. Events also have positive community benefits by strengthening community bonds, improving wellbeing and providing something to look forward to as the country faces the uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic. One of the ways Council can encourage events in our region is to remove financial hurdles for organisers, by offering In-kind support to utilise our various public spaces and facilities at very little or no cost to Council.

The Wonderland Under the Stars concept was conceived by Knockout events, who over the last 4 years have been an integral part of the Port Douglas Carnivale with their Spiegel Tent entertainment.

Working within the framework for COVID-19 compliant events, Wonderland under the Stars offers an open-air experience similar to that of the Spiegel tent and also acts as a showcase for our region by promoting the Douglas Shire as an entertainment destination, as well as presenting a unique attendee experience by utilising the natural beauty of Rex Smeal Park as an event space.

Council is currently engaged with Knockout events by way of a resource and performance agreement that secures the Spiegel tent for Carnivale. After much discussion, an amendment was made to the resource and performance agreement that would allow part funding from the original agreement to cover the costs of this proposal, while still being able to fund the Spiegel tent for the Carnivale in 2021.

Council has a strong and positive working relationship with Knockout events and have worked collaboratively with them for a number of years. Discussions are underway in the hopes that this event will return annually and become a regular part of the events calendar in the future. Providing an entertainment spectacle during a usually busy time of the year, September, will add to our tourism experience and promotes our region.

In addition to the Wonderland under the Stars September dates, discussions are underway to present a second 'Under the stars' event from 23-25 October, again at Rex Smeal Park. Following a similar format but with different acts, this proposed event would also require the in-kind assistance offered for the September event. This would present another opportunity to promote the region and would again have significant economic and social benefits through increased overnight stays and family entertainment for residents.

The Mini Fun Fair will be made up of rides and amusements that generally appear at the Port Douglas Carnivale and the Mossman Show. This small selection of activities has been designed within the framework of COVID-19 compliancy and offers a small entertainment area for families. The Mini Fun Fair will be set up for four days and nights and will be set up for the start of the September 2020 school holidays. Council will have an opportunity to promote the event through various networks, to encourage families to choose the Douglas Shire as a holiday destination.

All events will require the appropriate permitted council approval before beginning operation.

COMMENT

Fee waiving and in-kind assistance is requested for the following events:

Wonderland Under the Stars (two events)

Over the weekend of 11-13 September, Knockout Events will bring an outdoor show to Rex Smeal Park where the audience will experience the magic, music and wonder from the golden age of circus and travelling entertainment.

The weekend's events include the internationally acclaimed circus sensation A Simple Space, roving performances by fire twirlers and percussionists, live music by outstanding North Queensland blues outfit Lady Valiant, the blues band 19-Twenty and well-known Australian artist, Tex Perkins.

The subsequent 'Under the Stars' event will maintain a similar format with different acts yet to be confirmed.

Mini Fun Fair

A condensed version of the rides, amusements and a food truck that would normally be at the Port Douglas Carnivale, running for four nights during the first weekend of the school holidays from 17-20 September at Dixie Park in Port Douglas.

Council will be recognised as a sponsor of all events.

PROPOSAL

Provide in-kind support for use of venues / parks and waive application fees for post COVID-19 events, to the amount of:

- \$8,216 – Knockout Events - Wonderland Under the Stars (two events)
- \$2,508 + \$1,500 Security Bond – Festival Amusements - Mini Fun Fair

FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Fee waiving and in-kind assistance with no cash contribution from Council required. The cost for processing the applications are contained in the total amounts requested.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

These are public events and will have to submit with approvals

- Event Management Plan with current public liability insurance
- COVID 19 safe plans

Cancellation due to changed restrictions around COVID 19 would have no cost implications to Council.

CORPORATE/OPERATIONAL PLAN, POLICY REFERENCE

This report has been prepared in accordance with the following:

Corporate Plan 2019-2024 Initiatives:

Theme 1 - Celebrating Our Communities

Douglas Shire Council embraces the diversity of our communities and values the contribution that all people make to the Shire. We recognise that it is a core strength of the region. We acknowledge our past so that it may guide us in the future. We recognise the wrongs done to our Indigenous community and we actively seek to reconcile so that we may all benefit from and enjoy our Shire. We acknowledge early European settlers who forged an agricultural base for our economy and we welcome all new arrivals as part of our broader community.

Goal 4 - We will promote arts and cultural programs and events that bring vibrancy to the community and compliment the tourist experience.

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: Nil

External: Nil

ATTACHMENTS

Nil