

7.14. TASTE PORT DOUGLAS - RESOURCE AND PERFORMANCE AGREEMENT

REPORT AUTHOR	Events Officer
MANAGER	Manager Community Services
DEPARTMENT	Community Services
DATE	31 March 2026

RECOMMENDATION

That Council enters into a three-year Resource and Performance Agreement with the event organisers of Taste Port Douglas for in-kind support for venue hire of the Sugar Wharf, Market Park and Rex Smeal Park, for a period of three years (2026, 2027 and 2028) up to the value of \$5,000 per annum.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Taste Port Douglas wrote to Council on 2 Feb 2026 requesting to enter into a three-year Resource and Performance Agreement from 2026 to 2028 for in-kind / fee waiver support of up to \$5,000 per year to present their annual food and beverage festival.

The support would cover the use of council owned spaces, Rex Smeal Park, the Sugar Wharf and Market Park, to deliver key festival experiences as well as covering various application fees required by the event organisers.

PREVIOUS COUNCIL CONSIDERATIONS / RESOLUTIONS

At the Ordinary Meeting held 28 September 2021 it was resolved that Council:

1. Supports Taste Port Douglas by way of sponsoring the 2021 event with \$10,000 (Ex GST) cash and in-kind use of Market Park Port Douglas, for the purpose of holding the event; and
2. Delegates authority under section 257 of the *Local Government Act 2009* to the Chief Executive Officer to administer matters associated with the above.

At the Ordinary Meeting held 13 December 2016 it was resolved that Council:

1. In lieu of providing grant funding under the Event Funding Program, enters into a three (3) year Resource and Performance Agreement for \$10,000 (GST Exc) and in-kind venue hire per annum with Taste Port Douglas Food and Wine Festival;

REPORT/BACKGROUND

Beginning in 2015, Taste Port Douglas is a food and beverage festival that presents various events over the course of a few days, bringing together local suppliers, beverage makers, restaurants, foodies, and celebrity chefs to present a program of dining experiences, entertainment, cooking classes and workshops at locations around Port Douglas.

Since its inception, Taste Port Douglas has held events at the Sugar Wharf as part of the Port Douglas Carnivale and large-scale festivals in Rex Smeal Park.

Most recently the festival has been held at the Sheraton resort with Longest Lunch events being held at Market Park.

Council has been a supporter of the Taste Festival since 2015, where in-kind support was granted for providing venues and waiving application fees. Continuing support for the festival has been provided over the last several years in different ways, both via Council resolution and other approvals.

The event supports the regions tourism destination profile, provides economic benefit, encourages business collaboration and attracts a high yield market demographic. In addition, the event supports local suppliers and highlights local produce, locally, and nationally.

The Taste festival is considered a signature event for our region, is a complimentary feature in the regional annual events calendar and is considered one of Australia's leading boutique food festivals.

In recognition of the Douglas Shire Council's support of the fee waiver request, Council would be recognised as a major partner with acknowledgment listing on the Taste Port Douglas website and in printed programs.

FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

When Council provides in-kind support, it incurs direct financial impacts such as staff time, materials, utilities, and any contracted services required to deliver the support and maintain venues and facilities.

Taste Port Douglas engages local suppliers to provide the goods and services required for the festival. The economic impact of the festival has flow-on effects in the greater community

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Clear terms, conditions, and reporting requirements will mitigate the inappropriate use of Council facilities. Full event management planning will be required for events where permits are required. An outcome report will ensure Council requirements are met.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

The event organisers have previously engaged with Council's Resource Management team to implement a sustainable event program.

SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Taste Port Douglas delivers social benefits by building community pride, enhancing cultural vibrancy, promoting connection, and supporting local food culture.

CORPORATE AND OPERATIONAL PLAN

This report has been prepared in accordance with the following:

Corporate Plan 2025-2030 Initiatives:

Theme 1 - Liveability

To deliver community activities to promote safe, healthy, inclusive and socially engaged communities with an environmental conscious.

1.1 - Deliver community initiatives that support healthy, inclusive and socially engaged communities.

Theme 2 - Prosperity

Council plans, builds and maintains the infrastructure required to improve our lifestyle and promote economic growth, working actively to support local businesses.

2.3 - Advocate for/promote economic growth opportunities and economic transition.

Theme 4 - Recovery and Resilience

To partner with community to build resilience against natural disasters creating a strong sense of social capital.

4.3 - Foster collaboration, sustainability, and a strong sense of belonging.

Operational Plan 2025-2026 Actions:

New project arisen during the financial year.

LEGISLATION AND POLICY

Not applicable

CONSULTATION

Taste Port Douglas
Council's Tourism and Economic Development Officer

CONCLUSION

Taste Port Douglas are requesting to enter into a three-year Resource and Performance Agreement from 2026 to 2028 for in-kind / fee waiver support of up to \$5,000 per year to present their annual food and beverage festival using council owned spaces, Rex Smeal Park, The Sugar Wharf and Market Park.

The objective of this level of support is to attract and partner with events that provide strategic outcomes and benefits for the Douglas Shire.

This established annual event appeals to a targeted demographic and provides both tourism and economic benefits as well as clear alignment with Council priorities, including:

- Attract external visitation and increase overnight visitor expenditure
- Position Port Douglas - Daintree as a leading event destination
- Foster local community happiness, cohesion and participation.
- Develop a year-round calendar of events.
- Active and healthy Communities.
- Destination marketing and branding.
- Build an event friendly reputation.
- Increase event return on investment and conversion.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil