



Events Strategy

2015 - 2020

Contents

1. Preface	3
Strategy Purpose.....	3
Role of Douglas Shire Council	3
2. Overview	4
Vision	4
Objectives	4
Strategies	4
Actions	4
3. Event Snapshot	5
Profile of event sectors.....	5
Rewards from Council support for events.....	5
4. Event Evaluation	6
Evaluation and assessment criteria	6
Resource and Performance Agreements.....	7
5. Development and Diversification Opportunities	8
Key influencers of events in Douglas	8
Showcasing Council assets suitable for events.....	8
Funding opportunities	8
Potential partner events.....	10
6. Implementation	12
Community engagement	14
Report, review, readjust	14
Performance management of events strategy.....	14
7. Contact and Assistance Details	15

1. Preface

Strategy Purpose

The Douglas Shire comprises a very diverse range of communities and hosts a variety of civic, significant and community events that celebrate this diversity and reinforce its reputation as a leading tourism destination.

The purpose of this document is to provide Douglas Shire Council (Council) with a framework to guide the Douglas region to increased community enrichment and economic prosperity through events.

The economic impact of major events is realised by increased visitation and the associated benefits as well as the positive influence of localised expenditure due to the supply of goods and services for the event. According to Tourism Australia, for every dollar spent on tourism activities, another 91 cents is generated in other parts of the economy.

Council's Events Strategy 2015 – 2020 aims to quantify the social and economic benefit of events in the Douglas Shire, taking into account financial, social, environmental and logistical considerations.

Identifying opportunities for future collaboration with potential new events and adopting guidelines which streamline the application and reporting processes for Council funding are other key priorities.

Although this strategy presents a five-year framework for events in Douglas, it is to remain a working document to be assessed annually and adapted to suit the requirements of Council and our communities.

Role of Douglas Shire Council

Council's contribution to events in Douglas must fit into at least one of the criteria listed in the roles continuum (tabled below).

Information provider	Assisting other organisations by providing information (eg. website links, display of brochures) about their activities
Advocate	Supporting communities and groups by advocating for certain actions from other organisations (usually other levels of government)
Facilitator	Bringing people together to develop solutions to problems
Agent	Delivering a program or activity for another organisation (usually another level of government)
Part funder	Sharing the cost of a program or activity with other organisations
Asset owner	Meeting the responsibilities associated with owning or being the custodian of assets such as infrastructure;
Fully responsible	Funding the full cost of a program or activity;
Regulator	Meeting the responsibilities associated with regulating activities through legislation or local laws

Council's primary role in events funding and in-kind support is to provide sponsorship to organisations to deliver events in Douglas which meet the key principles and requirements set out in this document.

2. Overview

Vision

To *Provide, Partner and Promote*.

Council does not see its role as the primary host or organiser of events in Douglas except in civic events such as citizenship ceremonies and other events determined by Council.

Rather, Council's Events Strategy is to *provide* funding and in-kind support opportunities, *partner* with organisations to run successful events and *promote* events through Council's communications channels.

By adopting this vision, Council is empowering organisations to showcase events which contribute to the economic and community development of the Douglas Shire while providing the support and expertise of Council staff to ensure event managers are equipped with the knowledge to ensure the community derives the most benefit from their event.

Objectives

Douglas Shire Council's Events Strategy vision will be achieved by addressing the key objectives:

- Celebrating our diverse communities
- Making a positive contribution to civic events
- Supporting and promoting community celebrations and encouraging community involvement
- Positioning the region and grow its reputation as a tourism and events destination
- Maximising the economic, media and community values of events
- Providing a robust framework for supporting and growing events
- Continuously reflecting and improving

Strategies

When detailing the event strategies to be implemented by Council, it is imperative to clearly identify Council's role in events and the potential implications for Council and our communities.

Event strategies implemented by Council will:

- Support existing events which demonstrate social and economic benefits for the Douglas Shire
- Maximise the value of existing events and enable them to grow
- Secure new events and facilitate/develop opportunities in association with these events
- Identify Community Events which could transition to Resource and Performance Agreements
- Plan and facilitate delivery of event infrastructure and services
- Provide clear, cost-effective support arrangements which inspire confidence

Actions

The actions required to implement Council's Events Strategy are wide-ranging due to the complexity of addressing the vision, objectives and strategies outlined in the overview. These actions are detailed in the Implementation chapter of this document.

3. Event Snapshot

Profile of event sectors

Council is involved in many events annually, ranging from civic ceremonies through to large-scale festivals.

Civic Events

Incorporates important events such as Australia Day ceremony and awards, Anzac Day, citizenship ceremonies, Ministerial and other official government delegations, civic Mayoral receptions and ceremonial requests to the Mayoral office. Council support includes funding, organisational and/or in-kind assistance which is provided as required.

Significant Events

Events which attract significant national and international participation, including spectators; Must demonstrate significant economic and community benefits for the Douglas Shire. Applicants must demonstrate proven success in hosting major events. These events are generally subject to strict Resource and Performance Agreements;

Community Events

Local events which attract large numbers of participants from across Far North Queensland and to a lesser extent from interstate and overseas, or events which are considered integral to the social benefit of the Douglas community. Important events with a strong community aspect which contribute to the community development of Douglas. These Events must demonstrate considerable economic and/or community benefits for Douglas.

Rewards from Council support for events

Events play a significant role in making a community an attractive, welcoming and supportive place to live. They are also a very effective platform to showcase the region and stimulate the local economy by attracting large numbers of participants which filters through the business community.

Council's support of civic and community events assists local organisations in fostering connections with the community, particularly vulnerable and disadvantaged groups which can feel socially isolated without such contact. Community events also engender community pride which is an integral component of a healthy and happy community.

While Council's primary role is to provide essential services, Council's support of significant and major events is often the major influencer in securing or maintaining popular events that attract large numbers of visitors with an economic worth many times Council's investment.

4. Event Evaluation

Evaluation and assessment criteria

Key criteria for Council funding and providing in-kind assistance will include, but is not limited to:

Significant Events (subject to Resource and Performance Agreement) - must demonstrate *substantial community and economic benefits* for the Douglas Shire.

Event type

- Ongoing successful events that can demonstrate they are growing in size and attendance as well as securing sponsorship from other sources; or
- New events seeking to become established in the Douglas Shire.

Council, community and economic benefit

- Align Council brand with established events that offer substantial promotion and recognition opportunities for Council and economic benefits for region
- Attract people from across Queensland as well as visitors from interstate and overseas
- Provide benefits to the wider community by encouraging opportunities for community participation and development
- Provide substantial economic benefits, such as increased visitor spending, encouraging the uptake of overnight accommodation as well as partnering with local businesses to stimulate local business activity and/or employment
- Offer value for money, taking consideration of Council's contribution as a percentage of the total event budget and the number of people who are anticipated to attend the event
- Are encouraged to be held outside the peak tourist season of June-September

Sustainability

- Encourage the ongoing sustainability of the event through event organisers securing funding and in-kind support from other sources
- Match Council's contribution with cash and/or in-kind support (eg volunteer hours)
- Provide adequate lead time to ensure Council can maximise the benefits from the sponsorship relationship
- Demonstrate measures and practical examples of how the event will minimally impact the environment (eg reduced landfill, carbon footprint)

Community engagement

- Provide opportunities for Council to have a presence at the event, including the Council logo on all marketing and promotional materials
- Event organisers build positive relationships with other organisations in the Douglas Shire, including seeking letters of support for the event
- Event organisers work in partnership with local business organisations to support the planning and delivery of the event
- Provide opportunities for equitable access to events for people with a disability or those who are financially disadvantaged

Community Events - must demonstrate *considerable community and/or economic benefits* for the Douglas Shire.

Event type

- New events seeking to become established in the Douglas Shire; or
- One-off events which have considerable social and/or economic benefit for the Douglas Shire
- Secured sponsorship from other sources

Council, community and economic benefit

- Align Council brand with established events that offer considerable promotion and recognition opportunities for Council and economic benefits for region
- Attract people from across Far North Queensland as well as visitors from interstate
- Provide benefits to the wider community by encouraging opportunities for community participation and development
- Provide considerable social benefits, such as the participation and benefit of diverse cultures, the disadvantaged and vulnerable communities, and involves a cross-section of the community
- Provide considerable economic benefits, such as through increased visitor spending, encouraging the uptake of overnight accommodation as well as partnering with local businesses to stimulate local business activity or employment
- Offer value for money, taking consideration of Council's contribution as a percentage of the total event budget and the number of people who are anticipated to attend the event
- Are encouraged to be held outside the peak tourist season of June-September
- Recognise and promote Council's support of the event.
- Provide opportunities for Council to have a presence at the event.

Sustainability

- Encourage the ongoing sustainability of the event through event organisers securing cash and in-kind support from other sources
- Match Council's contribution with cash and/or in-kind support (eg volunteer hours)
- Demonstrate measures and practical examples of how the event will minimally impact the environment (eg reduced landfill, carbon footprint)
- Clearly outline the objectives of the event and how you will measure the success of the event.
- Managed by local community organisations.

Community engagement

- Managed by local community organisations
- Event organisers build positive relationships with other organisations in the Douglas Shire, including seeking letters of support for the event
- Event organisers work in partnership with local organisations to support the planning and delivery of the event
- Provide opportunities for Council to have a presence at the event, including the Council logo on all marketing and promotional materials
- Provide opportunities for equitable access to events for people with a disability or those who are financially disadvantaged
- Provide social benefits, such as the participation and benefit of diverse cultures, the disadvantaged and vulnerable communities, and involves a cross-section of the community.

Resource and Performance Agreements

Resource and Performance Agreements (RPAs) outline in detail the outcomes required by Council and the benchmarks event organisers need to achieve to receive funding.

All successful applicants for Significant Events and some successful applicants for Community Events will be required to enter into an RPA with Council.

The terms of these RPAs are generally set at three years to provide event organisers with the assurance required for budgeting purposes when planning for major events, providing the business or organisation subject to the RPA meets the conditions of the agreement.

Events subject to an RPA are generally funded in stages, with payments made by Council when agreed key performance measures have been reached.

5. Development and Diversification Opportunities

Key influencers of events in Douglas

Successful events rely on the cohesive partnerships formed by key influencers.

Council will work closely with local community organisations, the Douglas Chamber of Commerce and Tourism Port Douglas Daintree to sponsor, plan for, manage and improve on events.

The most important external key influencer is Tourism and Events Queensland (TEQ), the State Government authority which contributes significant partner funding to events throughout Queensland.

Aligning Council's funding round with TEQ and aligning Council's events strategy with TEQ's funding criteria is a priority as it will help develop new and existing events in the Douglas Shire.

Council's role as a key influencer depends on the individual event, ranging from information provider to fully responsible, as detailed in Section 1 of this strategy.

Showcasing Council assets suitable for events

Council boasts a diverse collection of recreational and infrastructure assets suitable for events and functions. Event organisers are encouraged to contact CEO Unit to discuss their event and venue needs.

Civic celebrations can also be enhanced by Council making greater use of these assets to provide a more satisfying experience for participants and the public while adhering to the protocols of specific events. By showcasing Council's diverse collection of recreational and infrastructure assets, Council can also demonstrate the capacity of these venues for events which the public can hire for their own use.

Below is a list of Council's major assets suitable for events:

COUNCIL ASSETS		
Mossman Shire Hall	Port Douglas Sports Complex	Reynolds Park (PD)
Port Douglas Community Hall	Rex Smeal Park (PD)	Jalunbu Park (PD)
Port Douglas Sugar Wharf	George Davis Park (Mossman)	Beaches (Various)
Daintree Hall	Coronation Park (Showgrounds)	Foreshore (Various)

Funding opportunities

Council encourages event organisers to explore a range of funding opportunities. The following table outlines some of the potential sources of funding and links for event managers to obtain further information:

ORGANISATION	DESCRIPTION OF FUNDING OR SUPPORT PROGRAM	CONTACT DETAILS
Douglas Shire Council – Community Support Program	To assist not-for-profit organisations develop programs, projects or activities.	http://douglas.qld.gov.au/community-support-program-csp/enquiries@douglas.qld.gov.au 4099 9444
Douglas Shire Council - Event Funding	To assist commercial organisations develop a new or one-off event.	enquiries@douglas.qld.gov.au 4099 9444
Tourism & Events Queensland	State events agency responsible for attracting, creating and growing events that will generate economic and social value to Queensland. Funding via major and regional events development programs.	www.eventsqueensland.com.au
Arts Queensland	Grants are allocated through a number of programs, including RADF, which supports professional development and employment of arts and cultural workers in regional Queensland, and IRADF, which supports events that provide access for indigenous communities in regional and remote Queensland to arts and cultural services.	www.arts.qld.gov.au
Douglas Shire Council - RADF	The Regional Arts Development Fund (RADF) is a highly successful state and local government partnership that supports local artists and arts and cultural activities in Queensland communities.	http://douglas.qld.gov.au/community/community-grants/regional-arts-development-fund-radf/enquiries@douglas.qld.gov.au 4099 9444
Gambling Community Benefit Fund	Distributes grants to Queensland-based not-for-profit community groups to provide services and activities to benefit Queensland communities.	www.olgr.qld.gov.au/grants
Department of National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing	A range of funding programs are available to “active organisations”, making it easier to access the funds needed to spread the words “Get Active Queensland”. Funding falls under both major and minor infrastructure grant programs	http://www.qld.gov.au/recreation/sports/funding/
Screen Queensland	Offers a range of funding initiatives for film development investment, multi-platform and games, micro budget movies, indigenous stories and training, professional development and travel grants.	http://www.screenqueensland.com.au/funding.html
Queensland Arts Council	Supports the arts in regional, remote and very remote/isolated Australia, offering applicants the chance to be granted \$5000 to \$30,000 towards their artistic projects.	www.artslinkqld.com.au/regional-arts/regional-arts-fund/
Indigenous Culture Support Program	Supports the maintenance and continued development of indigenous culture with a wide range of cultural projects, including traditional art and craft production, dance and theatre and community festivals showcasing indigenous talent.	www.arts.gov.au/indigenous

Potential partner events

Establishing new partnerships is essential to growing the community, social and economic benefits of events.

These partnerships encompass potential funding partners and event managers that can provide social and economic stimulation for the local community.

The following potential events are not a blueprint for Council to pursue but an indication of the opportunities and potential benefits of forming new partnerships and supporting new or growing events:

- **Celebrating Our Communities**

Increasing Council's collaboration on existing events and activities is an effective way to celebrate our communities.

As an example of the benefits of closer collaboration with local organisations, Council could help create a more vibrant Christmas spirit with lights and decorations built up over several years on the basis of a shared contribution to funding.

Christmas lights and decorations instil confidence in communities and establish a sense of community pride.

The Christmas season is an important tourism period for the Douglas Shire with potential to grow.

Families are more attracted to holiday in destinations over the Christmas season, which demonstrates a vibrant community spirit.

By creating a festive atmosphere in the lead-up to and during Christmas, the Douglas Shire is more likely to secure repeat visitation.

Council's active participation to enhance our communities during this period would demonstrate its commitment to improving the community and economic outlook in a partnership with our local communities.

- **One-off major sports tourism events**

Major sports tourism events are a key focus for major funding partner Tourism Events Queensland.

The Douglas Shire boasts the location, conditions and tourism infrastructure to attract major one-off sports tourism events.

They provide a great atmosphere for spectators and build a sense of community pride.

One-off major events do not provide the ongoing economic benefits of annual major events but attract a critical mass of participants and spectators which boosts the local economy.

These participants and spectators then become ambassadors for the Douglas Shire and potential return visitors.

The media exposure associated with one-off major events promotes the Douglas Shire to potential visitors who otherwise would not have considered here as a holiday destination.

Being actively involved in promoting major sports tourism events in the Douglas Shire enhances Council's reputation for supporting activities which stimulate the local community socially and economically.

- **Ongoing major sports tourism events**

Building on an existing sports tourism event or establishing a new one which is ongoing in partnership with local organisations may create significant community and economic benefits for the Douglas Shire.

Major sports tourism events attract dozens of participants and hundreds of spectators which will be expected to provide an economic boost for the Douglas Shire, particularly during the wet or shoulder seasons.

Sports tourism events create a great atmosphere with the influx of visitors in less active tourism periods and exchange of cultures courtesy of the involvement of international participants.

The benefits of repeat annual visitation from a large number of people in a quiet period for tourism and the potential to convert participants into ambassadors for the Douglas Shire who return for holidays or encourage friends and family to do so is significant.

Major sports tourism events are also very attractive for potential funding partners as well as external sponsors.

Council's support would demonstrate a proactive approach to stimulate the local economy in the off-season and provide entertainment for locals.

Council's support will also help build relationships with potential funding partners and forge an identity for the Douglas Shire as being capable of staging major events.

- **Arts and lifestyle festival**

An annual mixed arts and lifestyle festival held in the Spring shoulder season in partnership with local organisations could celebrate the unique artistic and agricultural diversity of Tropical North Queensland.

Local artists and agricultural producers are able to participate in a festival which involves experts in their field from around Australia.

The local community can celebrate the diversity of the tropics and enjoy a cultural experience.

A festival can build a reputation among artistic and agricultural communities around Australia which attracts participants and spectators to the Douglas Shire in the shoulder season, stimulating the local economy.

Media exposure of the event would also promote the Douglas Shire nationally.

6. Implementation

The following provides a detailed breakdown of key strategies and actions for Council:

KEY STRATEGY	ACTIONS
Strategy 1	Support existing events which demonstrate economic and social benefits for the Douglas Shire
	<p>The Douglas Shire boasts an impressive calendar of Significant and Community Events. To further boost the Douglas Shire's reputation as a premier events destination, it is important to support existing events which demonstrate economic and social benefits for the Douglas Shire.</p> <p>The following actions will enable Council to support existing events which meet the criteria of Council's events strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • proactively manage existing agreements and renewal arrangements to ensure they are compliant with Council's events strategy and instil confidence in event managers of the long-term security for their event in the region; • work with other levels of government and private sector stakeholders to maximise funding opportunities.
Strategy 2	Maximise the value of existing events and enable them to grow
	<p>The Douglas Shire hosts a wide range of events which showcase the region to a national and international audience and generate significant economic and community development returns for Douglas. Generating positive industry relationships, supporting individual events to develop and leverage benefit from each other and instilling confidence in event organisers are core elements of a successful approach to retaining and growing events in Douglas.</p> <p>The following actions will enable Council to maximise the value of existing events and support their capacity to grow:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure Council's investment in existing events is conducive to the retention of these events and facilitates their growth; • develop a stronger partnership with key strategic stakeholders as a priority; • growth targets and performance indicators will be established with event managers; • contract periods for Significant Events should be co-ordinated where possible with key strategic stakeholders for jointly sponsored events; • encourage growth in event participation from interstate and overseas participants to maximise the length of visitation; • identify the media benefits and opportunities that each event can deliver and work with the event manager and key strategic stakeholders to maximise these opportunities for Douglas; • leverage off existing events and create an events calendar to profile Douglas as an attractive destination for events; • consult with key strategic stakeholders and community organisations to develop an annual program of community activities, business support and marketing events to be staged in conjunction with Significant Events; • work in collaboration with key stakeholders to access wider national and international markets and the attract new participants and visitors through the recognition of Significant Events in regional trade and investment development programs.
Strategy 3	Secure new events and facilitate/develop opportunities in association with these events
	<p>Douglas will promote its strengths – the natural landscape and lifestyle attributes that present a competitive advantage for the region. The significant return on investment will come from working in partnership with key strategic stakeholders to attract new events which are commensurate with Douglas Shire's aspirations and which can be supported from existing assets.</p>

	<p>The following actions will support Council's capacity to secure new events and facilitate/develop opportunities in association with these events. Many of these actions will also support the retention and growth of existing events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • focus Council's efforts on those activities and attributes where the region has a natural, competitive advantage and offers the greatest prospects for success; • identify low occupancy months without major events and prioritise the attraction of new events for these months; • identify the event sector strengths of the Douglas Shire and identify potential events which could be secured with the support of Council and key strategic stakeholders; • clearly articulate the Douglas Shire's point of difference in relation to its natural environment, competitive advantages and assets when hosting major events.
Strategy 4	Identify Community Events which could transition to Significant Events
	<p>Providing support for existing Community Events to grow and become a Significant Event presents an opportunity to generate significant economic impact and media exposure benefits for the Douglas Shire.</p> <p>The following actions will enable Council to identify Community Events to transition to Significant Events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • establish the potential of an event in relation to other or similar events staged nationally and/or internationally; • identify and understand trends in the major events industry; • ascertain the potential growth and event growth plans with event managers to fully understand the event's potential; • collaborate with key strategic stakeholders on those events which show potential to transition; • engage with other levels of government and private sector stakeholders to remove any obstacles for events to demonstrate their growth potential.
Strategy 5	Plan and facilitate delivery of event infrastructure and services
	<p>Council's facilitation of the development and enhancement of its infrastructure and services to support major events and attention to the planning and provision of facilities and services will enable the Douglas Shire to grow its major events suite in the longer term.</p> <p>The following actions will contribute to Council's capacity to deliver the infrastructure and services necessary to support the development and growth of events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • undertake an audit of existing event infrastructure to identify critical gaps to advancing the objectives of this strategy and provide an evidence base to inform event infrastructure priorities; • ensure there are capital investment plans in place for critical event infrastructure so these facilities remain available and appropriate to the needs of existing and planned events; • consider the physical and operational needs of events when planning the development, redevelopment or maintenance of public places and other areas which regularly – or are potentially able to – support the staging of events; • adopt best-practice strategies to manage the impacts of major events on local communities to engender greater understanding and support for them.
Strategy 6	Provide clear and cost-effective support arrangements which improve confidence
	<p>Council's approach to supporting events will be transparent, evidence-based and accessible. Streamlined procedures and single points of entry for event organisers are vital. There will be rigour and transparency in assessing value for money from Council's event sponsorship investments. Council must maintain a proactive, leadership role in supporting events in the Douglas Shire in partnership with key strategic stakeholders and the tourism industry to maximise the market exposure of these events to wider audiences.</p> <p>The following actions will provide the platform for clear, cost-effective and contemporary support arrangements to build confidence in the region among event organisers and sponsors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure a competitive funding model and a robust assessment framework are established to support the Council's investment in events; • adopt an appropriate set of performance measures to assess the success of the

	<p>Douglas Shire's events and to maximise opportunities for growth and expansion of these events;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explore the creation of a fully integrated digital platform for events inclusive of an events calendar, social media sites and other communication tools to enhance the recognition of the Douglas Shire's proposition as an events destination.
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Community Engagement

Council's implementation of a robust events assessment and evaluation system which is transparent and accountable requires alignment with the adopted Community Engagement Strategy that clearly outlines Council's criteria for funding and in-kind support.

Educating event managers about the requirement to adhere to application timelines and evaluation and assessment criteria is essential.

Council will use all available information distribution channels to inform event managers when funding rounds open and close and emphasise the requirement to submit an application for events to be considered for Council funding.

The impartial Council panel that evaluates funding applications will be equipped with a stringent checklist which clearly defines the value of the individual criteria in determining the overall assessment of applications. This eliminates the risk of Council supporting events which do not match the relevant criteria.

If required, Council will host workshops when the event funding round is announced to assist applicants to understand the application process, ensuring events meet the selection criteria.

The promotion of these workshops is critical to community engagement, ensuring event managers are aware that Council has initiated a process to support them.

Report, Review, Re-adjust

A summary of all Council-sponsored and supported events will be included in Council's Annual Report.

Key priorities and actions will include evaluation of the event outcome report and the annual review of event acquittal against the criteria of Council's events strategy, with adjustments made accordingly. Feedback will be provided to event organisers to help strengthen future events.

Measures to be implemented by Council to strengthen the *Report, Review, Readjust* requirements of event managers include:

- Event inquiry template
- Event run sheet
- Event risk assessment checklist
- Media booking and marketing request sheet
- Post campaign analysis template
- Event briefing document template

Performance Management of Events Strategy

An appropriate monitoring and reporting system for the implementation of Council's events strategy provides a targeted analysis of current activities and progress.

To encourage consistency in reporting, benchmarking and a coherent focus on outcomes, Council and key strategic stakeholders will negotiate strategic "success indicators" and key performance indicators (KPIs).

KPIs which might be considered to assess the success of the events strategy may include:

- The number of events sponsored by Council which achieved their contracted performance targets
- The number of new events attracted to the Douglas Shire
- The level of support leveraged from key strategic stakeholders to support, secure and create events in the Douglas Shire

7. Contact and Assistance Details

For further information on the Events Strategy, or to obtain assistance with an application, please contact Council's CEO Unit

Telephone: (07) 4099 9444

Email: enquiries@douglas.qld.gov.au