

9.10 MAJOR EVENTS REVIEW OUTCOMES

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Meeting

Council

Date

14 November 2023

1. Purpose

To present the outcomes of the investigations to the proposed major event changes for 2024-25 and beyond in line with the resolutions from the 16 May 2023 Council meeting.

2. Recommendations

That Council:

1. Notes the outcomes of the investigations into council's major events for 2024-25.
2. Approves the annual hosting of a women's Tour Down Under stage with an annual budget allocation of \$25,000 commencing in 2024-25, indexed annually in line with CPI, noting that if not needed in its entirety any remaining funds would be returned to savings.
3. Approves a \$13,000 increase in the budget for the Onkaparinga Christmas Pageant to \$40,000 in 2024-25, indexed annually in line with CPI to address increasing costs.
4. Approves all major events budgets are indexed annually in line with CPI to help address increasing costs.
5. Approves rotating the Beachside Food and Wine Festival annually through multiple locations in co-ordination with council's Summer Activation Program.
6. Approves rotating the Trucks on Tour through multiple locations as additional suitable council venues can be found.
7. Notes community interest in a multicultural event and that community engagement outcomes will be used for future planning of major events.

3. Executive summary

Council currently delivers/hosts five major events annually. Following the conclusion of the three-year event plan 2020-21 to 2022-23, a review of council's major events was undertaken. Community engagement was conducted via an online survey and at the major events held in January and February 2023 to provide guidance on how we continue to manage the existing major events and whether any changes should be made.

A report was presented to Council on 16 May 2023 which included the outcome of the major events community engagement. At the meeting Council resolved to investigate potential future changes to the major events.

An Elected Member Session was held on 11 July 2023 to discuss our major events and also provide an update on the Australia Day events community engagement. Feedback from elected members at the session was considered in the preparation of this report.

The outcomes from the community engagement on our Australia Day events will be presented to Council in a separate report at a future date.

The recommended changes/improvements to council's major events can be summarised as:

- hosting of a women's Tour Down Under stage annually (subject to the outcome of an annual expression of interest process) with a \$25,000 operational budget allocation*
- increasing the Onkaparinga Christmas Pageant to \$40,000 to meet escalating costs*
- indexing all major events budgets are indexed annually in line with CPI*
- rotating the Beachside Food and Wine Festival and Trucks on Tour events through different venues to showcase more council assets, bring the events to more local communities, and support a broader range of local businesses
- changing the name of the Australia Day Bush Fair to Australia Day Family Fair to better reflect the nature of this event
- noting community interest in a multicultural event, but given current support of our existing major events and budget constraints this will inform future event planning.

* All budget allocations are subject to Council's annual budget process.

4. Background

Community Plan 2030	<p>people: connected, engaged, active, healthy</p> <p>place: green, inviting, accessible, liveable</p> <p>prosperity: economically strong, environmentally thriving</p> <p>Council's major events deliver a range of benefits under the themes of people, place and prosperity. They help people connect in a range of places throughout our city and support our economy to prosper through economic growth and tourism.</p>
Policy and/or relevant legislation	Nil
Who did we talk to/who will we be talking to	<p>We sought feedback at each of our major events in 2022-23 and undertook broader community engagement from 9 January to 20 February 2023.</p> <p>This was promoted through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • social media • roadside banners • direct email to Your Say Onkaparinga members, and • at our major events. <p>An Elected Member Session was held on 11 July 2023 to share the community engagement outcomes and seek feedback on our major events.</p>

5. Discussion

Council currently delivers/hosts the following five major events annually:

- Trucks on Tour (October)
- Onkaparinga Christmas Pageant (November)
- Tour Down Under Men's Stage (January)
- Australia Day Bush Fair (January)
- Beachside Food and Wine Festival (February)

In 2022 and 2023 we also delivered a women's stage of the Tour Down Under (January).

5.1 Major events review

Council periodically reviews the programs and activities we deliver to identify and implement continuous improvement opportunities. The review of our current major events commenced in January 2023 and included a city-wide community engagement, internal meetings with subject matter experts and investigations into locations across our city.

The results of that review – including background on all of our existing major events – were presented to council at the [16 May Council meeting](#) where it was resolved:

1. *That Council notes the agenda report and related Major Events Review community engagement outcomes.*
2. *That Council notes that, based on the finding of the Major Events Review, it is proposed to continue to deliver the annual program of five major events in 2023-24 and beyond, subject to the approval and adoption of Council's annual business plan and budgets.*
3. *That Council approves the following investigations into potential future changes to the major events delivered in 2024-25:*
 - *the annual hosting of a women's Tour Down Under stage*
 - *rotating one or more of the events through different locations each year in the context of related costs/benefits and the Summer Activation Program*
 - *introducing a new multicultural event, likely through discontinuation or redesign of an existing event, which responds to:*
 - o *changing community sentiment;*
 - o *cost pressures; and*
 - o *the opportunity to extend the annual event program into March each year.*
4. *That the investigation findings are provided to elected members at an Elected Member Session.*

An Elected Member Session was held on 11 July 2023 to discuss the investigations. From the discussions at the session elected members asked that this report considers:

- what community the engagement outcomes indicate regarding community sentiment around any potential changes to our major events
- the criteria for what makes a successful major event and why an event would and wouldn't rotate, including the variables/choices available
- the pros and cons of rotating Trucks on Tour, Australia Day Bush Fair and the Beachside Food and Wine Festival (including whether Trucks on Tour be rotated to areas where there are more families demographically)
- whether a laser or drone show could replace the fireworks display at the Australia Day Bush Fair
- the pros and cons of a multicultural event, and potential costs

- how a multicultural event could highlight our local multicultural communities and build on the refugee event held in McLaren Vale.

A number of other suggestions for a potential multicultural event and improving our existing major events were captured at the elected member session.

5.2 Community engagement outcomes

Community engagement was undertaken on our major events throughout January and February 2023. The engagement asked our communities for feedback on our existing major events and how they could be improved, as well as seeking input on options for a new major event. A total of 417 people provided input, and the outcomes were presented to Council at their [16 May 2023 meeting](#) (refer agenda item 9.3 attachment 2). In summary the engagement outcomes were:

- our major events are attended by a range of people of different ages and from across our region and beyond
- community members value and enjoy council's major events and there was strong support for the continuation of all five events – ranging from 77 per cent for the Australia Day Bush Fair to 98 per cent for the Onkaparinga Christmas Pageant
- while we received a number of suggestions for improving the existing events, most people would attend the same events again, and are satisfied with the location, entertainment and food and drink options. However, there is some support for rotating specific events into different locations
- while we did not specifically ask about the timing of the Australia Day Bush Fair, we received a number of unsolicited comments (from 25 people, or 7.5 per cent of survey respondents) stating that the event should be moved to a different day or cancelled/replaced
- feedback specifically relating to the Australia Day Bush Fair indicated that 49 per cent of respondents preferred to see this major event remain on Australia Day, with 46 per cent preferring the event is held on a different day, is revised, or not held at all. Five per cent of respondents were unsure/didn't care.
- there is support for new events being added to council's major events program.

Further community engagement was undertaken specifically on council's Australia Day events in June-July 2023, which includes the Australia Day Bush Fair major event. The outcomes from the community engagement on our Australia Day events will be presented to Council in a separate report in the future.

5.3 What makes a successful major event?

The objectives of our major events vary from community and social to economic growth and tourism outcomes.

The most successful major events bring a large number of people together to enjoy free activities and entertainment, support local businesses, and encourage new and repeat visitation.

Contributing factors to an event's success include a suitable location with access to public transport, strong marketing and promotion and favourable weather.

5.4 Proposed changes to our major events

While our current major events are well attended and strongly supported (as evidenced in the community engagement outcomes), it is important that we continuously review our program of major events and their locations to ensure they:

- meet community expectations and changing community preferences
- provide opportunities for economic growth and tourism across our region

- deliver on multiple strategic objectives of council such as community connection, diversity and inclusion.

Hosting a stage of the women's Tour Down Under

Hosting a stage of the women's Tour Down Under (TDU) in 2022 and 2023 were recent examples of our commitment to supporting the growth in women's cycling and gender equity in major sporting events, whilst at the same time growing our events offering. Council approved supporting a women's TDU stage in 2024 through the [Council resolution of 21 March 2023](#).

Hosting a women's TDU stage beyond 2024 will expand council's ongoing major events portfolio to six events and allow council to deliver on our diversity principles as outlined in the Community Plan 2030 outcome 'We support our communities' strengths, advancing equity and inclusion for all'.

To enable the ongoing hosting of a women's TDU stage (subject to the approval of an annual expression of interest process) an annual budget allocation of \$25,000 will be required (indexed annually in line with CPI), commencing in 2024-25. The men's stage of the TDU costs up to \$180,000. The budget for the women's stage will predominantly be used for traffic management, the removal and replacement of infrastructure, and local activations. The budget may not be needed in its entirety each year, and this will depend on the race route, whether we are hosting a start and/or a finish, and how many activations are needed. Any unused budget will be returned to operational savings.

As this is a hosted event, staff resourcing will be reallocated to include a stage of the women's TDU in our annual events calendar in addition to our existing major events.

Rotating one or more of our major events

Pros and cons

The positives of rotating a major event include:

- Delivering/hosting major events in different parts of our city will showcase our region's diverse places and spaces.
- Different venues offer diverse environments and backdrops, which can enhance the event's atmosphere, provide unique experiences for attendees and maintain the event's novelty.
- Different locations can attract new attendees. People may be more inclined to attend or revisit the event if it's held in different places, or in a closer location to their home.
- Rotating venues can help establish new partnerships with local businesses and community groups, and distribute the economic impact across different communities, benefiting local economies and encouraging tourism.

The negatives of rotating a major event include:

- Each new location brings its own set of logistical and unforeseen challenges that may arise, including infrastructure requirements which can add time to the event planning.
- Not all venues may offer the same quality or amenities, which could affect the overall experience and create varied impressions of the event.
- Frequent location changes might confuse attendees, making it harder for them to plan their visit and establish a tradition of attending the event.

Rotating our major events received mixed feedback through the community engagement, with a preference (66 per cent support) to keep the Onkaparinga Christmas Pageant in Christies Beach, and a willingness to consider the rotation of other events.

Research was conducted to better understand potential locations for major events, and consider elements such as:

- Size/scale of open space
- Slope, type and condition of the surface
- Exposure to weather conditions, in particular wind
- Availability of services (such as power and water)
- Available infrastructure (such as lighting, toilets and car parking)
- Proximity to local residents
- Proximity to local businesses.

Some of our popular open spaces were deemed unsuitable for a major event based on the above, such as Thalassa Park which is too hilly/sloped and does not provide enough car parking.

Examples of other council venues that may be suitable include:

- Nashwauk Reserve, Moana
- Port Noarlunga township
- some of our sports parks*, such as [Aldinga](#), [Hackham](#), [Happy Valley](#), [McLaren Vale](#), [McLaren Flat](#), [Reynella](#) and [Karingal Reserve](#).

** subject to negotiation with the current leaseholders.*

Based on all of the above factors, major events that could be rotated through different locations (including their traditional location) include:

- Beachside Food & Wine Festival (may need a name change to Onkaparinga Food & Wine Festival if being rotated through inland locations)
- stages of the Tour Down Under
- Trucks on Tour (would require a large flat area that can cater for very heavy vehicles)
- Australia Day Bush Fair/Family Fair (would require a large area away from residents/businesses for launching fireworks).

Beachside Food and Wine Festival

Feedback through the community engagement was mixed, the strongest preference was to retain this event in Christies Beach (44 per cent said it should stay in the same location, and 29 per cent say it should be rotated).

Two of our five current major events are held in Christies Beach (Beachside Food and Wine Festival and the Onkaparinga Christmas Pageant) so there is an opportunity to showcase our region's diverse places and spaces and support a broader range of local economies by rotating at least one of these events. With 66 per cent of respondents wanting to keep the Pageant in Christies Beach, it is recommended that consideration be given to rotating the Beachside Food and Wine Festival to other council locations.

Whilst the event has been successful in Christies Beach, it is proposed to rotate the Beachside Food and Wine Festival through suitable locations, including Christies Beach, which will enable us to showcase more council assets, bring the event to more local communities, and support a broader range of local businesses.

Suggested locations and associated criteria are outlined in the table below:

Suggested location	Economic impact for local businesses	Showcasing community assets	Size and shape of the space
Port Noarlunga township (Gawler and Ward Streets)	There are a number of local businesses who can participate in and benefit from this event being held in the township	The village atmosphere of Port Noarlunga township is unique to any other coastal township in our city, and with the local arts focus we can incorporate additional elements into the event	Gawler Street and Ward Street provide a location where the event can wind through the township and offer various 'pockets' for people to explore what will be on offer
Nashwauk Reserve, Moana	With limited bricks and mortar businesses in the area, we would encourage city-wide businesses to benefit from participating in the event	Nashwauk Reserve and Moana Beach are two assets side by side and this event can showcase them and encourage repeat visitation	Nashwauk Reserve is large enough to hold this event in its entirety in one location
Main Road, McLaren Vale	There are many businesses who can participate in and benefit from this event being held in the township	While the location is technically a state government road, this township represents the heart of our wine region, with local craft beer and gin which makes it an ideal location to hold this event	The event would feature one long strip of road, which allows for the pockets of entertainment and eating spaces to be clustered or presented uniquely as required
Rotary Park, Christies Beach	There are a number of local businesses who can participate in and benefit from this event being held in this well known event space	Rotary Park is on the Esplanade overlooking the ocean which creates a beautiful backdrop for the event	The event space is smaller in size, but utilising the surrounding roads can alleviate this

Additional locations may be added as they come to light.

Tour Down Under

We will advocate for the ongoing consideration of our coastal and inland townships for race start and finishes for the both the men's and women's TDU, and the rotation of locations to ensure the benefits are shared amongst our main streets and townships, and to highlight various elements of our region.

The announcement of the start for the [THINK! Road Safety Men's Stage 5](#) at Christies Beach in 2024 is an example of what can be achieved through our strong working relationship with the TDU team.

Ultimately the race routes are determined by the TDU team, and the race organisers will likely continue to change start and finish locations as their intention has traditionally been that no two TDUs should be the same.

Trucks on Tour

There was mixed sentiment in the community engagement to rotating the Trucks on Tour event (with 53 per cent unsure/don't care, and 29 per cent saying it should stay in the same location).

To date we have been unable to find an alternative council location to Wilfred Taylor Reserve for the Trucks on Tour event. This event requires a large flat area that can cater for very heavy vehicles, and the western car park at Wilfred Taylor Reserve is ideal for this, with lighter vehicles able to go onto the grassed area (archery field) further west to expand the event space. Holding the event at Wilfred Taylor Reserve also showcases another council asset, as it is located right alongside one of our premier playgrounds.

We will continue to investigate alternative council sites with a view to rotating the Trucks on Tour event through multiple locations, including Wilfred Taylor Reserve. Ideally we will locate the event in areas where we have the highest number of families with young children. Should suitable alternative council venues be found, an update will be provided to elected members via email.

Australia Day Bush Fair/Family Fair

Similar to Trucks on Tour, there was mixed sentiment from the community engagement in regard to rotating the Australia Day Bush Fair/Family Fair (42 per cent are unsure/don't care, and 37 per cent say it should stay in the same location), and we have been unable to find an alternative location to Flinders University Oval (South Adelaide Football Club) that meets the requirements for this event, in particular for safely launching a fireworks display.

Flinders University Oval provides a central location with good access to parking and public transport so we are anticipate continuing this event in the same location for now.

Fireworks/drones/laser displays at major events

The Australia Day Bush Fair/Family Fair has included a fireworks display for more than 10 years. However fireworks come with risks, especially in summer. Minor incidents with fireworks debris have been experienced at this event, and the fireworks were cancelled in 2020 due to local bushfires, which contributed to our lowest ever attendance at this event (1500 people).

To mitigate risks while ensuring this major event continues to meet community expectations, research was undertaken into drone shows and laser displays as an alternative to fireworks. However research into these options has identified that either option would require a significant budget increase.

Drone show

The cost ranges from around \$30,000 for a short drone demonstration with 50-100 drones, up to \$200,000 for a longer and larger drone show (300-500 drones). Given there are no South Australian providers we would also incur additional costs to bring in a drone company from interstate.

Drones require a large buffer/exclusion zone for safety. The size of the exclusion area is determined by the height of the drones in flight. For example a drone show with a maximum height of 150m would require a buffer of 150m around the show. This would incur additional costs for fencing/barriers and security.

Road closures may also be required for nearby roads, which could add to traffic management costs and inconvenience for local residents.

Drones cannot fly in rainy conditions, and wind gusts can also cause problems, which can mean cancellation of the drones at short notice.

Laser display

The cost of a basic laser show starts at around \$80,000. Providers have indicated that they work best in winter when the air is more dense, and laser shows in warmer months generally require the addition of smoke machines so that the lasers are visible.

Based on the research undertaken, it is not recommended that we host a drone show or laser display due to the costs associated with these entertainment options.

Therefore it is proposed that we continue with fireworks at the Australia Day Bush Fair/Family Fair and implement further risk mitigations.

Increasing the budget for the Onkaparinga Christmas Pageant

While the event budget has been unchanged for many years, the costs for the Pageant have continued to increase annually, with traffic management costs the main factor. Adding audio (a PA system) in recent years so that attendees can hear the Pageant commentary throughout the event enhanced the event experience, but also added to our costs. As a result this event has exceeded the \$27,000 budget for consecutive years, with the annual spend around \$40,000. It is proposed that the budget for the pageant be increased by \$13,000 to \$40,000 to ensure the event can continue in its current format and meet the expectations of attendees. The Events team will identify cost savings and work to the revised budget, and the annual CPI increase should cover ongoing cost increases.

Renaming two major events

Given the focus on families it is proposed to change the name of the Australia Day Bush Fair to Australia Day Family Fair. This better reflects the nature of the event, and matches the name used for the 2020 event when it was temporarily moved to Wilfred Taylor Reserve. This was also discussed at the 11 July 2023 Elected Member Session.

Also, the Beachside Food and Wine Festival may require a name change to Onkaparinga Food and Wine Festival if being rotated through inland locations.

Consider a multicultural event

Based on suggestions and feedback we have received, the review considered the opportunity for new/alternative events. During the engagement phase we asked the community about other major events that could be considered, with 80 per cent of community engagement participants supporting the introduction of a multicultural event, as well as a New Years event which received 69 per cent support.

In the 11 July 2023 Elected Member Session it was suggested that this report include the pros and cons of a multicultural event, and detail of the potential cost.

Pros and cons

The positives of a multicultural event include:

- Aligning an event to strategic outcomes. Council's [Community Plan 2030](#), [Community Capacity Strategic Plan 2021-24](#) and the [Inclusive Communities Action Plan 2021-2024](#), [Reconciliation Action Plan 2022-2024](#) and [Arts and Cultural Development Action Plan 2022-25](#) highlight the importance of celebrating all cultures and backgrounds.
- Putting a focus on the City of Onkaparinga's multicultural communities.
- The concept of a multicultural event received more support from our community than a New Years event.

The potential negatives of a multicultural event include:

- Due to the cost (approximately \$50,000) an existing event would likely need to make way for a new event of similar scale and cost.

Given a constrained budget and strong support for our existing major events, it is proposed to use the community feedback in our future planning as well as efforts to celebrate all cultures in our existing events.

6. Financial implications

Financial summary

Item	Capital	Operating	Comment
Budget			
Current budget allocation	Nil	\$327,000	Our total budget for major events is \$327,000 made up of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$20,000 Trucks on Tour • \$27,000 Onkaparinga Christmas Pageant • \$180,000 Tour Down Under men's stage • \$50,000 Australia Day Bush Fair • \$50,000 Beachside Food and Wine Festival
Additional funding required	Nil	\$38,000	Additional funding needed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$25,000 to add a Tour Down Under women's stage • \$13,000 Onkaparinga Christmas Pageant budget increase
Funding source and amount	Nil	\$38,000	Rates
Required Budget impact	Nil	0.024%	Based on 2023-24 rates
Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP)			
In current LTFP?	Yes – current allocation		
LTFP category	Materials, contracts and other expenses		
Timing in LTFP	Annually		
Additional debt		Nil	Not applicable
Rates funded amount		\$365,000	Original plus new budget
Ongoing rate impact		0.024%	Required rate impact

7. Risk and opportunity management

Risk	
Identify	Mitigation
Reputation/community expectation	<p>Our community value and enjoy council's major events, and expect them to continue, as evidenced in the community engagement outcomes detailed in the 16 May 2023 report to Council.</p> <p>Community feedback also indicated areas for improvement and additional opportunities as described in this report.</p> <p>Continuing to deliver our major events and improve/expand on what we offer will ensure we meet community expectations.</p>
Financial/business sustainability	<p>Due to increasing costs our major events can no longer be delivered in the same manner. As outlined in the 16 May 2023 report to Council all major events budgets will be indexed annually in line with CPI to ensure we can maintain the nature and scale of all events, or reduce the scope in line with budget constraints.</p> <p>Replacing one of our existing major events with a multicultural event wouldn't impact on existing budgets. However if we added a new major event and continued our existing events this would require additional budget and resourcing.</p>
Service delivery	Gaining community feedback through the community engagement process to ensure we are delivering events that meet community expectation.

Opportunity	
Identify	Maximising the opportunity
Opportunity to act on feedback captured	Incorporating feedback from the community and elected members will improve our major events offering.
<p>Opportunity to consider a future event that delivers on strategic outcomes</p> <p>Opportunity to consider a future event that has strong community support</p> <p>Opportunity to work with local cultural groups in the delivery of a major event</p>	<p>Feedback obtained from our communities through the engagement phase, as well as information obtained through our investigations will be used in future event planning.</p> <p>In the meantime there will be an increased focus on expanding cultural presence at existing major events.</p>
Opportunity to spread the benefits of our major events into additional locations/communities	Rotating one or more of our major events will enable us to showcase more council assets, bring the events to more local communities, and (in some instances) support a broader range of local businesses.

8. Next steps

Any recommended changes endorsed through this report will be implemented as part of the major events planning phase from March 2024.

9. Attachments

Nil

- END OF REPORT -