



12.1 **EVENTS STRATEGY AND OUTDOOR EVENTS POLICY 2023 - 26**

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1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To present the results of further community consultation on the draft Events Strategy and Outdoor Events Policy 2023 – 2026 and key document amendments in response to feedback provided.
- 1.2 To recommend adoption of the Events Strategy and Outdoor Events Policy 2023 – 2026.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 Events within the City of Port Phillip are a defining feature of the municipality; attracting visitation and economic growth, building its character and reputation, and bringing vibrancy, creativity and celebration to everyday life for the community.
- 2.2 The Events Strategy aims to shape the short-and long-term future of Port Phillip events, presenting a vision and aspiration for the events calendar and actions to ensure its outcomes are achieved.
- 2.3 The Outdoor Events Policy works in tandem with the Strategy, comprising operational guidelines by which events are approved, supported and assessed.
- 2.4 The Events Strategy and Outdoor Events Policy were last adopted by Council in 2017 and spanned from 2018 – 2022, with growth and improvements delivered as part of their implementation until most events were halted in 2020 and 2021 in response to pandemic related health restrictions.
- 2.5 Ahead of development of the new Strategy and Policy, targeted consultation was used to seek feedback and input from our community, councillors, event attendees, local business and event operators, with first stage consultation results presented to Council as part of a briefing (May 2022) and Report (June 2022).
- 2.6 The draft Strategy and Policy were subsequently released for broad community consultation through Have Your Say, and the results were presented to Council as part of a briefing (Aug 2022) with those results noted in section 5 of this Council report.
- 2.7 This feedback has contributed to the development of the Events Strategy, using it to shape a vision, key actions and shape our priorities for the coming period.
- 2.8 Economic benefit information has also been calculated from some events held in 2022, with the intention to continue to gather this baseline data and consider it in evaluating our events and building a sustainable and meaningful calendar into the future. Due to the impact of Covid on events a full year's worth of data has not yet been collected, and this data will be presented into the future.
- 2.9 The attached Strategy and Policy would commence from 2023 through to 2026, if adopted by Council. It is noted that they would be applied to expressions of interest for



major events scheduled to be held in 2023/24. It will not apply to major events for 2022/23 as these have already been determined.

3. RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 3.1 Notes the results of the broad community consultation via Have Your Say on events in the municipality as presented in this Report and as Attachment Three.
- 3.2 Adopts the Events Strategy 2023 – 2026 (Attachment One) and delegates to the CEO the ability to make changes that do not alter the substantive content of the document.
- 3.3 Adopts the Outdoor Events Policy 2023 – 2026 (Attachment Two) and delegates to the CEO the ability to make changes that do not alter the substantive content of the document.
- 3.4 Rescinds the Events Strategy and Outdoor Events Policy 2018-2022.

4. KEY POINTS/ISSUES

- 4.1 The draft Events Strategy and Outdoor Events Policy have been developed following community and industry consultation, consideration of the Council Plan and other relevant CoPP strategies, and assessment of previous approaches and their outcomes.
- 4.2 Outcomes of the Strategy have been identified and are included within the attached draft strategy, as well as actions to achieve their delivery.
- 4.3 Key additions or priorities within the draft Strategy that set it apart from previous iterations include:
 - 4.3.1 A strong priority on curation of our events calendar.
 - 4.3.2 A focus on economic development and visitation as a priority for events both internally and externally produced.
 - 4.3.3 Measuring economic benefit from events and data collection.
 - 4.3.4 Recognition of the impact of COVID on events and the community and a commitment to support that recovery.
 - 4.3.5 Identification of priority event areas, types and times to build our events calendar.
 - 4.3.6 Identification of gaps in the events calendar and mechanisms to respond to them.
 - 4.3.7 Increased communications surrounding events, including with residents, businesses and visitors.
 - 4.3.8 Clarification regarding officer delegation, processes for trialling and testing new events, and working with key partners, stakeholders and regulators.
 - 4.3.9 Premium sites established as South Beach Reserve, Catani Gardens and the Triangle car park, with additional criteria to ensure these sites are permitted to the right events and the contest for space is regulated.
- 4.4 The strategy commits to annual reporting on the events calendar through Councillor briefing and the CEO Report, increasing our transparency and allowing for ongoing assessment through the life of the plan.



5. CONSULTATION AND STAKEHOLDERS

- 5.1 A range of community consultation was conducted prior to development of the draft Strategy and Policy, including:
 - 5.1.1 Intercept surveys throughout the municipality in CoPP activity centres.
 - 5.1.2 Have Your Say online engagement.
 - 5.1.3 Direct engagement and consultation with local businesses through the Business Advisory Group and trader associations.
 - 5.1.4 Surveys of event operators, including those that do and don't currently operate within CoPP.
 - 5.1.5 Promotion of consultation at events, neighbourhood engagement programs, in activity centres and via Council online and social media channels.
- 5.2 Initial consultation was held with the community in early 2022, once events had restarted and COVID restrictions were largely removed. Engagement ran 8 February – 2 March 2022. Initial consultation results were presented to Council as part of a briefing (May 2022) and Report (June 2022).
- 5.3 Second stage community consultation was opened on 17 June 2022 for a three-week period.
- 5.4 The opportunity to provide feedback was highlighted on Council's website and Have your Say site and promoted through Council social media channels. Key stakeholders were directly notified, including local business groups, resident associations, and event operators.
- 5.5 Results of the broader Have Your Say consultation are attached to this briefing, along with direct correspondence from St Kilda Tourism and Events.
- 5.6 Have Your Say consultation highlights: -
 - 5.6.1 A total of 20 responses were received via Have Your Say consultation, with one of those responses representing multiple members of the West St Kilda Residents Association.
 - 5.6.2 Of survey respondents, 50% were satisfied with the draft Events Strategy, compared to 30% not satisfied and 20% neutral.
 - 5.6.3 45% were satisfied with the draft Outdoor Events Policy, with 40% not satisfied and 15% neutral.
 - 5.6.4 55% of respondents said they were likely to attend events within the city in the next 6 months, while 35% said they were not likely.
 - 5.6.5 When asked what would encourage respondents to attend more local events, 60% responded "knowing what's on and when", with answers for "different types of events" and "different locations of events" each chosen by 35% of respondents.
 - 5.6.6 When asked to rank priority actions within the Strategy, the two most important to respondents were "spread of events throughout the municipality" and "ongoing monitoring of amenity and event impact". The action ranked as the lowest priority was "spreading of events throughout the year".
 - 5.6.7 Of those who responded to the survey, 75% identified as CoPP residents, 45% as ratepayers and 35% as workers, with 15% identifying as a business owner (respondents were able to select more than one response).



- 5.6.8 Respondents came from a variety of locations throughout the municipality, including St Kilda West (30%), St Kilda (20%), Elwood (20%), Balaclava (10%) and St Kilda East (10%). A further 10% of respondents said “other” or preferred not to say. No responses were received from Port Melbourne, South Melbourne, Middle or Albert Park, however it is noted responses from all parts of the municipality were received as part of the first stage of consultation related to the Strategy and Policy.
- 5.6.9 Respondents identified as 50% male and 50% female, and only 15% of respondents were aged under 35. Age representation was as follows: -
- Under 25 years None
 - 25-34 years 15%
 - 35 – 49 years 35%
 - 50 – 59 years 25%
 - 60 – 69 years 10%
 - 70 – 74 years 15%
 - Above 75 years None
- 5.6.10 In written responses, specific comments included: -
- Concern about the cost of Council-run events.
 - The occupation of public space of outdoor events.
 - Consideration of increased accessibility at events.
 - Consideration of reconciliation and First Peoples’ role within events.
 - Consideration of corporate social responsibility.
 - Consideration of providing benefits to marginalised parts of the community.
 - Consideration of social benefit as well as economic.
 - Concern about amenity impact.
 - Consideration of funding for community, art and heritage events as well as commercial.
 - Concern about event patrons’ ability to easily leave the area once an event has finished.
 - Desire for more events in St Kilda East / Balaclava.
 - Noting the benefits of sporting events to health and wellbeing.
 - Noting the benefits of events with charity elements and their ability to deliver on Council’s social priorities.
 - Concern about loss of accessibility to public space when events are on (restricting access for disabled people).
 - Concern about the length and structure of the document and that it obscured policy intent and allowed for minimal feedback, and language used was “council speak”.
 - Concern that previous consultation results were misrepresented to Council, and poor survey methodology.
 - Requests that the Strategy include financial arrangements for events.



- Consideration of restoration to land after an outdoor event.

5.7 Key amendments made to the Strategy following consultation include: -

- 5.7.1 Addition of formally giving priority to local traders for itinerant opportunities at events.
- 5.7.2 Prioritise inclusion of First Peoples culture and engagement of talent within events, in order to strengthen this presence within the strategy.
- 5.7.3 Prioritise accessibility within internal and permitted events, including through Disability Action Plans and resulting ongoing regular improvement, in order to address consideration of improvements to accessibility and inclusion.
- 5.7.4 Maintain opportunities for participation and attendance from all parts of the community within Council events and optimise social benefit, including through partnerships with the social, community and charity sectors, in order to address feedback regarding social value and inclusion.
- 5.7.5 Recognise and value events that benefit health and wellbeing through participation, in order to address feedback regarding recognition of these benefits.
- 5.7.6 Addition of Public Transport Victoria and public transport providers as key partners to assist with amenity impact to address concerns regarding transport.
- 5.7.7 Balance event requirements with consideration of access to public space and ensure accessibility to key spaces is maintained, in order to address concerns about lack of access to space and impact on accessible pathways through the municipality.

6. LEGAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Risk management and assessment is required for each event held within the municipality, from both internal and external providers.
- 6.2 Legal advice and additional risk assessments are conducted as needed throughout events seasons.

7. FINANCIAL IMPACT

- 7.1 Events permitted on public space are an income source for Council, with a forecast revenue of \$575k in 2022/23.
- 7.2 Council produces its own major events annually: St Kilda Festival, St Kilda Film Festival and a First Peoples music and cultural festival, with a combined net cost of \$1.86m in 2021/22.
- 7.3 It is anticipated that additional resourcing would be required for 2023/24 to support key initiatives in the Strategy (which would be considered by Council and prioritised as part of the 2023/24 Council Plan and Budget), namely:
 - Funding to attract, procure or support events that meet identified priorities, whether that be site location, event timing or event type (ongoing expense).
 - Additional communications tools, including the potential for outdoor advertising or promotion (one-off expense with potential for ongoing revenue if leased to third parties).



8. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 8.1 The Outdoor Events Policy contains numerous measures to lessen environmental impact from outdoor events in public space.
- 8.2 All events within the municipality are expected to comply with environmental protection measures and a reduction in footprint.

9. COMMUNITY IMPACT

- 9.1 Events carry a range of community benefits and impacts, both of which are monitored throughout events in the municipality.
- 9.2 Community and amenity impact are mitigated where possible, and feedback and complaints are actioned for continuous improvement.
- 9.3 The Outdoor Events Policy contains numerous measures to lessen community impact from outdoor events in public space.

10. ALIGNMENT TO COUNCIL PLAN AND COUNCIL POLICY

- 10.1 The Events Strategy is aligned with and delivers on the Vibrant Port Phillip direction of the Council Plan.

11. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

- 11.1 Expressions of interest for the 2023/24 events season open in September. If adopted, implementation of Strategy and Policy would commence immediately.





11.2 COMMUNICATION

- Adoption of the Events Strategy and Outdoor Events Policy will be communicated via Council’s website.
- Notification will also be sent to recurrent event operators within the municipality.
- The Major events calendar Expression of Interest 2023/24 will be advertised via Council’s website and social channels in September 2022.

12. OFFICER DIRECT OR INDIRECT INTEREST

- 12.1 No officers involved in the preparation of this report have any material or general interest in the matter.

ATTACHMENTS

- 1. Draft Events Strategy 2023-26  [↓](#)
- 2. Draft Outdoor Events Policy 2023-26  [↓](#)
- 3. Community Consultation Have Your Say Summary - Events Strategy  [↓](#)
- 4. St Kilda Tourism and Events - Consultation Response Events Strategy July 2022  [↓](#)