



## Report to General Manager

Attachments:  
Nil

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**SUBJECT:** Carols under the Bridge – Request for financial support from Council

**AUTHOR:** Gemma North, Events Officer

**ENDORSED BY:** Sandra Moore, Acting Director Corporate Services

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Church by the Bridge (formerly St John the Baptist Church, Kirribilli) approached Council for financial support to assist with the operation of Carols under the Bridge. A Mayoral Minute was considered at the meeting of Council on 1 May 2017. Carols under the Bridge has been operating in Bradfield Park for 12 years. The number of attendees continues to grow and organisers wish to undertake improvements to the delivery of the event.

This report is the result of a Council resolution that in principle support be given to the request from the church and that a report be submitted by the events team. Detail includes where this event sits within the Events Strategy 2014-2017 and within the wider context of Council's Christmas events.

### FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The related financial implications to subsidise improvements to production and delivery of the event in Bradfield Park is \$10,000. Approximately \$1100 of this can be absorbed by the Third Party Events 2017/2018 budget as in-kind provision of bins.

The related financial implications to subsidise a road closure of Broughton Street, preparation of Traffic Management Plan and Traffic Control staff is estimated at \$5,000 - \$10,000.

Council in-kind support for staff time and park hire (approximate value \$1250). These costs will be absorbed by day-to-day operational costs.

**Comment by Responsible Accounting Officer:** Funding for the project is available from reserves if Council supports the proposal.

### Local Government Act 1993: Section 23A Guidelines - Council Decision Making During Merger Proposal Period

The Guidelines have been considered in the preparation of this report and are not applicable.

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

- 1. THAT** Council continue to provide existing support to the event; including advice from Council officers, contribution of land for the event, assistance to set-up the event and parking passes.
  - 2. THAT** Council absorb the cost of providing bins to the event.
  - 3. THAT** Council provide \$9000 to assist with additional audio speakers, multimedia screens, additional toilets, security, children's activities and crowd management infrastructure.
  - 4. THAT** Council provide up to \$7,500 for implementing the Broughton Street road closure for Greenway and James Milson Village participation.
  - 5. THAT** Council enter into an agreement with Church by the Bridge to ensure appropriate transparency of expenditure and acknowledgement of Council support.
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## LINK TO DELIVERY PROGRAM

The relationship with the Delivery Program is as follows:

- Direction:
- 3. Our Economic Vitality
  - 4. Our Social Vitality
- Goal:
- 3.3 North Sydney is a place that attracts events
  - 4.1. Community is connected
  - 4.2. Community is diverse
  - 4.3. Enhanced arts and cultural programs and facilities

## BACKGROUND

Church by the Bridge has approached Council for financial support to assist with the growth of Carols under the Bridge. Council resolved at its meeting on 1 May 2017:

1. *THAT Council give in principle support to the contribution of \$10,000 to the staging of Carols by the Bridge for 2017.*
2. *THAT Council staff enter into an agreement with Church by the Bridge to ensure appropriate transparency of expenditure.*
3. *THAT a report be submitted to the next Council meeting in relation to the details of Council's contribution in cash and in-kind and any additional logistical commitments.*
4. *THAT the report also explore future Christmas events in the context of Council's Events Policy including support by Council for this event.*

Council does not present its own Christmas event (other than a Christmas themed edition of Twilight Food Fair) and with staff engaged in planning for New Years Eve, supporting the development of an already established community event is an effective way to make use of Council's limited resources. A dedicated group, mostly volunteers, produce the event to a professional standard. Carols under the Bridge attracts an estimated 5,000 people and, given its iconic location, the event has the potential to attract a regional audience. Contributing to the event supports Council's Events Strategy 2014 -2017, specifically;

- Strategy 3 - 'Support events organised by external organisations'

It also supports Council's Community Strategic Plan 2013 - 2023:

- 3.3.2 Attract major regional and sporting events
- 3.3.3 Foster partnerships with other governments and businesses to deliver an annual events calendar
- 4.2.1 Facilitate and support local cultural groups and community organisations

## CONSULTATION REQUIREMENTS

Community engagement will be undertaken in accordance with Council's Community Engagement Protocol.

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Roads and Maritime Services are undertaking works on northern approaches to Sydney Harbour Bridge and must be consulted as the exclusion zone in Bradfield Park moves north in the park. Sydney Harbour Bridge security must be consulted on the placement of infrastructure in the park.

## **SUSTAINABILITY STATEMENT**

The following table provides a summary of the key sustainability implications:

Environment	Promote access by public transport and active transport
Social	Be inclusive and accessible Build social connections and encourage community participation Be vibrant and add life to our public areas
Economic	Support local businesses in Kirribilli by encouraging visitors to the village Activate our open spaces and Kirribilli village Assist to deliver high quality event without Council absorbing the full cost
Governance	Encourage partnership opportunities with other organisations

## **DETAIL**

Carols under the Bridge has been operating in Bradfield Park for 12 years. The event has reached a stage whereby improvements to the delivery of the event are required in order for continued growth. Carols under the Bridge presents an alternative to Carols in the Domain and attracts an estimated 5,000 people. Given its iconic location, the event has the potential to attract a regional audience.

A dedicated group, mostly volunteers, produce the event to a professional standard. The event commences with a Jazz concert before moving into the main Carols event. Council does not present its own Christmas event (other than a Christmas themed edition of Twilight Food Fair) and with staff engaged in planning for New Years Eve, supporting the development of an already established community event is an effective way to make use of Council's limited resources.

Improvements include provision of audio speakers in other areas of the park to improve sound quality and multimedia screens to increase visibility. Funding will also assist the Church to provide additional toilets, security, children's activities and crowd management infrastructure. Last year, organisers introduced a nativity scene, including camels and a donkey parading around Bradfield Park. The live animals proved popular among families and children, many taking photos. Organisers have requested assistance with traffic management to expand the parade along Broughton Street.

The event charity partner is Anglicare which sell battery-operated candles to raise funds for their Christmas appeal.

## **Support from Council**

Council currently supports the event by contributing land use, a staff member to assist in escorting vehicles in the park for event set up and 5 parking passes. Council officers also provide advice to ensure compliance documentation is relevant to current standards. It should be noted that no application fee is charged to the event. In 2016, the event paid Council \$57 per

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bin for 15 bins as per Council's Schedule of Fees and Charges - \$855 in total. It's recommended that Council absorbs the cost of bins to a maximum of 20 bins.

Council staff have met with Church volunteers to gain an understanding of the costs associated with the event. It is understood the increases to production equipment, toilets, security, children's activities and crowd management infrastructure would amount to approximately \$10,000. Note, this amount is without a costing estimate for traffic management which is detailed below.

### **Expansion of Parade to support Social Inclusion**

Up until now, there have been no road closures associated with the event. However, based on the success of the nativity scene, organisers would like to expand the parade to include residents of Greenway and James Milson Village who would otherwise be unable to attend the Carols event.

Ideally the parade would begin with a small event at Greenway, travel south along Broughton Street stopping in at the church with a special carols session for James Milson Village residents and finish at Bradfield Park. A closure of this scale supports 4.1.2 and 4.1.3 of the Community Strategic Plan;

*4.1.2 Promote active and diverse street life, including markets, street parties and fairs using streets, laneways and public spaces*

*4.1.3 Improve social inclusion*

### **Logistic Considerations of Road Closure**

Traffic delays on Broughton Street can potentially have an impact on Sydney Harbour Bridge and bus timetables therefore extensive traffic management measures are required. Council would need to install a works zone on parking lanes of Broughton Street to create a thoroughfare for the parade whilst still maintaining a flow of traffic (at a reduced speed). There are two key places where permanent traffic calming infrastructure and footpaths make temporary acquisition of the additional parking lanes impossible. In these places traffic controllers would be required to manage flow down one lane.

Council uses external contractors to compile Traffic Management Plans and to provide Traffic Control personnel. A quotation from a traffic management company is yet to be requested however it's estimated this would cost between \$5,000 and \$10,000. The proposed closure would be from approximately 4pm – 5.30pm. a time which has minimum impact on restaurant trading.

The road closure could operate on a smaller scale to reduce costs and commence on Ennis Street or Broughton Street tunnel, however, this option would not support social inclusion by delivering the event to Greenway.

### **Broader context of Christmas**

Council supports other Christmas events and activities including Christmas decorations, Christmas Carols and a special edition of the Twilight Food Fair.

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In 2016 two other outdoor carol events operated in North Sydney's parks:

- Carols in Green Park, Cammeray was organised by Naremburn Cammeray Anglican Church
- Carols in Ernest Place, Crows Nest was organised by Northside Baptist Church and Crows Nest Mainstreet.

The venues for the above carols prohibit them from reaching the volume of attendees that Carols under the Bridge has the potential to reach and thus make it a regional event. However, it's recommended that, if requested, Council continues to provide land use and access to the Council facilities as appropriate for the above carols events.

Council budget for Christmas decorations is spread to provide a range of decorations to as many of the village centres as possible. In the past this has included chalkart, wreaths, banners and baubles. In 2016, Council installed flagship interactive LED light installations to two high traffic areas Civic Park [Twilight Food Fair and North Sydney Produce Market] and to Ernest Place. Christmas decorations are an ideal tool using the streetscape to promote social connections and interaction. The year, flagship light installations are proposed for Civic Park and Ernest Place with an additional installation planned for Kirribilli Village.

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