

Destination and Major Events Advisory Committee Meeting

Business Paper

Notice is hereby given that a Destination and Major Events Advisory Committee Meeting of Parkes Shire Council will be held in the Committee Room, Parkes Shire Council, 2 Cecile Street, Parkes, on Tuesday 5 March 2024 at 11:00am.



Kent Boyd PSM
GENERAL MANAGER

Order of Business

1	OPENING OF MEETING	4
2	ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY.....	4
3	APOLOGIES	4
4	CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES	5
4.1	Minutes of the Destination and Major Events Advisory Committee Meeting held on 21 November 2023	5
5	LATE BUSINESS	14
6	OFFICERS' REPORTS.....	15
6.1	Major Events & Festivals Strategy project update	15
6.2	Trundle ABBA Festival 2023 project wrap-up	17
6.3	Trundle ABBA Festival 2024 project update	20
6.4	Parkes Elvis Festival 2024 project wrap-up	23
6.5	Parkes Elvis Festival 2025 project update	58
6.6	Sounds at the Pavilion events update	63

1 OPENING OF MEETING

2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Committee Chairperson will invite a Committee Representative to deliver an Acknowledgement of Country:

Parkes Shire Council acknowledges the Wiradjuri People who are the Traditional Custodians of the Land. I would also like to pay respect to the Elders past, present and emerging of the Wiradjuri Nation and extend that respect to other Aboriginal peoples from other nations who are present.

Alternatively, the Committee Representative may deliver the following Acknowledgement of Country in Wiradjuri language, which has been provided by Mr Geoff Anderson, a Wiradjuri Elder resident of the Parkes Shire:

Wiradjuri language	English translation
Badhu yinganha yindyamarra-gu Wiradjuri mayiny bu Wiradjuri manhang	<i>I give respect to Wiradjuri people and Wiradjuri soil.</i>
Badhu gulbarra ngali Yama Wiradjuri ngurambang bu ngali garrariwibarra gu marambir Niiringal	<i>I understand we are on Wiradjuri country and can work together to a better tomorrow.</i>
Mandaang guwu	<i>Thank you.</i>

3 APOLOGIES

4 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

4.1 MINUTES OF THE DESTINATION AND MAJOR EVENTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 21 NOVEMBER 2023
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IP&R Linkage: Pillar: Leadership

Goal: Our local government is open, accountable and transparent.

Strategy: Provide open and transparent decision-making and undertake the civic duties of Council with professionalism and integrity.

Annexures: A. **Destination and Major Events Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes - 21 November 2023**

RECOMMENDATION

That the receive and confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 21 November 2023 appended at *Annexure A*.

Destination and Major Events Advisory Committee Meeting

Minutes

Tuesday 21 November 2023



Minutes of the Destination and Major Events Advisory Committee Meeting
Held on Tuesday, 21 November 2023 at the
Parkes Council Chamber, 2 Cecile Street, Parkes

Present:

Cr Marg Applebee	Councillor
Cr Jacob Cass	Chairperson
Cr William Jayet	Councillor
Cr Ken Keith OAM	Councillor
Cr Neil Westcott	Councillor
Mr Dave Chambers	External Member
Mr Gary Crowley	External Member

Council Officers in Attendance:

Mr Anthony McGrath	Executive Manager Corporate Services
Mrs Carrie Olsen	Executive Manager Economy, Destination and Activation
Ms Katie Nash	Economic Development Specialist
Hayley Roach	Events Officer (Trundle ABBA Festival)

NOTES

Cr Ken Keith attended via audio-visual link.

The meeting commenced at 10:30 am and concluded at 12:30 pm.

Order Of Business

1	OPENING OF MEETING	4
2	ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY	4
3	APOLOGIES	4
4	CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES	4
5	DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS	4
6	LATE BUSINESS	4
7	OFFICERS' REPORTS	4
9.1	Election of Chairperson	4
9.2	Confirmation of Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 12 September 2023	5
9.3	Trundle ABBA Festival - Post Event Review	5
9.4	2024 Parkes Elvis Festival Update	5
9.5	Customer Profiles - Project Update	5
9.6	Development of Parkes Shire Destination Management Plan & Bypass Strategy.....	6
8	CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS	6
9	REPORT OF CONFIDENTIAL RESOLUTIONS	8
9.1	Development of Parkes Regional Entertainment and Cultural Centre Feasibility Study	8
10	CONCLUSION OF MEETING	8

1 OPENING OF MEETING

The Chairperson declared the Destination and Major Events Advisory Committee Meeting of Tuesday, 21 November 2023 open and welcomed Council Officials in attendance.

2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Chairperson read the following Acknowledgement of Country:

Parkes Shire Council acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the Wiradjuri Country and recognises and respects their cultural heritage, beliefs and continuing connection with the lands and rivers of the Parkes Shire.

Council pays its respects to Elders past, present and emerging and extends this respect to all First Nations peoples in the Parkes Shire.

3 APOLOGIES

Nil

4 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

5 DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS

The Chairperson reminded Council Officials of their obligation under Council's Code of Conduct to disclose and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in matters being considered at the meeting, and invited Council Officials present to disclose any such interests.

Nil interests were disclosed.

6 LATE BUSINESS

The Chairperson advised that no late items of business had been submitted to the meeting.

OR

The Chairperson advised that the following late items of business had been submitted by Council Officers, and invited a motion to enable the addition of the late items to the meeting agenda.

1. *Type list of late items*

7 OFFICERS' REPORTS

9.1 ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON

AMENDMENT

That the Destination and Major Events Advisory Committee:

Continue to be chaired by Cr Jacob Cass as he had not resigned from the Destination and Major Events Advisory Committee.

9.2 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 12 SEPTEMBER 2023**RESOLVED DMEA 006/23**

Moved: Cr William Jayet
Seconded: Cr Marg Applebee

That the Committee:

1. Confirm the minutes of the previous meeting.

CARRIED**9.3 TRUNDLE ABBA FESTIVAL - POST EVENT REVIEW****COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION**

Moved: Cr Marg Applebee
Seconded: Cr William Jayet

That:

1. A tentative date be agreed upon.
2. Parkes Shire Council staff develop and present a risk appetite matrix for events and festivals.
3. Parkes Shire Council staff complete a post-event report for the Trundle ABBA Festival, including all available financial data.

9.4 2024 PARKES ELVIS FESTIVAL UPDATE**RESOLVED DMEA 007/23**

Moved: Cr Neil Westcott
Seconded: Cr William Jayet

That the Destination and Major Events Advisory Committee:

1. Receive and note the information regarding the 2024 Elvis Festival update.

CARRIED**9.5 CUSTOMER PROFILES - PROJECT UPDATE****RESOLVED DMEA 008/23**

Moved: Cr Marg Applebee

Seconded: Cr Neil Westcott

That the Destination and Major Events Advisory Committee:

1. Receive and note the Customer Profiles project update report.

CARRIED

9.6 DEVELOPMENT OF PARKES SHIRE DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN & BYPASS STRATEGY
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RESOLVED DMEA 009/23

Moved: Cr Neil Westcott

Seconded: Cr Marg Applebee

That the Destination and Major Events Advisory Committee:

1. Receive and note the briefing on the development of the Parkes Destination Management Plan & Bypass Strategy, as detailed in this report.

CARRIED

8 CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS

RECOMMENDATION

That Destination and Major Events Advisory Committee:

1. Moves into Closed Session to deal with the matters below, which are classified as confidential under section 10A(2) of *the Local Government Act 1993* for the reasons specified:

9.1 DEVELOPMENT OF PARKES REGIONAL ENTERTAINMENT AND CULTURAL CENTRE FEASIBILITY STUDY

This matter is considered to be confidential under Section 10A(2) - c of the Local Government Act, and the Council is satisfied that discussion of this matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest as it deals with information that would, if disclosed, confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom the Council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business.

Further it is considered that discussions of this matter in open Council would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest as it would prejudice Council's ability to secure the optimum outcome for the community.

2. Exclude the media and public from the meeting on the basis that the business to be considered is classified as confidential, pursuant to 10A(1), 10(2) and 10A(3) of the *Local Government Act 1993*.
 3. Withhold reports and correspondence relevant to the subject business be withheld from the media and public as provided by section 11(2) of the *Local Government Act 1993*.
 4. Make public resolutions made by the Council in Closed Session after the conclusion of the Closed Session, and record such resolutions in the minutes of the Council meeting.
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BACKGROUND, ISSUES AND COMMENTARY

In accordance with section 10A(2) of the *Local Government Act 1993*, Council may close part of its meeting to deal with business of the following kind:

- (a) Personnel matters concerning particular individuals (other than councillors).
- (b) Personal hardship of any resident or ratepayer.
- (c) Information that would, if disclosed, confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom Council is conducting (or proposes to conduct) business.
- (d) Commercial information of a confidential nature that would, if disclosed:
 - (i) Prejudice the commercial position of a person who supplied it: or
 - (ii) Confer a commercial advantage on a competitor of Council;
 - (iii) Reveal a trade secret.
- (e) Information that would, if disclosed, prejudice the maintenance of law.
- (f) Matters affecting the security of Council, Councillors, Council staff and Council property.
- (g) Advice concerning litigation, or advice that would otherwise be privileged from production in legal proceedings on the grounds of legal professional privilege.
- (h) Information concerning the nature and location of a place or an item of Aboriginal significance on community land.
- (i) Alleged contraventions of any Code of Conduct requirements applicable under section 440.

It is my opinion that the business listed in the recommendation is of a kind referred to in section 10A(2) of the *Local Government Act 1993* and, under the provisions of the Act and the *Local Government (General) Regulation 2021*, should be dealt with in a part of the meeting that is closed to members of the public and the media.

Pursuant to section 10A(4) of the Act and clauses 14.9–14.10 of Council's Code of Meeting Practice, members of the public may make representations to the meeting immediately after the motion to close part of the meeting is moved and seconded, as to whether that part of the meeting should be closed.

At 12:10 pm, the Meeting went into Closed Session.

MOTION

That the Destination and Major Events Advisory Committee:

1. Resume in Open Session and note the Chairperson's report on Confidential Resolutions.

At 12:20 pm, the Council in Closed Session returned to Open Session.

9 REPORT OF CONFIDENTIAL RESOLUTIONS

In accordance with clauses 14.22 and 14.23 of Council's Code of Meeting Practice, resolutions passed during a meeting, or a part of a meeting that is closed to the public must be made public by the Chairperson as soon as practicable. Such resolutions must be recorded in the publicly available minutes of the meeting.

9.1 DEVELOPMENT OF PARKES REGIONAL ENTERTAINMENT AND CULTURAL CENTRE FEASIBILITY STUDY

RESOLVED DMEA 010/23

Moved: Cr William Jayet
Seconded: Cr Marg Applebee

That the Destination and Major Events Advisory Committee:

1. Receive and note the briefing on the development of the Parkes Regional Entertainment and Cultural Centre Feasibility Study, as detailed in this report.

CARRIED

10 CONCLUSION OF MEETING

The meeting concluded at 12:30 pm.

This is the final page of the minutes comprising 8 pages numbered 1 to 8 of the Destination and Major Events Advisory Committee Meeting held on Tuesday, 21 November 2023 and confirmed on .

CHAIRPERSON

5 LATE BUSINESS

6 OFFICERS' REPORTS

6.1 MAJOR EVENTS & FESTIVALS STRATEGY PROJECT UPDATE

IP&R Linkage: Pillar: Economy

Goal: Our Shire is an attractive destination to live, work, visit and invest.

Strategy: Promote Parkes Shire as a tourist destination and support the continued growth of our visitor economy.

Author: Mikaela Cass, Events and Festivals Specialist

Authoriser: Carrie Olsen, Executive Manager Economy, Destination and Activation

Annexures: Nil

RECOMMENDATION

That:

1. The Committee note the update provided by Silver Lining Strategy on the Major Events and Festivals Strategy.
2. The Committee engage with Silver Lining Strategy for the purpose of collating feedback from key stakeholders for the development of the Major Events and Festivals Strategy.

BACKGROUND

Council currently lacks a documented strategic framework for its events and festivals. Development of such a strategy was a recommendation of the Parkes Elvis Festival Service Review, which was undertaken by consultants Morrison Low on behalf of Council, with findings presented in early 2023.

In February 2023, Council issued a Request for Quotation ("RFQ") to engage a suitably skilled, qualified and experienced consultant to undertake the preparation of a Major Events and Festivals Strategy and Action Plan ("Strategy"). The successful proponent is Silver Lining Strategy. Work on this project commenced in January 2024.

As part of the development of this Strategy, Council will consider a current situation analysis of the events industry, including trends, issues, challenges and risks, and how the organisation can respond to these factors to ensure the ongoing successful development, implementation and sustainability of its events and festivals program.

It is expected that this Strategy, once finalised, will assist in informing Council's future decision-making regarding major events and festivals such as the Parkes Elvis Festival and Trundle ABBA Festival.

ISSUES AND COMMENTARY

Stu Speirs from Silver Lining Strategy will be in attendance at the Destination and Major Events Advisory Committee meeting to provide an update on the Major Events and Festivals Strategy. As part of the update, Stu will engage with Committee members to gain insight into their understanding of the current state of the Events and Festivals portfolio and delivery of events at Parkes Shire Council, including any areas of improvement to consider as part of the strategy development. Committee members are tasked to consider the above prior to the meeting to ensure meaningful and constructive discussion at the Committee meeting.

Further reports regarding this project will be taken to Council's Destination and Major Events Advisory Committee.

LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY CONTEXT

There are no legislative or policy implications for the Committee associated with this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Council Investment

Council has invested \$25,454 from the 2023/24 Events and Festivals operational budget to the development of the Major Events and Festivals Strategy.

RISK IMPLICATIONS

It is expected that the Major Events and Festivals Strategy, once finalised, will better equip Council to make associated future decisions surrounding Council's signature and major events.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

There are no community consultation requirements for the Committee associated with this report.

For the information of the Committee, the Major Events and Festivals Strategy will not be placed on public exhibition prior to being endorsed by Council as we are not seeking public input. However, the Strategy will not be confidential, and a copy will be made available on Council's website via the Council Business Paper and once endorsed, as a supporting document that works hand-in-hand with Council's Integrated Planning and Reporting (IP&R) framework.

6.2 TRUNDLE ABBA FESTIVAL 2023 PROJECT WRAP-UP**IP&R Linkage:** **Pillar:** Economy**Goal:** Our Shire is an attractive destination to live, work, visit and invest.**Strategy:** Promote Parkes Shire as a tourist destination and support the continued growth of our visitor economy.**Author:** **Mikaela Cass, Events and Festivals Specialist****Authoriser:** **Carrie Olsen, Executive Manager Economy, Destination and Activation****Annexures:** **A. Trundle ABBA Festival 2023 Financial Report as at 26 February 2024** [↓](#)**RECOMMENDATION**

That:

1. The information contained in this report be received and noted by the Committee.

BACKGROUND

The Trundle ABBA Festival ("the Festival") was launched in 2012 by Gary and Ruth Crowley, and since then the event has gone from strength to strength. The Festival is a true celebration of all things ABBA - the music, the fashions, as well as disco and music from the 70's. It's an opportunity for festivalgoers to dig out their platforms, sparkles, and flares.

In 2022, the Festival founders approached Parkes Shire Council to undertake the 2022 Trundle ABBA Festival. However, due to severe weather, Parkes Shire Council cancelled the 2022 event.

Hayley Roach was appointed Manager of Trundle ABBA Festival in August 2022 on a short-term contract ending in November 2022. In February 2023, Hayley Roach was re-engaged as an Events Casual, working remotely to facilitate the Festival, relocating to Parkes in August 2023 to deliver the event in person.

A report was tabled at the Destination and Major Events Advisory Committee on 21 November 2023 providing a post-event review. At that stage, the final costs to deliver the 2023 Trundle ABBA Festival and the results of the feedback survey weren't available. The Committee were advised that a report will be tabled to a future meeting with these details.

ISSUES AND COMMENTARY***Financial Implications of the Trundle ABBA Festival 2023***

The financial operating result of the Trundle ABBA Festival 2023 was budgeted at **(\$107,000)**, based on an income budget of \$361,000 and expenditure budget of \$468,000. This signified an intended investment by Parkes Shire Council to the value of \$107,000.

The current financial result for the Trundle ABBA Festival 2023 is an investment of \$160,680 by Council. A copy of the final Trundle ABBA Festival 2023 financial report has been provided at *Annexure A*, capturing actuals to 26 February 2024.

Trundle ABBA Festival 2023 Attendee Survey

An attendee survey for the Trundle ABBA Festival 2023 was conducted by Council during November. The Committee were provided with insights from the responses received by 30 attendees at the meeting held 21 November 2023. No further survey responses were received following the meeting and as such, there are no further insights to provide.

CommBank IQ Data

Council has begun a partnership with a credit card data analysis provider, CommBank IQ. This service provides access to meaningful consumer spend data that combines movement and economic insights to create a single, robust asset to empower decision-making. Insights provided in relation to the Trundle ABBA Festival 2023 demonstrate a local economic impact/uplift of \$97,000 as a direct result of visitor expenditure. Further information including associated workings and data limitations can be provided.

LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY CONTEXT

There are no legislative or policy considerations for the Committee associated with this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Council Investment

In summary, expenditure was well managed for the 2023 event: all things considered, expenses were less than budget by \$82,905, however the budgeted income fell short by \$136,585 due to lower-than-expected ticket sales revenue and committed grant funding being invoiced in the 2022/23 financial year.

Based on the current results, the event incurred a (\$160,680) loss in this financial year. Council had budgeted for a (\$107,000) loss. There is income yet to be realised for event merchandise sales. Once the final position is determined at the end of the current financial year, Council is likely to be required to transfer an funds from other budget areas to off-set the budget variance.

Grant Funding

Grant funding of \$120,000 was secured for the Trundle ABBA Festival 2023, comprised of \$90,000 in Round 2 of REAF with the Department of Regional NSW and \$30,000 through the Regional Event Fund Flagship Event Agreement with Destination NSW. As \$72,000 of the \$120,000 committed in grant funding for the Trundle ABBA Festival 2023 was invoiced and received from the funding body during the 2022/23 financial year, it is not represented on the provided report and signifies a (\$72,000) variance against the budget.

Merchandise Sales

It should be noted that some merchandise purchased for the Trundle ABBA Festival 2023 remains in stock and available for sale at the Parkes Visitor Information Centre. As such, additional sales income associated with this project will be realised in due course, with a journal entry at the conclusion of the 2023/24 financial year to confirm final results.

RISK IMPLICATIONS

There are no risk implications associated with this report.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

There are no community consultation requirements for the Committee associated with this report.

6.3 TRUNDLE ABBA FESTIVAL 2024 PROJECT UPDATE**IP&R Linkage:** Pillar: Economy**Goal:** Our Shire is an attractive destination to live, work, visit and invest.**Strategy:** Promote Parkes Shire as a tourist destination and support the continued growth of our visitor economy.**Author:** Mikaela Cass, Events and Festivals Specialist**Authoriser:** Carrie Olsen, Executive Manager Economy, Destination and Activation**Annexures:** Nil

RECOMMENDATION

That:

1. The information contained in this report be received and noted by the Committee.
-

BACKGROUND

Founded in 2012 by Gary and Ruth Crowley, the Trundle ABBA Festival ran successfully for eight years prior to the onset of the Novel Coronavirus ("COVID-19") pandemic in early 2020. As a result of the ongoing pandemic, associated Public Health Orders and various travel restrictions and social distancing requirements in place during this time, the festival was postponed in both 2020 and 2021. Trundle ABBA Festival Incorporated subsequently approached Parkes Shire Council ("Council") and requested that it assume ownership and management of the festival.

Hayley Roach was appointed Manager of Trundle ABBA Festival in August 2022 on a short-term contract ending in November 2022. In February 2023, Hayley Roach was re-engaged as an Events Casual, working remotely to facilitate the Festival, relocating to Parkes in August 2023 to deliver the event in person.

Following a request made by the Destination and Major Events Advisory Committee at the meeting held 21 November 2023, an Extraordinary Council Meeting was held on 4 December 2023 to discuss the planning and delivery of the Trundle ABBA Festival 2024, including the provision of all available financial data.

At its Extraordinary Council Meeting held 4 December 2023, Council resolved to proceed in planning and delivering the Trundle ABBA Festival 2024, to be held Saturday, 19 October 2024 [res. ECM 23-027].

ISSUES AND COMMENTARY***Trundle ABBA Festival Manager***

Hayley Roach has once again been re-engaged as Trundle ABBA Festival Manager on a short-term contract ending 31 October 2024 to support the planning and delivery of the Trundle ABBA Festival 2024. As part of the Events and Festivals team and in consultation with the Events and Festivals Specialist, the Trundle ABBA Festival Manager will be responsible for the following deliverables for 2024:

- Develop, negotiate and secure the event program, including performing artists, ancillary events, theme (special anniversary) and full Festival schedule (working to budget).
- Staging and production (audio visual).
- Music licensing.

- Artist management, travel, accommodation, and hospitality.
- Operational delivery and run sheet management.
- Community and Trundle stakeholder engagement.

The remainder of the deliverables for the Trundle ABBA Festival 2024 will be the responsibility of the Events and Festivals Specialist and the wider Events and Festivals team, with specialist advice provided by the Trundle ABBA Festival Manager as needed.

Trundle ABBA Festival planning update

At this early stage in the planning process for the 2024 event, the following performers have been engaged:

- Performer - Bjorn Again (*headline act #1*)
- ABBA Stage MC - Tristan McManus

In line with the work being undertaken in the Events and Festivals portfolio to better align with Council procedures, a new process for contracts, programming and invoicing is being developed. This will also help to mitigate the risks associated with potential budget over-runs.

The Trundle ABBA Festival Manager met with the Swedish Embassy on 19 February 2024 to discuss support for the 2024 event, including the Embassy's support of an invitation to "ABBA Royalty" to attend the Trundle ABBA Festival 2024, and to jointly celebrate and mark the 50-year anniversary of ABBA winning the Eurovision song contest, through an activation in metro-Sydney.

Partnership Prospectus

Council's Events and Festivals team have commenced work on developing a holistic Partnership Prospectus for the Events and Festivals portfolio, rather than stand-alone documents for individual major events.

The objective of the Partnership Prospectus is to develop a strategy that builds and increases investment and partnership opportunities with strong value propositions that align with the respective target audience of the Events and Festivals held within the Parkes Shire, therefore generating an increase in income for the Events and Festivals operational budget.

A copy of the Partnership Prospectus will be made available to the Committee once developed.

LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY CONTEXT

There are no legislative or policy considerations for the Committee associated with this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Council Investment

Budget allocation will be made in the 2024/25 Operational Plan and Budget. As per the resolution of the report tabled at the Extraordinary Council Meeting held 4 December 2023, Council investment of \$100,000 will be considered when drafting the operational budget for the Trundle ABBA Festival 2024. Council's Events and Festivals Specialist is working closely with the Trundle ABBA Festival Manager to ensure the budget is conservative with a reduction in expenses.

The final budget for the Trundle ABBA Festival 2024 will be tabled at Council's Ordinary Council Meeting scheduled to be held Tuesday, 16 April 2024.

Grant Funding

To-date, \$30,000 has been committed to the Trundle ABBA Festival 2024 under a triennial agreement through the Destination NSW Regional Event Fund Flagship Event Agreement, which spans the period 2022 through 2024. The Events and Festivals team are working with the Communications team to develop a structured and effective Marketing and Promotions Plan which will utilise the funds committed through the Destination NSW Regional Event Fund Flagship Event Agreement.

Council's Events and Festivals Team are pursuing all available grant funding opportunities to offset the costs associated with delivering the Trundle ABBA Festival 2024 and further activate aspects of the event including Trundle Main Street.

RISK IMPLICATIONS

With all events, there are risks of budget over-runs due to market volatility and the increasing cost of goods and services. Once an operational budget for an event is agreed, should there be over-runs, there are risks that other proposed Council events or community events support programs will be impacted.

Managing outdoor events has high inherent risks. Considering progressively unpredictable weather patterns and severe weather events, it is increasingly difficult to secure appropriate insurance coverage for large outdoor events. Council Officers have approached Council's insurance provider for a quote for coverage for the Trundle ABBA Festival 2024.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Council officers will plan and execute a program of communication and engagement activities to meet community and stakeholder needs.

6.4 PARKES ELVIS FESTIVAL 2024 PROJECT WRAP-UP**IP&R Linkage:** Pillar: Economy**Goal:** Our Shire is an attractive destination to live, work, visit and invest.**Strategy:** Promote Parkes Shire as a tourist destination and support the continued growth of our visitor economy.**Author:** Mikaela Cass, Events and Festivals Specialist**Authoriser:** Carrie Olsen, Executive Manager Economy, Destination and Activation**Annexures:** A. **Parkes Elvis Festival 2024 - Financial Report as at 26 February 2024**B. **Parkes Elvis Festival 2024 - Media Coverage Report** [↓](#)

RECOMMENDATION

That:

1. The information contained in this report be received and noted by the Committee.
-

BACKGROUND

Recognised as one of the top three Festivals and Events in Australia, the Parkes Elvis Festival ("the Festival") attracts 25,000 fans with a global reach of 1.87 billion across over 3,000 media outlets.

Due to staffing changes in the Events and Festivals portfolio throughout 2023, a fresh Parkes Elvis Festival team was formed in late 2023 with a combination of Parkes Shire Council ("Council") staff, external contractors and volunteer Portfolio Holders to deliver an amazing Parkes Elvis Festival from 10-14 January 2024.

ISSUES AND COMMENTARY

In summary, Parkes Elvis Festival 2024 was a success; over 150 events delivered across multiple venues to thousands of keen Elvis-lovers in rural NSW - unforgettable!

A short Parkes Elvis Festival 2024 highlights reel is available to watch [here](#).

Successes

- Parkes Elvis Festival team worked to rebuild relationships with Portfolio Holders to a level of strength.
- Credit to the incredible team, or the "nucleus". To see them pick up the project in November and hit the ground running to deliver in January was a highlight. Special mentions for Joel Ulbricht, Mikaela Cass, Natalie Williams, Lisa Moon (and the wider Tourism team), Megan Morrison, Jolie O'Shannessy, Rebecca Scully, Cassidy Martin-Scully and Ash Weaver - the dream team!
- Over 5,000 tickets sold over three venues (Parkes Leagues Club, Parkes Services Club and the Little Theatre).
- Up-and-coming talent, Charlie Gaylard, was unleashed on Cooke Park Main Stage, setting him up for a bright future as an Elvis Tribute Artist.
- Highest marketing footprint achieved in Festival history, with over 1.87 billion mentions across over 3,000 media outlets both locally, domestically, and internationally.
- Significant improvement on integrating Council processes within the festival framework - more work will be undertaken for 2025 delivery and beyond.
- The involvement, enthusiasm and positivity shown from all Council staff across all areas. Incredible feedback received by staff and the public noting the streamlined and smooth

delivery across multiple areas of the Festival. A short video highlighting some of the team responsible for delivering the 2024 festival can be viewed [here](#).

Key Learnings

Several key learnings have been identified as part of the debrief for Parkes Elvis Festival 2024. Key learnings have been identified below:

Administration

- Opportunity to introduce a more centralised program document, that once established, will become the source of truth for all information around marketing, website, programme booklet and information for internal stakeholders.
- A need to continue to incorporate Council processes and collaboration with relevant departments throughout the preparation, onsite and post-Festival plans.
- Monthly financial reporting with results to be communicated to the Executive Leadership Team to ensure a healthy position and that Council's investment is as per the 2024/25 Operational Plan and Budget.

Marketing

- Opportunity to develop a Partnership Strategy that builds and increases investment/partnerships for the Festival and the broader Events and Festivals portfolio.
- Creating a strategic multi-week Marketing and Communications Plan that incorporates website, email, ticket box office, social media, and advertising (print/on-air) in an approach that presents an exciting Parkes Elvis Festival 2025.

Operations

- Working with local businesses, cafes, and restaurants to encourage innovation and extended hours which will generate greater local economic impact and provide improved dining/café/shopping experiences and options for visitors.
- Activating the top end of Clarinda Street.
- Greater focus placed on the activation of the Traffic Control Plans put in place for the Festival including communication with local businesses and movement of vehicles in no parking zones.
- Additional disability viewing platforms in Cooke Park for Main Stage.
- Investigate options to enhance distribution of sounds from Cooke Park Main Stage to the south end of the park.
- Streamlined storage and cataloguing of Festival assets.
- Wayfinding signage throughout the Festival Boulevard and Cooke Park precincts to enhance the visitor experience.

Programming

- Creating and establishing a new process for artist contracts, programming, and invoicing.
- Maximising the top end of Clarinda Street, generating more entertainment and experiences in the broader Festival Boulevard precinct.

Portfolio Holders

The efforts of the Portfolio Holders cannot be understated; the valuable input from all for their respective portfolios is to be commended and was greatly appreciated by the incoming Parkes Elvis Festival team.

2024 Portfolio Holders included:

- Street Parade and Cars of the Era - John Kennedy
- Wall of Fame and Heritage Car Show - Bob Steel
- Main Stage - Nola Short
- Volunteers - Sue McGrath
- Busking - Kenny McGrath
- Rock N Roll Dancing - Kristen Barrass
- Miss Priscilla - Anne Steel
- Renewal of Vows - Anita Beddowes
- Main Stage Competitions - Ashlee McGrath

Debriefs are scheduled to be held with each Portfolio Holder in March 2024. The debriefs will also include a brief introduction to a revised way of working for portfolios including a framework around expenditure of Council funds and a standard authorisation process for major decisions for each portfolio.

Media Update

Parkes Elvis Festival 2024 achieved the highest marketing footprint in festival history, with over 1.8 billion mentions across over 3,000 media outlets both locally, domestically, and internationally.

Council engaged PR company, Original Spin, to coordinate PR activities associated with the Festival. Original Spin worked closely with the Festival Producer and Council's Communications team to achieve this fantastic result.

A copy of the coverage report has been included at *Annexure B*, for the information of the Committee.

LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY CONTEXT

There are no legislative or policy considerations for the Committee associated with this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Council Investment

The final financial result for the Parkes Elvis Festival 2024 is yet to be realised with some supplier invoices outstanding. A preliminary financial report has been provided at *Annexure A*, capturing actuals to 26 February 2024, and outstanding commitments.

In summary, the operating result of the Parkes Elvis Festival 2024 was budgeted at **(\$202,231)**, based on an income budget of \$804,309 and expenditure budget of \$1,006,540. This signified an intended investment by Parkes Shire Council to the value of \$202,231. The current financial result for the Parkes Elvis Festival 2024 is an investment of \$593,202 by Council.

There is outstanding income yet to be recognised associated with the Destination NSW Strategic Investment Agreement. This additional income will be realised within the current financial year, upon meeting of reporting milestones and achievement of agreement KPIs. This income will amount to approximately \$60,000.

Council's Events and Festivals Specialist is working closely with the Festival Producer and wider Events and Festivals team to finalise outstanding commitments against the budget.

Grant Funding

Nil grant funds were secured for the delivery of Parkes Elvis Festival 2024.

Support from Destination NSW is provided through a Strategic Investment Agreement. This income is captured on the sponsorship income line. The total value of the 2024 event investment is

\$90,000. Around \$60,000 of that is yet to be invoiced and as such is not recognised on the report appended at *Annexure A*.

Merchandise Sales

It should be noted that some merchandise purchased for the Parkes Elvis Festival 2024 remains in stock and available for sale at the Parkes Visitor Information Centre. As such, additional sales income associated with this project is likely to be realised in due course, with a journal entry at the conclusion of the 2023/24 financial year, to confirm final results.

RISK IMPLICATIONS

The organisation carries significant financial risk as part of coordinating the Parkes Elvis Festival. The Festival was unable to achieve the budget target in the current year and could result in the general fund posting a deficit result.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

There are no community consultation requirements associated with this report.

6.5 PARKES ELVIS FESTIVAL 2025 PROJECT UPDATE

IP&R Linkage: **Pillar:** Economy
Goal: Our Shire is an attractive destination to live, work, visit and invest.
Strategy: Promote Parkes Shire as a tourist destination and support the continued growth of our visitor economy.

Author: **Mikaela Cass, Events and Festivals Specialist**
Authoriser: **Carrie Olsen, Executive Manager Economy, Destination and Activation**
Annexures: **Nil**

RECOMMENDATION

That:

1. The information contained in this report be received and noted by the Committee.

BACKGROUND

Recognised as one of the top three Festivals and Events in Australia, the Parkes Elvis Festival ("the Festival") attracts 25,000 fans with a global reach of 1.8 billion across over 3,000 media outlets. The 2025 Festival will be held 8-12 January and will celebrate its 32nd year.

ISSUES AND COMMENTARY

Planning is well and truly under way for the Parkes Elvis Festival in January 2025. The Events and Festivals team ("team") have commenced engaging with Portfolio holders, committee members and visitors from past years.

While there are a variety of ideas and suggestions to incorporate into planning, the team will be ensuring that changes enhance the rich thirty-one years of Festival history without over-hauling what is a tried and trusted format.

In 2025, the overall programming will be consistent with previous years. The team are currently working on the following areas to introduce a touch of fresh paint and some new processes to complement, based on the experience/feedback received.

In summary:

Area	Deliverables
Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch Event • UETA Competition Reimagined • Feature Artists • Australian Elvis Tribute Artists • Miss Priscilla
Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PEF2025 Launch <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Earlier launch date • More ticketed shows <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lower priced tickets

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing Plan introduced with four phases • Website: improvements on user experience • Sponsorship to Partnership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increase in income
Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review configuration of market and food stalls • Work with local cafés and restaurants to extend trading hours • Look to create expanded dining spaces "on" Clarinda Street under shaded marquee

Let's take a deeper dive...

Programme

The 2025 Programme is currently being reviewed and some areas of focus include:

Launch Event

The 2025 launch event may be brought forward to help generate a longer lead time in overall promotion and encouraging visitors to lock in accommodation, travel plans and also get a glimpse of the programme.

Traditionally this has taken place in mid-late September and a proposal is currently being drawn up to bring the launch into August. The team expect to be providing a detailed recommendation during April.

Feature Concert Series Plus Other Ticketed Shows

Throughout the lead up to PEF, much online debate and discussion has seen many visitors confused about the length of time that shows were being played. One show may play for two hours, while another show plays for ninety minutes. Both shows are ticketed at the same price, and caused confusion, and for the shows that were shorter - a little disappointment.

In centralising and creating a new template - all ticketed shows will be played for 90 minutes. This also allows the feature artists, session musicians and production providers a chance to avoid fatigue and voice-loss during the five days of entertaining.

Further to this, it also opens an opportunity to consider additional shows for other Australian artists and performers (*more on that shortly*).

UETA Competition Reimagined

The UETA (Ultimate Elvis Tribute Artist) competition is a much-loved annual competition, with the eventual winner going on to represent Australia in the ETA competition in the United States in August.

As part of a long-term strategy, there is a need to continually develop new talent. Without Tribute Artists, Parkes does not have a Festival. In line with this thinking, the UETA competition may include the introduction of some satellite competitions outside of Parkes to generate excitement, increase the profile of the Festival and capture any young artists who may be interested in taking part.

Upon introduction of 15-year-old Charlie Gaylard to the Cooke Park Main stage on Saturday night of the 2024 Festival, there was a significant response from the crowd, who enjoyed seeing the fresh-faced Tribute Artist provide a brilliant inaugural performance.

As part of a review, the team will be considering how the UETA Competition can become an annual talent quest that grows the volume of Tribute Artists, helping prolong the life of the Festival.

Feature Artists

Each year, as a requirement of the Destination NSW Strategic Agreement, Parkes Elvis Festival is required to feature two international feature artists. The team will work closely with Elvis Presley Enterprises and seek to have the winner of the international UETA competition (Memphis, August) as one of the feature artists.

This will ensure that Parkes is featuring the global number one artist, and also provides an incentive for artists competing in that competition, with the unique opportunity to travel Down-Under.

A final proposal for 2025 international feature artists will be ready in April 2024.

Australian Elvis Tribute Artists

Over recent years, programming focus and attention has been on international artists for ticketed events, and the Cook Park Mainstage free programme.

In a bid to provide opportunities for Australian ETAs, several new shows are proposed in 2025, making better use of existing venues (Little Theatre, Services Club) where event infrastructure is already in place.

Proposed show titles are:

- Happy Hour with ...
- The Easy Come, Easy Go Sessions, and
- Australian Made

These shows will not only highlight local Australian talent, but also increase the range of shows on offer for patrons, all without increasing overall expenditure (production, backline and venue already paid for).

Miss Priscilla

A review of the current Miss Priscilla format is underway. While a long-time Festival favourite, there are opportunities to provide a refresh to this competition.

Marketing

The Parkes Elvis Festival is a much-loved experience and sees many happy returning fans each year. As part of a longer-term strategy, there will be a focus on ensuring the Festival's patronage does not decline due to the aging population of its primary demographic.

For 2025, the Festival team will focus on:

PEF2025 Launch

In response to feedback and recognised challenges associated with the 2024 Festival launch, for 2025, a plan will be implemented to ensure the website, ticket box office and social media messaging is clear, accurate and simple. A launch strategy and timeline will be finalised in April 2024.

Launch Date

The team are currently working on a strategy that would see marketing and communications of Parkes Elvis Festival 2025 commence earlier than usual, in August. This would allow an additional six weeks in market to help provide profile and awareness, ensure more planning time for patrons, and the potential to generate additional ticket sales.

More Ticketed Shows

Over past years, most of the ticketed shows on offer have sold out or been near capacity. Around 5,700 tickets were sold in 2024. For 2025, a proposed 7,700 tickets will be made available, with the addition of eight new shows.

Ticket Pricing

As the increased cost of living continues to put pressure on household budgets, and based on patron feedback, Festival ticket pricing is being reviewed. Detailed budget modelling is underway, and it is expected that the Feature Concert Series ticket pricing will be reduced by 9%.

Marketing Plan introduced with four phases

Internal administration improvements will see a comprehensive marketing plan introduced that includes four phases. This strategy is currently in design and scope mode however includes:

- Phase One - Branding, Save The Date and Generic Information
- Phase Two - Shows, Tickets and Website Launch
- Phase Three - Detailed Programme, Artist Reviews, Competitions
- Phase Four - Festival Week Communications

Each of the four phases will also focus on the user experience, using best practice to achieve patron satisfaction.

Sponsorship to Partnership

The team are developing the sponsorship prospectus and reviewing grant funding opportunities, seeking to connect with major sponsors and brands to complement the festival audience. The sponsorship prospectus will look to incorporate the broader Parkes Shire Council portfolio of events, including the Trundle ABBA Festival and Sounds at the Pavilion Series.

Operations

The Festival operations and logistics are continually under review. After thirty years, management of the Street Parade, Waste Management and Emergency Management is world class. The team are currently reviewing:

Configuration of market and food stalls

Each year many local and interstate market and food stall providers get the opportunity to engage with a large audience over Festival weekend. As part of maximising the Cooke Park experience, a review of the site map layout, featured providers, and potential amusement rides will be conducted.

An overall plan for this aspect of Festival will complement an earlier launch date for vendors to apply.

Work with local café's and restaurants to extend trading hours

Clarinda Street forms a central pathway for many visitors heading to venues, shops, pubs and Elvis Central. A large amount of feedback has been received over the years on the trading hours of shops, cafes and restaurants. Efforts will be taken throughout 2024 to engage with local businesses to maximise their opportunities to capture trade over the five Festival days.

Look to create expanded dining spaces "on" Clarinda Street under shaded marquee

In line with increasing trade opportunities for local business, there has been some conceptualisation to erecting marquees on Clarinda Street, providing additional, extended dining seating on-street.

Other concepts are also being explored that would see experiences, entertainment and/or programming included at the top end of Clarinda Street.

LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY CONTEXT

There are no legislative considerations for the Committee associated with this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Council Investment

Budget allocation will be made in the 2024/25 Operational Plan and Budget. Council Officers have identified a prospective investment of \$450,000 by Council for delivery of the Parkes Elvis Festival 2025. This budget will be considered by Council at the Ordinary Council Meeting scheduled to be held Tuesday, 16 April 2024.

Council's Events and Festivals Specialist is working closely with the Festival Producer to ensure a reduction in expenses and increase in income to allow for this budget allocation.

Grant Funding

Council's Events and Festivals Team are pursuing all available grant funding opportunities to offset the costs associated with delivering the Parkes Elvis Festival 2025, with focus placed on activation of the northern end of Festival Boulevard (Clarinda Street).

RISK IMPLICATIONS

With all events, there are risks of budget over-runs due to market volatility and the increasing cost of goods and services. Once an operational budget for an event is agreed, should there be over-runs, there are risks that other proposed Council events or community events support programs will be impacted.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Council officers will plan and execute a program of communication and engagement activities to meet community and stakeholder needs.

6.6 SOUNDS AT THE PAVILION EVENTS UPDATE**IP&R Linkage:** Pillar: Economy**Goal:** Our Shire is an attractive destination to live, work, visit and invest.**Strategy:** Promote Parkes Shire as a tourist destination and support the continued growth of our visitor economy.**Author:** Mikaela Cass, Events and Festivals Specialist**Authoriser:** Carrie Olsen, Executive Manager Economy, Destination and Activation**Annexures:** Nil

RECOMMENDATION

That:

1. The update on the Sounds at the Pavilion events be noted by the Committee.
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BACKGROUND

Presented by Parkes Shire Council and proudly funded by the NSW Government's *Reconnecting Regional NSW - Community Events Program*, the Sounds at the Pavilion series started in December 2022 with "Latin Sounds" at the Pavilion and "Disco Sounds" at Tullamore and the Pavilion. Both events were well-attended and supported by the Parkes Shire community, with 1,600 attendees between the three events.

Following the success of Latin Sounds and Disco Sounds events, Parkes Shire Council committed in the [2023/24 Operational Plan](#) to deliver a subsequent three Sounds at the Pavilion events.

ISSUES AND COMMENTARY

Council's Events and Festivals Team have delivered two Sounds at the Pavilion events in the 2023/24 financial year to date. Whilst a commitment was made in the 2023/24 Operational Plan to deliver three Sounds at the Pavilion events, a budget of \$60,000 was committed for all three events, and as of 26 February 2024, the total expenditure to deliver two events is \$90,125, resulting in a \$30,125 budget over-run.

An overview of the Country Sounds and Sounds of the Decades: 70's, 80's and 90's events, as well as an update on the preliminary planning for the third Sounds at the Pavilion event, Local Sounds of Rock, is provided below for the information of the Committee.

Country Sounds

Country Sounds was delivered on 18 November 2023 at Cooke Park Pavilion. The event attracted 2,500 attendees from the Parkes Shire LGA and beyond.

The lineup featured well-known country artists including Robbie Mortimer (headliner), Raechel Whitchurch, Austen Logan and Megan Woods. Positive sentiment was received for all performers via social media following the event.

The total event cost was \$43,107 and included performance fees, event equipment, accommodation and travel, workforce costs, Cooke Park activations, event infrastructure and event services.

The post-event survey was distributed via social media and received 8 responses. Survey responses indicate clear support for events such as this to continue. Further information has been provided in the Community Consultation section of this report.



Sounds of the Decades: 70's, 80's and 90's

Sounds of the Decades: 70's, 80's and 90's was delivered on 3 February 2024 at Cooke Park Pavilion. The event attracted 3,000 attendees from the Parkes Shire LGA.

The lineup featured a variety of metro and regional artists including Yacht Rock Revival (headliner - Melbourne), Panorama Band (Sydney) and Tanya Andrews (Dubbo). Positive sentiment was received for all performers via social media following the event, with locals showing fantastic support for Panorama Band and expressing support for their return to the Parkes Shire LGA.

The total event cost was \$47,018 and included performance fees, event equipment, accommodation and travel, workforce costs, Cooke Park activations, event infrastructure and event services.

The post-event survey was distributed via social media and has received 160 responses. Survey responses continued to indicate clear support for events such as this to continue. Further information has been provided in the Community Consultation section of this report.



Local Sounds of Rock

Council's Events and Festivals Team have commenced preliminary planning to deliver "Local Sounds of Rock" in May 2024. The Events and Festivals Team are pursuing all available grant funding opportunities to deliver the third Sounds at the Pavilion event, including the NSW Government's [NSW Social Cohesion Grant for Local Government](#) which closes on 29 February 2024. Should Council be unsuccessful in obtaining the grant funding, it is unlikely that the third Sounds at the Pavilion event will be delivered.

If grant funding is secured, preliminary planning for the event provides an estimated cost of \$42,605 which consists of performance fees for local performers, event equipment, accommodation and travel, workforce costs, Cooke Park activations, event infrastructure and event services.

LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY CONTEXT

There are no legislative or policy considerations for the Committee associated with this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Council Investment

Council's 2023/24 Operational Plan and Budget committed \$60,000 to the delivery of three Sounds at the Pavilion events. As of 26 February 2024, \$90,125 has been expended on two Sounds at the Pavilion events, resulting in a **(\$30,125)** operating result for the project YTD.

Operating Expenses: 2023/24 Sounds at the Pavilion events			
Event Name	Budget	Actuals + Commitments	Variance
Country Sounds	\$20,000	\$43,107	(\$23,107)
Sounds of the Decades	\$20,000	\$47,018	(\$27,018)
Local Sounds of Rock <i>(TBC)</i>	\$20,000	-	-
Total	\$60,000	\$90,125	(\$30,125)

Considering the Council investment to-date, the feasibility of delivering the third Sounds at the Pavilion event, "Local Sounds of Rock", is under review. Alternate funding opportunities are being explored as Council does not have the internal funds to commit to the event in the Events and Festivals budget.

Grant Funding

Council's Events and Festivals Team are pursuing all available grant funding opportunities to deliver the third Sounds at the Pavilion event.

The NSW Government has released the [NSW Social Cohesion Grant for Local Government](#) which supports local councils to develop innovative programs for stronger and more resilient and cohesive communities. The aim of the grant is to strengthen:

- Connection and belonging within local communities.
- Connection and belonging between local communities.
- Connection and trust between local communities and institutions.
- The capabilities of Local Governments to design, implement and evaluate social cohesion initiatives.

Parkes can be considered a Shire of a lower concentration of wealth (Census) with access to experiences outside of sport very limited for the majority of the community. As highlighted in Council's Community Strategic Plan, "public space is essential to our physical and mental wellbeing: it's where we meet our friends, exercise, play sport and relax". The opportunity for Council to host a free, family-friendly event in the heart of Parkes in Cooke Park addresses the social cohesion challenge of bringing together people from all walks of life to build connection and give a sense of belonging.

Announcement of successful grant applications is due 31 March 2024.

RISK IMPLICATIONS

There is a reputational risk to Council associated with the decision to proceed in hosting the third Sounds at the Pavilion event, or not. Some community members would be disappointed to see Council choose not to proceed with delivery of the third event due to the overwhelmingly positive response received from the previous Sounds at the Pavilion events.

Managing outdoor events has high inherent risks. Considering progressively unpredictable weather patterns and severe weather events, there is a risk of event cancellation due to inclement weather and/or unsuitable grounds conditions. Further, it is difficult to secure appropriate insurance coverage for outdoor events.

With all events, there are risks of budget over-runs due to market volatility and the increasing cost of goods and services. Over-runs in the operational budget will impact other Council programs.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Post-event surveys were distributed via social media for Country Sounds and Sounds of the Decades: 70's, 80's and 90's.

Survey responses: 2023/24 Sounds at the Pavilion events		
	Country Sounds	Sounds of the Decades: 70's, 80's and 90's
Number of responses	8	160
Postcode data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2870 - Parkes NSW (5) • 2869 - Peak Hill NSW (1) • 2860 - Eugowra NSW (1) • 2879 - Menindee NSW (1) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2870 - Parkes NSW (140) • 2869 - Peak Hill (7)
Commentary and/or suggestions for future events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep it a free event. • Local musicians. • More food vendors. • Unable to hear the music at the back of the park near the Kids Entertainment Zone. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local entertainment by local performers. • More food vendors. • More variety of covers by performers. • Jumping castles were a hit and it was all free - such a relaxing experience! • A mixture of all genres of music. • Provide extra seating at the event. • Extend shade cloth to the east of Cooke Park. • If running the events in winter, start earlier in the day and finish earlier. • Advertise that camp chairs and picnic blankets are required. • Recycling bins would be handy. • No need for fireworks all the time - special occasions are OK. • Improved stage lighting.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More entertainment for young kids (e.g. magician)• More events - every two months!
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Feedback received will be taken into consideration when planning for future events.

Next meeting date: Tuesday 4 June 2024.
