

8.1 2009 GLEN WAVERLEY COMMUNITY FESTIVAL PROGRAM

(CL: ARTS43)

Responsible Councillor: Cr Geoff Lake

RECOMMENDATION*That Council:*

1. *approves the following festivals be held in the Glen Waverley Activity Centre in 2009:*
 - *The Glen Waverley Chinese Lantern Festival to be held on Sunday 8 February (**the Lantern Festival**); and*
 - *The Glen Waverley Food and Wine Festival to be held on a Sunday in October or November (**the Food and Wine Festival**);*
2. *approves up to \$80,000 funding from Council cash reserves for the Lantern Festival comprising \$60,000 direct funding to the Event Organising Committee (EOC) and makes provision of \$20,000 for Council support services;*
3. *approves up to \$80,000 from the 2009/2010 Budget, subject to final approval in the Budget process for the Food and Wine Festival comprising \$60,000 direct funding to the EOC and makes a provision of \$20,000 for Council support services;*
4. *funding to the respective EOC for either festival is subject to compliance with conditions listed in recommendation 5;*
5. *requires from either EOC:*
 - *evidence of appropriate Public Liability Insurance for the respective festival;*
 - *a proposal for the appointment of a suitably qualified and experienced professional Event Manager and Risk Manager;*
 - *a Risk and Safety Management Plan which is submitted at least four weeks prior to the respective festival;*
 - *a detailed proposal for the respective festival program including all proposed activities;*
 - *agreement that Council will approve all sub contractors involved in the respective festival, including, security, public toilet, staging, audio and marquee service providers; and*
 - *acknowledgement of Council in all marketing and promotional material as the major supporter of the respective festival;*
6. *requires from the Food and Wine Festival EOC, a proposal for Council's consideration of the date and time for that festival;*
7. *agrees that following the conclusion of each festival, to review the event and consider, in consultation with Glen Waverley traders and the wider community, whether that festival should become a permanent addition to Council's festival program and, if so, the most appropriate model for its future delivery, management and funding arrangements;*
8. *expresses its appreciation of the significant time and support of the various community groups and individuals who have developed either festival proposal; and*
9. *that the EOC for the Food and Wine Festival proactively seek funding from either State or Federal Government.*

INTRODUCTION

This report presents two proposals for festivals to be held in Glen Waverley during 2009. The proposals have been developed separately by community groups active in Glen Waverley and the wider Monash area in consultation with Council Officers and myself. The purpose of the report is to recommend that

Council accepts and endorses the proposals and to fix the level of Council support to be provided to either event.

BACKGROUND

Festivals and events are an essential part of a vibrant and healthy community. Festivals can create a sense of pride and belonging in an area, while showcasing talents, lifestyles and cultures to a wider audience. They also offer an exciting opportunity to bring people of diverse backgrounds together in celebration and friendship.

Council's current festival program includes:

Festival	Total Cost inclusive of in house costs
Ashwood Chadstone Family Fun Day	\$28,200
Clayton Community Festival	\$114,859
Mulgrave Family Fun Day	\$19,600
Monash Carols by Candlelight at Jells Park	\$195,245
Oakleigh Community Festival	\$43,000

It is apparent from the table that there are no events currently held in Glen Waverley. As well as being Council's largest suburb, Glen Waverley is also the location of the biggest activity centre in the municipality. It is considered both appropriate and desirable for Council's festival program to be expanded to include events situated in Glen Waverley.

As already noted, Council has recently received two separate proposals for festivals to be trialled in Glen Waverley during 2009. Both proposals are discussed further below.

LANTERN FESTIVAL

The proposal for a Lantern Festival (see Attachment 1) is from a group of Chinese community groups and organisations which have proposed that a Chinese Lantern Festival be held to coincide with Chinese New Year celebrations on Sunday 8 February 2009.

It is proposed that the Lantern Festival be held between noon and 9.00 p.m. on Kingsway in the heart of the Glen Waverley Activity Centre. The focus of the festival will be situated between Bogong Avenue and Coleman Parade. Kingsway is the main road through the Glen Waverley Activity Centre and is a popular recreational and shopping precinct with a high presence of cafés and restaurants. The event is intended as a one-day community cultural event and will include an evening lantern celebration. The proposal seeks financial and in-kind support from Council.

The Chinese Association of Victoria, Monash Chinese Friendship Association, Chinese Performing Arts Development, Waverley Chinese Senior Club and the Xin Jin Shan Chinese Culture School have submitted the proposal.

Representatives from these organisations will form part of the Event Organising Committee (EOC).

The City of Monash has previously supported two Asian/Australian festivals in Kingsway. On Sunday 11 October 1998 approximately 5,000 people attended the inaugural City Of Monash Asian/Australian Festival marking the Chinese Mooncake Festival. The festival featured a lion dance, Tai Chi displays and other cultural events. Council contributed direct financial assistance of \$10,000 to this festival in addition to providing considerable in-kind support services.

A second festival, this time marking Chinese New Year on 2 April 2000, was also held and used to launch the City of Monash Restaurant and Hospitality guide. This festival was less successful and further festivals were not held due to a lack of participant support. Council's contribution to this second festival was \$19,000 plus additional in-kind support.

Since the time of these festivals, the proportion of residents living in Glen Waverley who are from a Chinese background has increased significantly. Statistics from the 2006 census demonstrate that the Chinese community is the largest multicultural group in Monash. 20% of Glen Waverley residents indicated they have Chinese ancestry. Over 17% of Glen Waverley residents speak Chinese at home.

In addition, the support and involvement of the key Chinese community groups in framing the Lantern Festival proposal is seen as a significant enhancement from the model used in the earlier Asian festivals. Also significant is the personal involvement of a number of individuals who have organised and managed the successful and long running City of Melbourne Chinese New Year celebrations. The combination of these various factors mean that the Lantern Festival in 2009 has the potential to be highly successful and appeal to a very significant audience.

While the Lantern Festival will have a particular focus and resonance for the Monash Chinese-Australian population, it is intended to appeal equally to non-Chinese residents. Indeed, the proposers of the festival are planning for performances from a range of diverse ethnic groupings. One of the aims of the festival is to provide an opportunity for the wider Monash Community to engage in a cultural celebration to which they may not otherwise have been exposed. While recognising an important event on the traditional lunar calendar, the Lantern Festival is intended to serve as a wider celebration of multiculturalism and provide an opportunity for increased interaction between residents of different cultural backgrounds.

Features of the proposed event

It is proposed that the Lantern Festival will include the following:

- food and trade stalls;
- stage performances;
- Chinese cultural corner with traditional arts and craft activities;
- official opening by City of Monash Mayor;
- lion dance;

- night lantern parade and Chinese dragon dance; and
- karaoke.

Developing and refining the proposal

A significant amount of time and effort has gone into developing the proposal for the Lantern Festival. Since receipt of an initial proposal in July 2008, Council has provided advice to the Lantern Festival EOC in order to assist them to submit an appropriate request to Council. Council has conducted analysis of the following:

- review of the site and an alternative site;
- review of site closure times;
- development of a draft preliminary traffic management plan;
- review of the proposed budget; and
- examination of the implications of the proposed event on Council's internal resources.

Various recommendations and advice have been provided to the Lantern Festival EOC on all of the above points.

In addition to the above, representatives of the Lantern Festival EOC met with me on 29 August 2008 and with Council's Arts and Cultural Development Unit and Festival Consultant on 2 September 2008.

Budget

The City of Monash has estimated that the actual cost to implement a festival of the size and nature of the Chinese Lantern Festival in accordance with risk management standards and Occupational Health & Safety legislation is \$100,000.

It is proposed that the EOC provide funding of \$40,000 and Council funds the EOC to a maximum of \$60,000. It is likely that a financial contribution from the State Government will be available and this is factored into the budget of the EOC.

In addition, it is proposed that Council also allocates \$20,000 internally to support the festival through the provision of the following services:

- Arts and Cultural Development – an officer to be the main liaison point between Council and the Lantern Festival EOC and to represent Council on the Lantern Festival EOC;
- Asset Services – provision of road closure equipment;
- Economic Development – trader liaison and communication;
- Environmental Health Services – administration of Temporary Food Permits and inspections on the day;
- Local Laws – dealing with any enforcement issues on the day;
- Traffic Management – development of the traffic management plan and an officer available on call during the festival; and
- Public Affairs – assistance with promotion and advertising of the event.

FOOD AND WINE FESTIVAL

The Food and Wine Festival proposal has been developed by the Glen Waverley Traders Association (see Attachment 2). The event is proposed to be held in October or November 2009.

This festival is aimed at raising the profile of Monash as a destinational food and beverage precinct as well as offering a community event that will appeal to a different cohort of the Monash community from what is currently offered in Council's other festivals and events. It is appropriately proposed to be held in the Glen Waverley Activity Centre given this is the largest activity centre in Monash.

It is intended that the Food and Wine Festival would also involve the participation of a number of community groups and appeal to the wider Monash and business community. Restaurants and traders in other parts of Monash would be encouraged to participate as stallholders on the day.

Monash is ideally positioned an equal short driving distance from Melbourne's two leading wine regions – the Yarra Valley and the Mornington Peninsula. The intention is for leading wineries from both regions to be involved in the festival and to be paired with fine dining restaurant stalls to offer a fabulous culinary and wine tasting experience. As well as the obvious community benefit of such a day, it is also intended that the event will help in developing the reputation of the Monash area as having some of Melbourne's finest dining and entertainment options.

The Food and Wine Festival concept has the potential to appeal to a significant proportion of the adult population in Monash who do not currently get involved in the current offering of cultural festivals and events in Monash.

Budget

It is proposed that Council support the Food and Wine Festival in a similar way to the Chinese Lantern Festival by providing \$60,000 in direct funding to the Food and Wine EOC and by allocating a further \$20,000 internally to provide Council support services. The provision of internal services will be similar to the services listed above for the Lantern Festival.

Given the Food and Wine Festival will be held in financial year 2009/10, Council's direct contribution will be funded from the 2009/10 Council budget.

It is intended that the Food and Wine EOC will at least match the level of direct Council funding (\$60,000) through sponsorship, admission charges and in-kind support from other organisations. There may also be an opportunity for State Government funding assistance which will also be explored.

LOGISTICS

Kingsway will be closed to traffic for both events from midnight prior to either event between the roundabouts at Bogong Avenue and Coleman Parade.

Kingsway is ideally suited to a street festival concept as the area is well contained once the road closure is in place. Stalls can be placed in the angled parking in the centre of Kingsway, leaving existing traders unencumbered and able to feel a part of the festival because their shopfronts will not be obstructed by the stallholders.

There is ample parking available at the multi-level car park in Bogong Avenue and in other car parks around the Activity Centre. The festival is also within short walking distance to the Glen Waverley train station and bus terminal.

As neither EOC are experienced in operating festivals of this size and scope, the management of the logistics and risk management of both festivals will require the engagement of professionals. This is included in the budget breakdown for both proposals.

In addition, the Lantern Festival will also involve a number of risky activities which need to be managed including firecrackers and temporary cooking facilities.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Both festivals present an opportunity to expand the event and cultural offering across the municipality in line with Council policy. Both events are consistent with Council's Arts & Cultural Development Strategy. In the case of the Food and Wine Festival, it is also consistent with Council's Economic Development Strategy, while the Lantern Festival is consistent with Council's Multicultural Framework and Action Plan. These policies are briefly outlined below.

Creative Communities: Monash Arts & Cultural Development Strategy 2007 - 2010

Relevant strategies include:

- Getting the Word Out - To promote the cultural life of Monash as a key to the quality of life for residents, workers and visitors, and a core activity of Council.
- Expressing and Celebrating Our Diversity - To bring people together to promote an understanding, respect and tolerance that contributes to the creation of a safe, cohesive and resilient community.
- Expressing and Celebrating Our Diversity - To encourage access and inclusion in the cultural life of Monash.
- Expressing and Celebrating Our Diversity - To encourage fresh ideas and innovative programming.

Economic Development Strategy 2008-2012

The Food and Wine Festival is aligned with the overriding objective of the Economic Development strategy, namely, to showcase, develop, foster and enhance the economic viability of businesses in Monash. The Food and Wine Festival concept is in accordance with Council's commitment to Economic Development and the emphasis in the Economic Development Strategy to the importance of activity centres in Monash in both economic and social terms.

Multicultural Framework and Action Plan 2006-2008

The proposed Lantern Festival is in line with Council's Multicultural Framework and Action Plan, in particular it is consistent with its specific actions relating to capacity building, partnership development, acknowledgement and celebration.

Events such as the Lantern Festival provide the opportunity for diverse communities in Monash to share and celebrate with the broader community their heritage and traditions. These events also create the opportunity to build a better community awareness of diversity and the contribution multicultural life has made to civic life in Monash.

CONSULTATION

Letters were sent to all Glen Waverley traders in the Kingsway Precinct on 8 September 2008, notifying them of the festival proposals.

A traders' information session was held on 18 September 2008 and all Kingsway traders were invited to attend. The aim of the session was for Council to gauge the level of support for the proposed festivals. I facilitated the session and it was attended by relevant Council officers and Council's Festival and Events consultant.

The proposers of the respective festivals attended and presented their proposals. The response from the traders in attendance was positive. There has also been no objections raised to either festival by any trader in response to the letters which were sent from Council.

There has also been ongoing discussion and liaison between myself and the Glen Waverley Traders' Association, since July.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Lantern Festival requires a direct Council contribution of \$60,000 which can be comfortably funded from Council's reserves.

The \$60,000 contribution to the Food and Wine Festival will be made in financial year 2009/10 and will be referred to Council's budget planning process commencing in early 2009.

In addition, internal resources and staff time of up to the value of \$20,000 will be required to support both festivals.

CONCLUSION

The proposed Lantern Festival and Food and Wine Festival will be significant events for the Monash community and it is recommended both festivals receive support from Council as outlined in the recommendations.

The significant contribution of the Community groups and individuals who have spent many hours developing the respective proposals should also be acknowledged and applauded by Council.