

ITEM 4.1. NSW ABORIGINAL RUGBY LEAGUE KNOCKOUT SPONSORSHIP**FILE NO: X003748****MEMORANDUM BY THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**To Council:

The NSW Aboriginal Rugby League Knockout, known in the community as the Knockout, is the largest annual Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander gathering in NSW. The first Knockout was held at Camdenville Oval in St Peters in 1971 organised by the Redfern All Blacks.

Today, the Knockout has grown to include 132 teams from communities across the State, including 64 men's teams, 22 women's teams and 46 junior rugby league teams. Tens of thousands of people participate as players, officials, volunteers and spectators over four days of competition.

The winner of the men's event wins the right to host the next tournament. The Redfern All Blacks won both the men's and women's events at the 2015 carnival in Dubbo.

The 2016 Knockout will be held at Leichhardt Oval and surrounding grounds on the October long weekend from 30 September – 3 October. The large number of games held during the carnival require multiple ovals in close proximity. Leichhardt offers the best facilities with the required ovals that are closest to Redfern.

The Redfern All Blacks is the oldest Aboriginal Rugby League Club in Australia and has been at the cultural, community and political heart of Aboriginal Redfern for around 80 years.

The victory of the Redfern All Blacks and their hosting of the carnival this year is a cause for great cultural celebration in our city. It will be a time when members of the local community welcome Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities – family and friends – from across NSW to experience Sydney and, in particular, the home of the host team, Redfern. It is also an opportunity for the City to share some of the projects and achievements from the Eora Journey, Reconciliation Action Plan and Redfern Community Centre with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people visiting Sydney for the Knockout.

The carnival has significant cultural and community outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. It is often described as a "modern day Corroboree". As well as the rugby league competitions, a series of community and cultural events will be held. Many will take place in Redfern, including at the Redfern Community Centre.

The carnival is a no-smoking and no-alcohol event and promotes healthy and active living. The Knockout organisers have established partnerships with several successful community health and wellbeing programs including "Girls, make your move," "Tackling violence" and the highly regarded "Clean slate without prejudice" and "Never going back" programs run by the Redfern community and Redfern Police.

Hosting the carnival in Sydney poses significant organisational and event management challenges that are different from those experienced by the regional communities that have hosted the carnival in recent years.

The event budget is close to \$1million. They have secured over \$900,000 in sponsorship and other income including significant support from the Inner West Council and the NSW NRL. To date, the City has supported the organisers with a \$30,000 festival and events grant for cultural activities as well as \$3,042 value-in-kind to use Redfern Community Centre for meetings and functions.

The Redfern All Blacks Knockout Committee presented to the July meeting of the City's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Panel. As part of the presentation, they requested additional cash sponsorship of \$42,000 and value-in-kind for banner pole hire of \$3,366. This would enable them to employ an event manager in the lead up and during the event (\$30,000) and to promote the event with posters and street banners around Redfern (\$12,000).

This additional funding will assist the organisers overcome the challenges of hosting a large community and sporting event in inner Sydney and also increase engagement and sense of celebration within the Redfern community.

Support for the Redfern All Blacks and the 2016 Knockout carnival aligns with actions in Sustainable Sydney 2030 to celebrate and support the cultures of the First Nations people of Sydney.

Funding of \$42,000 is available from the approved 2016/17 Grants and Sponsorships budget. Value-in-kind is provided in line with the banner pole hire program for not-for-profit organisations and the City's grants and sponsorship guidelines.

RECOMMENDATION

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council approve cash sponsorship of \$42,000 (excluding GST) and \$3,366 value-in-kind to the Redfern All Blacks Rugby League Football Club Incorporated to host the 2016 Aboriginal Rugby League Knockout;
- (B) Council note that all grant amounts are exclusive of GST and all value-in-kind offered is subject to availability; and
- (C) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to negotiate, execute and administer a sponsorship agreement with the Redfern All Blacks Rugby League Football Club Incorporated.

MONICA BARONE

Chief Executive Officer