

ITEM 3. EVENTS CHARITY PARTNERSHIPS**FILE NO: S125584.001****SUMMARY**

The City of Sydney has previously appointed annual Charity Partners for its three key events as follows:

- Sydney New Year's Eve since 2004;
- Sydney Christmas since 2003; and
- Sydney Chinese New Year Festival since 2006.

These appointments offer a significant platform for the charities to build awareness through integration in the City's events and associated event marketing and communications. It also provides an opportunity for the City's event audiences to reflect on the broader needs of communities beyond the celebration and participation in these events.

Following a recently advertised Expression of Interest (EOI), three not-for-profit organisations are recommended for Events Charity Partnerships.

The recommendation for the 2015 Sydney New Year's Eve Charity Partner is Habitat for Humanity Australia (Habitat), whose vision is a world where everyone has a safe and decent place to live. Anchored by the conviction that safe and affordable housing provides a path out of poverty, Habitat has built or repaired over 800,000 homes, serving more than five million people worldwide since its founding.

The recommendation for the 2015 Sydney Christmas Charity Partner is Guide Dogs NSW, which assists four thousand (4,000) people each year to achieve their mobility goals.

The recommendation for the 2016 Sydney Chinese Year Festival Charity Partner is Cure Brain Cancer, which supports developing a national agenda and influencing the global agenda for brain cancer research.

Since the release of the Charity Partner EOI, it has been decided to change Art & About from a festival in September and October to an annual program of art installations and projects. With this consideration, no partner is recommended for Art & About Sydney 2015, as no suitable match was found.

It is recommended that the Charity Partners for Sydney New Year's Eve, Sydney Chinese New Year Festival and Sydney Christmas have an option for a two year partnership in order to maximise benefits to both the City's events and the respective Charity Partners. This is subject to discussions between the City and the selected organisations.

RECOMMENDATION

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council approve the appointment of Habitat for Humanity Australia as the Charity Partner for 2015 Sydney New Year's Eve with an option to extend to 2016;
- (B) Council approve the appointment of Guide Dogs NSW as the Charity Partner for 2015 Sydney Christmas with an option to extend to 2016;
- (C) Council approve the appointment of Cure Brain Cancer for the 2016 Sydney Chinese New Year Festival with an option to extend to 2017; and
- (D) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to negotiate, execute and administer agreements with Habitat for Humanity Australia, Guide Dogs NSW and Cure Brain Cancer to establish their Charity Partner status for the respective events.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil.

BACKGROUND

1. When the appointment of Charity Partners for 2014 Sydney New Year's Eve and Sydney Christmas was reported to Council mid last year, it was noted that an Expression of Interest (EOI) would be advertised in the future to attract the City's Events Charity Partnerships.
2. An EOI advertisement was placed in the Early General News (EGN) sections of The Daily Telegraph and The Sydney Morning Herald on 20 March 2015, and the advertisement and an information sheet were posted on the City's Creative City website from 11 March 2015 to 12 April 2015. The closing date for submissions was 10 April 2015, noting that the City reserved its right to appoint or not appoint a Charity Partner.
3. Bidders were invited to submit a three-page document on the suitability of their organisation to partner with a City of Sydney event. The benefits offered by the City to Charity Partners include:
 - (a) incorporation in the City's event marketing materials and event collateral;
 - (b) opportunities to provide on-site event activations;
 - (c) speaking opportunities (as appropriate); and
 - (d) leveraging opportunities through other event partners (where possible).
4. In response to the EOI, the City received 26 submissions for Events Charity Partnerships by the closing date of 10 April 2015. Two late submissions were accepted for inclusion in the evaluation process. They responded to the relevant criteria for each of the events, which had been provided via an information sheet. In addition to the three key events, Sydney Art & About was also included.
5. Applications were assessed by a panel of four City of Sydney staff members. Organisations had the opportunity to apply for more than one event.
6. Sydney New Year's Eve is an annual event viewed by 1.5 million people around the Harbour foreshore and an estimated 1 billion worldwide via television and online broadcasts. The City has appointed an annual Charity Partner for Sydney New Year's Eve since 2004. Previous Charity Partners include: Engineers Without Borders (2013/14); The Fred Hollows Foundation (2012); CARE Australia (2011); WWF (2007 and 2010); Australian Conservation Foundation (2009); Planet Ark (2008); Médecins Sans Frontières (2006); and Oxfam (2004 and 2005).
7. In recommending the selection of a Charity Partner for Sydney New Year's Eve, the following seven criteria were considered:
 - (a) the organisation is an official registered charity;
 - (b) the charity is a member of the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID);
 - (c) the charity has no religious affiliation;
 - (d) the charity is reputable and internationally recognised;

- (e) the work produced by the charity provides significant benefit to the global community;
 - (f) the charity has offices in Australia; and
 - (g) the charity's operational and organisational focus is compatible with the City's values and Sydney New Year's Eve as an event.
8. The recommended Charity Partner for 2015 Sydney New Year's Eve is Habitat for Humanity Australia (Habitat). A partnership between the City and Habitat for Sydney New Year's Eve offers a platform to engage Sydneysiders and the wider national community to take action combating housing poverty across the Asia Pacific region. Habitat hopes to capitalise on its partnership with the event by:
- (a) running a competition on the night to win a chance to volunteer in its Global Village Program in the Asia-Pacific region;
 - (b) projecting images of 'what home means to me' on the Sydney Harbour Bridge pylons on the night; and
 - (c) tailoring a social media campaign.
9. Habitat has more than 70 international offices including Australia, with offices in New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Queensland and Western Australia. It is an officially registered charity; a member of the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID); and currently holds full accreditation with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT).
10. Habitat for Humanity Australia is part of Habitat for Humanity, one of the world's leading not-for-profit providers of housing across the world, originating in Georgia, USA in 1976. Habitat's vision is a world where everyone has a safe and decent place to live. Notably, the organisation doesn't give handouts, but rather hand ups by building homes in partnership with families both in Australia and overseas. In Australia, where Habitat has been working for over 25 years, there is a great need to support disadvantaged, disabled and elderly people with housing maintenance in our own community. Habitat regularly mobilises volunteers in local communities within Sydney, Melbourne and Adelaide affected by disasters such as bush fires. This is in addition to the building of more than 140 homes in partnership with families from diverse backgrounds such as Sudanese refugees.
11. The Sydney Christmas program is a series of outdoor concerts including a light up of a Christmas tree, from late November through December each year. The City has appointed an annual Charity Partner for Sydney Christmas since 2003. Previous Charity Partners include: Australian Children's Music Foundation (2011 to 2014); Monika's Doggy Rescue (2009 and 2010); RSPCA (2006 to 2008); State Emergency Service (2005); Guide Dogs NSW (2004) and Canteen (2003).
12. In recommending the selection of a Charity Partner for 2015 Sydney Christmas, the following five criteria were considered:
- (a) the organisation is an official registered charity or public benevolent institution;
 - (b) the charity is reputable;
 - (c) the charity has no religious affiliation;

- (d) the charity's work produces significant benefit to the community; and
 - (e) the charity's operation and organisational focus is compatible with the City of Sydney's values and the Sydney Christmas program.
13. The recommended Charity Partner for 2015 Sydney Christmas is Guide Dogs NSW, which aligns well with the City's values, particularly integrity and respect. It has demonstrated its capacity to deliver above and beyond the minimum requirements of the Sydney Christmas Charity Partnership with a strong response that will add new activities and opportunities for promotion and fundraising to the Sydney Christmas program. Specifically, Guide Dogs NSW has suggested the introduction of the following new initiatives:
- (a) an "Ambassador" puppy involved in promotions and events;
 - (b) their four metre tall fibreglass mascot "Gulliver" available for positioning in the city and at events during Christmas;
 - (c) blindfold challenge to experience vision impairment at Christmas concerts;
 - (d) collaboration with the City to create audio description or audio or tactile components of the City's light displays;
 - (e) speakers and musicians with vision impairment for Christmas concerts;
 - (f) Guide Dog puppy themed decoration workshops at concerts, which Guide Dogs NSW would design and have produced;
 - (g) Christmas family portraits at Christmas concerts with a puppy and Santa; and
 - (h) the possibility to host a Guide Dog graduation ceremony in a central location in the Sydney CBD.
14. Guide Dogs NSW exists to enhance the quality of life of people who are blind or have impaired vision, by assisting in their achievement of independence through access and mobility. Guide Dogs NSW provides all its services free of charge to clients. They assist more than 4,000 people each year to achieve their mobility goals and was voted by Reader's Digest as Australia's Most Trusted Charity. Guide Dogs NSW is financially dependent on the generosity of the community, with less than 2 per cent of their funding coming from government.
15. The City's Sydney Chinese New Year Festival falls in January/February each year and consists of a series of events including Dragon Boat Racing in Darling Harbour and the famous Chinese New Year Parade in the centre of the city. The City has appointed an annual Charity Partner for the Sydney Chinese New Year Festival since 2006. Previous Charity Partners include: Barnardos Australia (2015 Year of the Sheep); Chinese Parents Association – Children with Disabilities (2014 Year of the Horse); the Taronga Foundation (2013 Year of the Snake and 2012 Year of the Dragon); the Fred Hollows Foundation (2011 Year of the Rabbit); WWF (2010 Year of the Tiger); Oxfam (2009 Year of the Ox); and Guide Dogs NSW (2006 Year of the Dog).

16. In recommending the selection of a Charity Partner for 2016 Sydney Chinese New Year Festival, the following four criteria were considered:
 - (a) the organisation is an official registered charity or public benevolent institution;
 - (b) the charity is reputable;
 - (c) the charity has no religious affiliation; and
 - (d) the charity's operation and organisational focus is compatible with the City of Sydney's values and Chinese New Year Festival.
17. The recommended Charity Partner for 2016 Sydney Chinese New Year Festival is Cure Brain Cancer, which is developing a national agenda and influencing a global agenda for brain cancer research. Cure Brain Cancer has outlined the following opportunities to be derived from their partnership with the festival:
 - (a) providing the charity's founder, Dr Charlie Teo, as a speaker at festival events;
 - (b) alignment of the event with Dr Teo, a significant and well respected figure in the Chinese-Australian community;
 - (c) using alignment with the festival as an opportunity to raise awareness and funds for brain cancer research; and
 - (d) a direct correlation with the 2016 Year of the Monkey's characteristics being of people who are clever and enjoy challenges, and are suited to careers in science.
18. Cure Brian Cancer's founder, Dr Charlie Teo, is an internationally recognised neurosurgeon who is a prominent and highly respected member of the local Chinese community, and would be able to serve as an ambassador of the festival subject to discussions with the charity. Brain cancer is an insidious disease that kills more children in Australia than any other disease, and more people under 40 than any other cancer. Only 20 per cent of people will survive for five years and that statistic has remained unchanged for 30 years, however brain cancer receives only 4 per cent of federal government cancer research funding.
19. The City to this point has not entered into a Charity Partnership for Sydney Art & About, but through the recent EOI had hoped to align with a suitable organisation. In recommending the selection of a Charity Partner for 2015 Sydney Art & About, the following five criteria were considered:
 - (a) the organisation is an official registered charity or public benevolent institution;
 - (b) the charity is reputable;
 - (c) the charity has no religious affiliation;
 - (d) the charity's work produces significant benefit to the community; and
 - (e) the charity's operation and organisational focus is compatible with the City of Sydney's values and the Sydney Art & About program.

20. Since the release of the Charity Partner EOI, it has been decided to change Art & About Sydney from a festival in September and October to an annual program of art installations and projects. With this consideration, no partner is recommended for Art & About Sydney 2015, as no suitable match was found.

KEY IMPLICATIONS

Strategic Alignment

21. A partnership between The City of Sydney and Habitat for 2015 Sydney New Year's Eve offers a platform to engage Sydneysiders and the wider national community to take action in combating housing poverty across the Asia Pacific region. The City's 2030 strategic directions can be met by creating an effective partnership with Habitat, which has an international profile and wide network. The City has identified that Sydney in 2030 should be a place where people feel at home, connect to the local community and the wider world, and therefore an opportunity for Sydney to have a strategic partnership with effective outcomes.

Risks

22. For the City, there is reputational risk in partnering with charitable organisations and mechanisms have been put in place to manage this risk. All selected Partner Charities have submitted evidence of their charity status. For Sydney New Year's Eve, the charity partner is required to be a member of the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID).

Social / Cultural / Community

23. The appointment of Charity Partners each year is intended to engender a favourable community sentiment for the selected charity, the City and the event.
24. As noted in the City's Creative City Cultural Policy, not only do festivals and special events add to a city's cultural layer, but they also bring economic benefits to businesses in the retail, hospitality and tourism sectors. Visitors come from interstate and around the world to be part of events such as Sydney New Year's Eve and Sydney Chinese New Year Festival, which is the biggest outside China. Through a charity partnership exposure, not-for-profit organisations can leverage community awareness from the cross-promotional possibilities associated with these large international events.
22. Habitat is consistently looking for innovative ways to create affordable housing solutions with partner families within its local, national and global communities. It tackles issues of urbanisation where cities across South-East Asia are buckling under an influx of 120,000 new people every day in a mass migration of people from rural to urban areas. The failure to house these people is creating a humanitarian crisis in slow motion. It is a crisis that will impact the economic, social and security future of our Asian neighbours, which in turn could impact Australia. Habitat builds communities via strong and effective partnerships with partner families and community members. It addresses water supply and sanitation issues, and in some communities provides health and educational services such as teaching financial literacy and livelihood training. This is vital knowledge that communities can share with others.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS

25. Any activity or activation agreed by both parties will be covered by the existing operational budgets for the respective Events and Sydney New Year's Eve units.

CRITICAL DATES / TIME FRAMES

26. Signed Letters of Agreement with the appointed Charity Partners are required by 17 July 2015 to enable:
- (a) public announcement of the appointment as part of the first release of event information
 - (b) sufficient timing to produce effective initiatives and attract sufficient numbers of volunteers to plan and implement such initiatives; and
 - (c) integration of partnership opportunities into event programming, which occurs mid-2015.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

27. In view of the restructure of the current Chinese New Year Festival Advisory Group and the timing of the recent EOI, no consultation has commenced with this group.

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