

Item 3.

Adhoc Grant - WorldPride 2023 Bid

File No: X025863

Summary

Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Ltd (SGLMG) has approached the City to support a bid to host WorldPride in 2023. The year 2023 also marks the 45th anniversary of the first Mardi Gras Parade as well as the 5th Anniversary of Marriage Equality. Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras will present the bid to members of InterPride (licensee of WorldPride) at their Annual General Meeting in Athens in October 2019.

WorldPride is a bi-annual international festival that promotes lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex (LGBTQI) issues on an international level through parades, festivals and other cultural activities. The inaugural WorldPride was held in Rome in 2000. Cities which have hosted WorldPride include Jerusalem, London, Toronto and Madrid. New York is hosting WorldPride in 2019 and Copenhagen in 2021.

If Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras' bid is successful, Sydney would be the first city in the southern hemisphere to host WorldPride; attracting a wide and diverse new global audience to the event.

WorldPride Sydney 2023 would offer an immersive opportunity to bring LGBTQI communities and allies to Sydney to generate belonging, pride and connection to our city and its unique culture.

WorldPride Sydney 2023 would provide multiple opportunities for artistic and creative expression through a combined Mardi Gras and WorldPride Arts and Cultural Festival, incorporating stand out events from the Mardi Gras Festival season with new programming specially curated for WorldPride.

In December 2013, Council adopted the City's Economic Development Strategy which aims to strengthen the city economy and support business. Under this Strategy, the Retail and Tourism Action Plans recognise the important contribution that major events play in the City's economy, cultural and sporting life.

Large-scale events have the potential to attract audiences from regional NSW, interstate and overseas. The City's hospitality, tourism and retail businesses in particular are beneficiaries of major events and cultural tourism. Major events can also be the catalyst for participation and engagement, enhance a city's liveability and encourage ongoing investment in infrastructure. Cities compete for the rights to major events in an increasingly competitive market and the cities in which levels of government and private enterprise work together are often more successful.

According to a recent study by Deloitte, as the event will be held around the same time as Mardi Gras, WorldPride 2023 represents an uplift over and above expected Mardi Gras numbers. This includes an additional 88,000 to 350,000 visitors to the local government area with an added economic benefit to Sydney of between \$60 million to \$309 million.

Moreover, the City's hospitality, tourism and retail businesses will be the major beneficiaries of the event's economic footprint given that most of the proposed events during WorldPride Sydney 2023 will take place within the LGA.

This report recommends a \$50,000 (excluding GST) cash sponsorship to support Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras' bid to host WorldPride 2023 in Sydney.

The request for sponsorship has been evaluated against the City's Grants and Sponsorships Program criteria and cash sponsorship is recommended.

Recommendation

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council approve a \$50,000 (excluding GST) cash sponsorship to support Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Ltd's bid for World Pride Sydney 2023 with funds drawn from Council's General Contingency budget; and
- (B) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to negotiate, execute and administer a sponsorship agreement with Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Ltd in support of the bid for bid for World Pride Sydney 2023.

Attachments

Nil.

Background

1. The City's Social Sustainability Policy and Action Plan, *A City for All*, sets out the framework for achieving a City that is inclusive, connected, liveable and engaged. It outlines a number of outcomes which align with the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras's bid for WorldPride in Sydney, including the following: Harmony and social cohesion; Diverse thriving communities; Vibrant creative life; Collaboration and partnerships; Sense of belonging and connection to place.
2. WorldPride is a bi-annual event that promotes lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex (LGBTQI) issues on an international level through parades, festivals and other cultural activities.
3. WorldPride is awarded by members of InterPride at the InterPride Annual General Meeting every two years.
4. InterPride currently has 327 members from 50 countries. Of the 19 Australian Members of InterPride, 9 are located in the Sydney LGA, including Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras.
5. Bids for WorldPride are presented four years in advance. Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras will present the bid for WorldPride Sydney 2023 at the InterPride Annual General Meeting in Athens on 17 October 2019.
6. Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras believe they are well placed to win the bid on the basis of Mardi Gras Festival's high global profile. In 2018 (its 40th anniversary), the event produced more than 8 billion media engagements globally and attracted 875,214 attendees, 13 per cent of which were international and 25 per cent from interstate.
7. The City is home to a large population of LGBTQI people and the City has a long history of providing support to this community. Over the past few years, Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras has worked to develop and strengthen relationships with the '78ers, transgender people, rainbow families, women over 55, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and people under 30 from South Asian and South Pacific communities. WorldPride will provide opportunities to celebrate, strengthen and empower diverse communities to participate in a global celebration of pride.
8. WorldPride 2023 will include a Human Rights and Health Conference focussing on LGBTQI rights and issues. It is intended that there is a diverse range of speakers and interactive workshops and sessions.
9. Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras is aware of two other organisations intending to bid for the 2023 WorldPride – Fierté Montreal (Montreal Pride) and Pride Houston. Both of these cities have hosted WorldPride previously; 2013 and 1993 respectively.
10. InterPride has become increasingly aware of the need to expand its global support reach which is currently dominated by North America and Europe. Hosting WorldPride in Sydney would offer the opportunity for the Southern Hemisphere to host the event for the first time.
11. Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras' approach will include a strong focus on the Asia Pacific region - LGBTQI communities in the region experience some of the worst human rights abuses in the world but the region is very under-represented in InterPride.

12. Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras have already received \$360,000 support in total towards this bid from Tourism Australia, the NSW Government and corporate sponsors.
13. Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras have also allocated \$50,000 of their own funds towards the bid.
14. The City is recommending a cash contribution of \$50,000 (excluding GST) to cover the costs of travel and accommodation for Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras staff, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander contributors as well as Australian and European based performers involved in delivering the final stage of the bid process in Athens in October 2019.
15. On 9 December 2013, Council adopted an Economic Development Strategy which aims to strengthen the city's economy and support business. The Strategy sets out a course of action designed to build on the city economy's strong foundations for success; create opportunities for individuals, businesses and the community; and address the challenges that might limit Sydney's potential growth as a global city.
16. The actions for the City in the *Retail Action Plan* include the need to create great experiences for city workers, residents and visitors to Sydney to ensure they choose to shop in central Sydney and the villages.
17. The focus for the City under the *Tourism Action Plan* includes encouraging the development of product and infrastructure; enhancing the quality of the visitor experience; and strengthening partnerships to maximise visitation potential.
18. Major events are a significant driver of demand in the visitor economy and a strong economic driver for Sydney businesses during the event period.
19. The positive economic forecasting from Deloitte is supported by the experiences of previous host cities, which have all seen a considerable increase in visitation compared to previous years: 67 per cent for Toronto, 100 per cent for Madrid, 50 per cent for New York. Moreover, a study of the economic impact of WorldPride Toronto 2014 found a multiplier indirect benefit of 3.5, that is, for every \$100 million in direct economic impact there was an indirect economic impact of \$350 million.
20. The City's hospitality, tourism and retail businesses will be the major beneficiaries of the event's economic footprint given that most of the proposed events during WorldPride Sydney 2023 will take place within the local government area.
21. Should the bid be successful it is anticipated that Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras will approach the City, amongst others, to further support the event in 2022/23. At that time, the request will be assessed against our economic, social, cultural and environmental strategic objectives.

Key Implications

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030 Vision

22. Sustainable Sydney 2030 is a vision for the sustainable development of the City to 2030 and beyond. It includes 10 strategic directions to guide the future of the City, as well as 10 targets against which to measure progress. This grant is aligned with the following strategic directions and objectives:
- (a) Direction 5 - A Lively and Engaging City Centre - This bid aligns with our roadmap of an inclusive and connected city as outlined in the Social Sustainability Action Plan. Harmony and social cohesion will be enhanced across the City as people from all over the world gather to celebrate Pride in the City of Sydney.
 - (b) Direction 6 - Vibrant Local Communities and Economies - Parade audience data indicates that of those surveyed over 60% were from Inner, South or Eastern Sydney, supporting Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras as an active local LGBTQI community. Of the 19 Australian Members of InterPride, nine are located in the Sydney LGA, including Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras.
 - (c) Direction 7 - A Cultural and Creative City - Currently Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Parade and Festival employs over 1700 people, over 450 artists, over 1600 volunteers, 12,500 parade participants and over 300 000 people viewing the parade. Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras has diversified their program over the past two years and is offering events and activities to diverse groups such as women over 55, rainbow families, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People, people with a disability, people under 30 from South Pacific or South Asian backgrounds and transgender people. The diversity of offerings throughout the festival is indicative of the support that Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras provides to community and gives a platform to those individual communities for self-expression.

Risks

23. Even with City funding, there is no guarantee that Sydney will win the bid for WorldPride 2023.

Social / Cultural / Community

24. Sponsorship of a successful WorldPride 2023 bid will help to promote the City of Sydney as an inclusive global and welcoming city for all.
25. WorldPride will showcase the City of Sydney to the world and is a demonstration of the support that community has from the City of Sydney.
26. With an emphasis both on celebratory activities and a conference stream, WorldPride will bring together thought leaders, creatives, cultural icons and activists to debate current social and cultural issues that cross borders and are relatable to LGBTQI people globally.
27. Communities will feel a sense of belonging and connection to place as Sydney celebrates WorldPride as a part of the 2023 Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Festival. This sense of belonging comes from feeling safe and supported, having access to events and activities across the local government area and having representatives from LGBTQI communities around the world visit Sydney to celebrate.

28. As Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras continues to develop their artistic and cultural program, visitors to the City will be a part of the vibrant creative life of the City. Currently, Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras employ over 450 artists, and this will be a significantly higher figure by 2023.

Economic

29. The combined Mardi Gras and WorldPride Sydney 2023 festival has the potential to deliver strong economic benefits to the hotel, retail, hospitality and tourism sectors with a potential combined economic benefit to Sydney of \$660 million to \$845 million, according to Deloitte.
30. This event will help promote Sydney as a world-class tourist destination to a global audience.

Budget Implications

31. The funding for the support and sponsorship of the teams will be sourced from the 2019/20 General Contingency budget, covering cash sponsorship of \$50,000 (excluding GST) in 2019/20.

Relevant Legislation

32. Section 356 of the Local Government Act 1993.

Critical Dates / Time Frames

33. Sydney's WorldPride presentation to InterPride members will occur at the Annual General Meeting in Athens on 17 October 2019.

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