

Community Services Grant - Glebe Youth Services 2021

File No: S116523

Summary

Glebe Youth Service is a not-for-profit, non-government organisation that supports young people aged 12-24 who live, work, study or play in the Glebe area. Glebe Youth Service provides a range of services and programs, as well as opportunities to socialise and develop knowledge and skills.

Glebe Youth Service has been working with young people and families in the Glebe area for over 30 years. The organisation is governed by a volunteer management committee and is located in a building owned by the NSW Land and Housing Corporation in Glebe Point Road, Glebe.

The City has been providing funding to Glebe Youth Service to deliver the After Dark Program on a Friday and Saturday night in Glebe since 2006. The After Dark program addresses a gap in appropriate programming for young people in the Glebe area by engaging them and their families in fun, safe and age-appropriate activities. The program runs most Friday and Saturday nights at Glebe Youth Service and one Friday per month at Peter Forsythe Auditorium for a whole of community event.

Participation in the After Dark Program has increased slightly over the years it has been operating. Through ongoing consultation, the Glebe community has expressed their satisfaction with the program. Glebe Youth Service's positive working relationships with local young people, service providers and community members mean they are well placed to provide programming for young people in the area.

The current triennial grant agreement between the City and Glebe Youth Service ends on 31 December 2020. Glebe Youth Service has applied to the City for a further one-year grant to continue to deliver the After Dark Program, as well as provide follow up referrals, case management and support to young people and their families in Glebe.

Whilst continuing ongoing service delivery or funding core business is not generally supported by the City, it is recommended that a one-year grant is provided to enable Glebe Youth Service to continue to provide the After Dark program. During this one-year funding period, a thorough evaluation of the program will be undertaken to inform future funding requests. Glebe Youth Service has also been recommended for a Quick Response Grant to enable this review.

Recommendation

It is resolved that:

- (A) Council approve a grant of \$245,000 cash (excluding GST) and venue hire fee waiver to the value of \$1,728 (excluding GST) to Glebe Youth Service Incorporated for the 2021 After Dark Program; and
- (B) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive Officer to negotiate, execute and administer an agreement with Glebe Youth Service Incorporated.

Attachments

Nil.

Background

1. Glebe Youth Service is a not-for-profit non-government organisation that has been working with disadvantaged and vulnerable young people and families in the Glebe area for over 30 years. The service provides services and support to young people and their families living in Glebe, particularly those experiencing disadvantage and complex issues. The service has also more recently engaged young international students in the area.
2. Glebe Youth Service runs the After Dark program to engage local young people and their families in positive social activity as an alternative to anti-social or potentially criminal activity. The City has funded the program since 2006 when Glebe Youth Service and the City identified a lack of safe and positive activities for young people in the area. This is still the case, and After Dark continues to fill this gap in service delivery on a Friday and Saturday night.
3. Consultation for the 2019/20 Glebe safety audit conducted by the City included consultation with local residents, community groups, organisations, Police and business to identify priority safety issues in Glebe. Through this audit, a number of issues were raised in relation to the program, including anti-social behaviour among young people, violence between young people, community perceptions of young people, and incidences of anti-social behaviour and crime in locations including the area around Broadway Shopping Centre and the Peter Forsythe Auditorium.
4. Over 80 per cent of After Dark program participants surveyed in late 2019 said that they would be engaging in non-social activities if it weren't for their participation in the program. Community consultations conducted by Glebe Youth Service throughout the term of the last contract repeatedly highlighted the need for safe, supervised activities that promote positive socialisation for local at-risk young people, particularly those from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander backgrounds.
5. The After Dark program will:
 - (a) deliver a program of Friday and Saturday night activities and events for young people each week at Glebe Youth Services, with one night per month at Peter Forsythe Auditorium, that promote healthy living and social and cultural inclusion. The program will include sporting activities, skill-building activities (such as computer skills, cultural knowledge, and food preparation), artistic activities, and music. It will also run special event nights (in line with applicable Covid-19 public health requirements) for NAIDOC Week, Youth Week, as well as a community Christmas party;
 - (b) provide fresh meals at activities and events, to address food security and nutrition issues for young people and their families;
 - (c) use social activities to identify and connect with at-risk participants and link them to Glebe Youth Service and other community organisations such as job networks, housing services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific organisations. Assistance will include case management and referrals for health, education, legal issues, housing and mental health needs;
 - (d) use Peter Forsythe Auditorium one Friday a month in an inclusive, intergenerational manner, to enable different groups, including international students, to interact and build community connection; and

- (e) encourage young people to be involved in and have ownership of program design by developing and implementing a youth feedback mechanism.
6. An evaluation of the After Dark program across 2018 to 2019 was conducted by Glebe Youth Service. The report found that between 2018 and 2019:
 - (a) there were 9,815 attendances at the program;
 - (b) of the attendees, 75 per cent are Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander peoples, with 80 per cent of participants living in the local government area;
 - (c) over 10,000 meals were served to program participants. It is noted that many attendees arrive hungry and eat more than one meal each evening; and
 - (d) of the participants surveyed, 90 per cent said the program helped them feel more connected to their community, while 78 per cent said the program gave them access to healthy food, and 80 per cent agreed the program gave them the opportunity to improve their physical health.
 7. The City's current three-year grant agreement with Glebe Youth Service ends on 31 December 2020. Under this agreement, the City has provided Glebe Youth Service a total of \$694,368 (excluding GST) over the three years.
 8. The City also provides value in kind for the use of Peter Forsyth Auditorium to the value of approximately \$5,000 per annum. It is noted that a smaller amount of value in kind is requested for this contract period, as the venue will be used for only one Friday night per month, rather than the previous four Fridays each month. The program will be run from Glebe Youth Service on the other occasions each month.
 9. The City's funding to Glebe Youth Service enables them to:
 - (a) employ a full-time Project Coordinator to oversee the After Dark Program;
 - (b) engage with local socially disadvantaged families who need referral or advice;
 - (c) provide local young people with a safe and engaging place to go in the evening;
 - (d) provide food education and nutrition programs to young people in Glebe, equipping them with important life skills; and
 - (e) engage with other Glebe-based service agencies to provide comprehensive case management for young people and families requiring more intensive support.
 10. Glebe Youth Service has submitted a proposal for a 12-month grant from the City for 2021. The application has been assessed against the City's Community Services Grant Program. It was found to strongly align with key outcomes of the program, including ensuring strengthened social cohesion, sense of belonging and connection to place, and enabling increased engagement in healthy, active living (including mental health).

11. Further funding from the City will allow Glebe Youth Service to continue the program with some minor changes, which were developed in consultation with young people and with the wider community. These changes include improved individual support for at-risk youth, increased collaboration with other social services in Glebe, as well as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, and a more diverse range of cultural and artistic activities.
12. City staff will continue to work closely with Glebe Youth Service, through quarterly meetings and regular, ongoing communication, over the next 12 months to ensure good program governance, quality assurance and continuous improvement. City staff will also ensure the Service adheres to any Covid-19 regulations in place, complements other City funded programs in the area, and that it can be delivered within budget constraints.

Key Implications

Strategic Alignment - Sustainable Sydney 2030

13. 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 6 - Vibrant Local Communities and Economies - The After Dark program works towards creating a connected community. Community members of all ages and a range of service providers are involved in the planning, implementation and evaluation of the After Dark program. The program provides space for young people to make connections and increase their connection to the Glebe community.
14. The program also aligns with the following directions from the City's Social Sustainability Policy and Action Plan, A City for All:
 - (a) 1.13 enable community led solutions to social issues;
 - (b) 1.15 improve community health and wellbeing;
 - (c) 1.16 improve food security, and
 - (d) 2.1 improve social connectedness among diverse communities.

Social / Cultural / Community

15. Glebe Youth Service has a strong relationship with the Glebe community. The organisation also works closely with the City, NSW Police and a range of other government and non-government organisations to ensure there is a wholistic approach to service delivery in the area. This also enables Glebe Youth Service to be aware of any issues and respond accordingly.

16. The After Dark program strives to improve community connectedness amongst diverse communities. Whilst the After Dark program is targeted at young people aged 12-18, the Service takes a whole of community approach to service delivery. On a Friday evening, the After Dark program caters for the wider community, by allowing all to engage in activities and consume a meal. This approach ensures Glebe Youth Service has a connection to the young people and their families, as well as being able to link families with other appropriate service providers.
17. The majority of the participants that attend After Dark identify as being Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander peoples. Glebe Youth Service has engaged with Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander organisations regularly to deliver cultural activities during After Dark. In addition, Glebe Youth Service attempt to ensure at least half of the staff that work at After Dark identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander peoples. Whenever possible Aboriginal artists, musicians, performers and cultural educators are engaged to support the After Dark program.

Budget Implications

18. It is recommended that Council approve an additional 12 months of funding to Glebe Youth Services for the ongoing provision of the program as follows:

- (a) cash grant over 12 months which consists of the following:

	January to June 2021	July to December 2021
Staffing and Operational Costs	\$117,500	\$117,500
Program Evaluation	\$5,000	\$5,000
TOTAL:	\$122,500 (ex. GST)	\$122,500 (ex. GST)

and

- (b) value in-kind for venue hire of Peter Forsyth Auditorium for one Friday night per month for an all of community event as negotiated with Glebe Youth Service and the City, valued at \$1,728.
19. Provision has been made for this funding in the Grants and Sponsorship 2020/2021 Operating Budget and future year forward estimates.

Relevant Legislation

20. Section 356 of the Local Government Act 1993.

Critical Dates / Time Frames

21. The current funding the City provides Glebe Youth Service expires 31 December 2020. Beyond that period, without further funding they will be unable to continue the After Dark Program.

EMMA RIGNEY

Director City Life

Aliza Denenberg, Senior Social Programs Officer