

**ITEM NO: 8****SUBJECT: STRATEGY FOR CELEBRATING CHRISTMAS IN SPRINGWOOD AND KATOOMBA****FILE NO: F00434 & F00240**

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**Recommendations:**

1. *That the Council notes that in consultation with the Katoomba and the Springwood Chambers of Commerce, decorative banners have been purchased and will be attached to nominated sections of street light poles along Katoomba St, Katoomba and Macquarie Rd Springwood to celebrate Christmas 2007 .*
  2. *That the Council has formed a partnership approach with the Katoomba Chamber Commerce and Community and the Springwood Chamber of Commerce to assist with "works in kind" to decorate other public spaces where possible.*
  3. *That an application be submitted as a quarter two budget variation to fund the supply and installation of the Christmas decorative banners in Katoomba and Springwood.*
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**Report by Group Manager Community and Corporate****Reason for report:**

The purpose of this report is to provide the Council with an approach to manage community expectations in relation to the provision of Christmas decorations in Katoomba and Springwood, which are the two major service centres within the City.

The issue of providing Christmas decorations in the City, and in particular Springwood, was raised at the Extraordinary Council meeting of 12 October 2007.

At this meeting, the Council resolved:

- "1. *That this Council receive a report regarding options for increasing the visibility of Christmas decoration in the Springwood CBD.*
2. *That this report include a costing for the various decorative options.*
3. *That the Springwood Chamber of Commerce be approached for comment as to the most appropriate approach to this matter."*

(Minute No. 291, 12/10/07)

**Background**

As is general practise, Council officers were in discussion with different Chambers of Commerce to find solutions to decorating town centres prior to the adoption of the above resolution. Generally in the past, an allocation has been made from the operating budget of around \$10,000 per year for installing and maintaining Christmas decorations across the City.

Within Springwood town centre, the Council has previously supplied and maintained the decorative lights located in the specimen of *Cedrus deodora* (pine tree) in Manners Park. In 2006, the Council did not provide this service as the lights had previously been removed when they were assessed as being unrepairable. No replacement lights were installed at that time.

The Springwood Chamber of Commerce subsequently decorated the specimen of *Ulmus parvifolia* (Elm tree) located in the Springwood School of Arts Town Square with a decorative lighting system supplied and installed at their own cost. The Council facilitated access to power for these lights.

It is worth noting that while the Council has provided the limited decorative lighting described above, it has not provided decorative elements that are effective during the daytime when the majority of residents and visitors access town centres.

### **Proposed Strategy for celebrating Christmas 2007**

It is appropriate that the Council develop a strategy to assist in the decoration of the two major commercial streetscapes within the City namely Macquarie Road, Springwood, and Katoomba St Katoomba for Christmas 2007, while also identifying ways to encourage shop owners to decoration their commercial properties through partnerships and incentives.

Key objectives of the strategy include:

- Incorporation of sustainability objectives to ensure long term reuse of decorative elements and minimal reliance on energy consumption to provide the display.
- Minimal installation and removal costs to the Council.
- Use of decorative elements that in combination provide a display that is visible during the day as well as at night.
- Identifying opportunities to encourage the involvement of local communities through partnerships and incentives.

### **Springwood and Katoomba as the major service centres of the City**

At these locations the strategy for celebrating Christmas 2007 will include the following elements:

#### ***1. Day time display of “Christmas” themed banners mounted on street light poles***

Coloured and themed banners consisting of selected iconic Christmas images will be installed to street lighting poles along sections of Macquarie Road, Springwood, and Katoomba Street, Katoomba. Due to the requirements to purchase and install the decorative banners in time for Christmas 2007, and in conjunction with the partnership between the Katoomba and Springwood Chambers and the Council, the banners have now been ordered for installation early December.

The cost to purchase, install and remove a total of 44 banners to selected street light poles in Springwood along Macquarie Road (between Raymond Road and Ferguson Road) and in Katoomba along Katoomba St (between Waratah Street and Bathurst Road) will be in the order of \$16,500.

An application will be submitted for a quarter two budget variation to fund the supply and installation of the Christmas decorative banners in Springwood and Katoomba.

While there is an initial one off capital cost to purchase and install the frames to the light poles as well as the banners, future recurrent annual costs will be minimal and will relate only to installation and removal of the banners as required. These banners are expected to remain in good condition for over 5 years.

In addition, the frames that will enable the installation of the Christmas themed banners onto the street light poles will also be able to be used throughout the year to facilitate the installation of other banners that may be developed by the community to celebrate local cultural events in these town centres.

## ***2. Night time lighting of nominated “Christmas Trees”***

### Katoomba

The Council will partner the Katoomba Chamber of Commerce and Community (KCCC) to upgrade the decorative lighting to the southern specimen of *Cedrus deodora* (pine tree) in Carrington Place Katoomba. The KCCC will supply and install decorative lights to this tree. The Council is providing logistical support and access to the power supply.

The KCCC will supply a feature “Merry Christmas” decoration to be placed on the Rotary Clock arch over Katoomba Street. The Council will install the decoration.

### Springwood

The Council will partner the Springwood Chamber of Commerce to install decorative lighting to the *Ulmus parvifolia* (elm tree) specimen tree in Springwood Town Square. The Council will install a new dedicated power supply to the tree, while the Chamber will supply and install decorative lighting through the tree branches. The lighting in this tree will be in lieu of the lighting previously installed to the “Christmas Tree” in Manners Park.

## **Establishing a competition for the “Best Commercial Shopfront Decorative Display” in the town centre of Katoomba and Springwood for Christmas 2008.**

The Council staff are seeking to establish the level of interest in the community as well as the legal and risk management parameters for the Council to partner the Katoomba and Springwood Chambers of Commerce to establish a competition to encourage shopkeepers to decorate their shopfronts for Christmas 2008.

A notional prize of \$1,000 would be awarded to the winning decorated shopfront in Katoomba and Springwood. It is proposed that the Council provide a \$500 contribution to the prize pool in each town centre, with a matching \$500 provided by the local Chamber of Commerce. The total cost of this proposal to Council will be \$1,000 for Christmas 2008. This approach has been very effective in motivating shopkeepers to decorate their shop fronts in other Council areas across NSW and Australia with only minimal outlay and administration by the local Council involved.

The Council’s notional contribution to the prize pool is proposed to be made available through the Corporate Planning Branch budget of the Community and Corporate Group and specifically through the Council's Area Manager and the Economic Development Program Leader.

## **Financial implications for the Council**

The strategy for celebrating Christmas 2007 in Springwood and Katoomba, utilising street banners and providing assistance to local Chambers of Commerce to install lighting and other

decorative elements, is to be funded from a quarter two budget variation application of \$16,500. While this is more expensive than amounts generally expended each Christmas (approximately \$10,000), it is considered to be more cost efficient over a 5 year period. Annual amounts into the future are estimated at approximately \$3,000. Where possible, partnership approaches have been established to reduce the cost of works to the Council.

### **Legal and risk management issues for the Council**

The Council has a duty of care to ensure that lighting systems and decorations installed in the public domain are placed, secured and operating in accordance with relevant Australian Standards. Consultation and approval by Integral Energy will be required prior to the installation of the decorative banners to the street light poles.

Where works are proposed to be undertaken in a partnership approach with local Chambers of Commerce it is essential that the Chambers provide evidence of their public liability insurance and workers compensation where appropriate.

### **External consultation**

The Council staff have met with representatives, of both the Springwood Chamber of Commerce and the Katoomba Chamber of Commerce and Community, to document their expectations in relation to decorating the main commercial streetscapes for Christmas 2007. At the same time opportunities for implementing partnership projects between the Chambers and the Council have been identified. These partnership projects have the potential to add significant streetscape decoration to the Springwood and Katoomba town centres with minimal capital outlay by the Council.

The Council has received a positive response and support from both the Katoomba and Springwood Chambers of Commerce regarding the installation of the decorative banners on the nominated light poles in the Town Centres.

### **Conclusion**

In order to meet increasing community expectations about celebrating Christmas in the public domain areas of the City, the Council is proposing to implement a cost effective strategy that incorporates community partnership components.

In recognition that Katoomba and Springwood are the major service centres of the City and also where the local Chambers of Commerce are actively seeking Council partnership for celebrating Christmas in the public domain, the proposed strategy of installing decorative banners on street lighting poles and assisting the Chambers of Commerce to light significant trees for night time display is considered appropriate. This strategy is proposed to be funded from an application for a quarter two budget variation.

In summary, the strategy outlined in this report provides the most cost effective and targeted method of meeting community expectations in relation to celebrating Christmas 2007 in the public domain areas of Springwood and Katoomba. The strategy also seeks to engage and encourage local commercial stakeholders, as well as individual community members, to celebrate Christmas through their own efforts in decorating their town and village centres.

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**ITEM NO: 9****SUBJECT: INCOMING FUNDS PERTAINING TO THE TEMPORARY USE OF LAND NEAR THE ELSIE LANGFORD CENTRE****FILE NO: F03588 / F02329**

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**Recommendations:**

1. *That the Council note the consultation undertaken with the Medlow Bath Community Association, and the options for use of the funds received from the leasing of the Elsie Langford Centre to Sydney Water.*
  2. *That the 2008/09 Capital Works Program assessment process determine the merits and outcome of the Medlow Bath Community Association's submission for the construction of a public toilet facility in Medlow Bath Park.*
  3. *That should the 2008/09 Capital Works Program submission for the construction of a public toilet facility in Medlow Bath Park be successful, the funding be used to contribute toward the capital costs.*
  4. *That should the 2008/09 Capital Works Program submission for the construction of a public toilet facility in Medlow Bath Park be unsuccessful, the income be retained in a restricted asset account, and a further report be provided to the Council providing options for consideration on the use of the funds.*
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**Report by Group Manager, Community & Corporate****Introduction**

The purpose of this report is to advise the Council on the current funds available from the leasing of the Elsie Langford Centre at Medlow Bath, and the result of consultation with the Medlow Bath Community Association.

**Background**

At the 15 May 2007 Ordinary Meeting of the Council, the following Notice of Motion was resolved:

- “1. *That the Council notes the following funds it has received and will be receiving in connection with the temporary use of land near the Elsie Langford Centre, Medlow Bath.*

RTA: \$2,920.00  
Sydney Water: \$1,041.00 per month  
(Commencing 5 February 2007 until termination)  
Currently Available: \$2839.00

2. *That the Council receives a report on the allocation of funds to be used for facilities and/or improvements for the local community and the Medlow Bath Community Association be fully consulted regarding the use of these funds.*

(Minute No.121, 15/5/07)

The RTA no longer uses the site. The Sydney Water occupation of the site is expected to run for another 12 months. The monthly income quoted above includes GST, which cannot be regarded as contributing to available funds. The actual income is \$946.36 per month.

Discussions were held between Council Officers and members of the Medlow Bath Community Association during September of this year. The matter was subsequently discussed at the Association's Meeting of 13 October 2007.

### **Current Situation**

The current funding situation is as follows:

Previous RTA Income:	\$2,920.00
2006/07 Sydney Water Income:	\$4,731.80
2007/08 Sydney Water Income to date:	\$5,678.00
<b>Total to Date:</b>	<b>\$13,329.60</b>

Assuming Sydney Water remain in occupation for the rest of the current financial year, a further \$5,624.52 should be generated from the site, making the total available at the end of June 2008, \$19,954.48.

### **Options for Expenditure on Assets in Medlow Bath**

The Rural Fire Service Station, the Elsie Langford Centre and Medlow Bath Park are the only community facilities in Medlow Bath.

The RFS Station is a valued and well utilised community asset in need of some minor maintenance which is being undertaken in the current financial year. The Elsie Langford Centre is a very small building with limited facilities, and is generally not well utilised. Low demand for use of this facility is evidenced by relatively few bookings over the last few years. The cost of improvements that would be necessary to potentially increase its utilisation, (if the desire or demand in the community exists), are not within the scope of this report, nor achievable within the limit of the subject funds. Options for consideration have therefore been centered on Medlow Bath Park.

The Medlow Bath Community Association has advised their preferred use of the funds is to contribute toward a public toilet facility at Medlow Bath Park. The Association has subsequently lodged a submission for the 2008/09 Capital Works Program. The location and expected low usage rate indicate a prefabricated facility, similar to that recently installed at Mt Wilson, and proposed for Mt York, would be suitable at Medlow Bath. The total cost of the supply and installation of a suitable public toilet facility is expected to be approximately \$55,000. This application obviously needs to be progressed through the normal assessment process and be determined by the Council.

While the provision of a public toilet facility in this location has not been considered a high priority in the Sustainable Asset Management planning process due to the expected relatively

low usage rates, it is recognised that there is currently no public toilet facility in Medlow Bath. The Community Association is of the belief that patronage and enjoyment of the park would be enhanced if one was provided. It appears therefore that if the rental income was to be used to supplement capital funding of \$35,000, then the investment would be well received by the community.

Further options for consideration (in no particular order of priority) include:

- New swings and rubberised softfall. (cost approx. \$20,000).
- Modify the open and incised drain, by either piping it, which will increase the usable area of the park, or alternatively developing it further to create an attractive riparian zone. (cost \$10,000 - \$20,000).
- Improve the path through the park by widening where necessary, and realigning to modify grades thereby making it wheelchair accessible. (cost approx. \$10,000).
- A range of works including garden bed edging to facilitate memorial plaques and improve tidiness of the park, replanting with additional plant species, new bin enclosures, and other minor improvements. (cost approximately \$10,000).
- Subsidise the community group currently conducting volunteer working bees in the park through the provision of paid supervision, mulch and plants. Supervision is required under the OH&S Act and this is currently funded by the community group. (cost approximately \$500 each time depending on what materials are provided).
- Invest in the preparation of a master plan for the park, by an external consultant, to guide future development. (cost approx. \$20,000).

**Financial implications for the Council**

With the exception of the public toilet facility option there are no ongoing financial implications for the Council. Should the capital works submission for the public toilet facility be successful, additional ongoing recurrent funding of approximately \$3,000 p.a. will be necessary to meet the costs of cleaning and maintenance.

**Legal and risk management issues for the Council**

There are no known legal or risk management issues relevant to this report.

**External consultation**

The Medlow Bath Community Association has been consulted regarding their preferences for the expenditure of funds received from the occupation of the Elsie Langford Centre.

**Conclusion**

The forgoing report advises on the consultation undertaken with the Medlow Bath Community Association and their preferences for the use of funds received from the temporary occupation of the Elsie Langford Centre in Medlow Bath. It further advises on additional options for use of the funds to improve facilities for the local community.

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**ITEM NO: 10**

**SUBJECT: COMMUNITY ASSISTANCE / DONATIONS – RECOMMENDATIONS BY COUNCILLORS**

**FILE NO: C00944**

**Recommendation:**

That the Council approve the following donations from the Councillors’ Minor Local Projects Vote:

<u>Organisation</u>	<u>Amount</u>
<i>Mid Mountains Combined Church</i>	<i>\$100.00</i>
<i>Mid Mountains Combined Church</i>	<i>\$100.00</i>
<i>Kinship at Christmas Foundation</i>	<i>\$ 50.00</i>
<i>Kinship at Christmas Foundation</i>	<i>\$ 50.00</i>
<i>Kinship at Christmas Foundation</i>	<i>\$100.00</i>
<i>Fellowship of Australian Writers NSW Inc</i>	<i>\$ 60.00</i>
<i>Fusion Blue Mountains</i>	<i>\$ 85.00</i>

**Report by General Manager:**

On 11 July 2000 the Council adopted a revised Policy for Councillors’ Minor Local Projects allocations for the provision of community assistance/donations. The following recommendations for donation, which appear to fall within the ambit of the Policy, have been received and are submitted for approval.

**Minor Local Projects**

<u>Recommending Councillor</u>	<u>Organisation</u>	<u>Purpose</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Cr Van der Kley	Mid Mountains Combined Church	Help with cost of Christmas Carols	\$100.00
Cr Searle	Mid Mountains Combined Church	Help with cost of Christmas Carols	\$100.00
Cr Van der Kley	Kinship at Christmas Foundation	Christmas Lunch at Katoomba	\$50.00
Cr Searle	Kinship at Christmas Foundation	Christmas Lunch at Katoomba	\$50.00
Cr Trindall	Kinship at Christmas Foundation	Christmas Lunch at Katoomba	\$100.00
Cr Trindall	Fellowship of Australian Writers NSW Inc	Publication of 2008 Anthology	\$60.00
Cr Hamilton	Fusion Blue Mountains	Help with cost of Christmas Advent Pageant in Katoomba	\$85.00

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ITEM NO: 11

SUBJECT: UPDATE ON COMPANION ANIMALS EVENT

FILE NO: C05861

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*Recommendation:*

*That the report be noted*

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**Report by Group Manager, Environmental and Customer Services:**

**Background**

On 17 July 2007 the Council considered a report on the feasibility of holding a Companion Animals Day at Glenbrook in 2007. That report was a direct response to a Council resolution of 15 May 2007. On 17 July the Council resolved as follows:

1. *That this be referred to a Community and Facilities Working Party for a discussion of the options raised by the speakers on a Companion Animals Day.*
2. *That a report comes to the Council, following the working party discussions, on the feasibility of holding a Companion Animals Day in the Mid to Upper Mountains in 2007.*

(Minute No. 189, 17 July 2007)

Staff prepared the presentation to the Community and Facilities Working Party after meeting with one of the speakers referenced in the Council resolution on 25 July. The matter was brought before the Working Party on 31 July 2007. That presentation gave an overview of the options and ideas raised by the speakers, which suggested that a more modest event be planned for this financial year and that the event be more strongly focused on education and training.

The Community and Facilities Working Party requested that the interested councillors meet the speakers referred to in item one of Minute No. 189 before reporting back on the way forward. That meeting with the community members occurred on 25 September 2007. This report provides advice as to the outcomes of that meeting and the proposed way forward.

**Proposal for 2007/2008 - A more community driven, training focused and participatory event be held in April-June 2008.**

The Council will aim to initiate a modest but strong educationally oriented event to be held towards the end of this financial year, which is the time that most suits the external organisations that are required to support such an event. The assistance of interested community members is being sought from the outset and can expand to include the detailed promotion and planning for the day.

This event would promote responsible dog ownership generally but more particularly would provide information about some of the training and education programs available.

Some of the programmes run by the Delta Society of Australia were identified as the most likely known source of appropriate training and promotional programs. In particular the Pet Partners program was nominated as a suitable program for early investigation and potential promotion in the local area. That program identifies and trains dogs and their owners who would be suitable to provide support to people in hospitals and other institutions.

The Delta Society also runs advanced dog training courses which may also present opportunities for promoting responsible dog ownership.

Any such educational event would also provide an opportunity to promote the State Government sponsored SPOT program (Safe Pets Out There), which Delta is running through schools and aims to educate dog owners and the community in general about safe behaviour around dogs.

The event could also incorporate related demonstrations by dog clubs and information from relevant organisations such as Dogs NSW or the Canine Club of NSW. These organisations in particular have major competing demands for their resources until after the Royal Easter Show, hence the nomination of the time frame for this event.

It is envisaged that this awareness raising event would identify interested members of the community and link them up with the Delta program/s. Preliminary feedback from Delta is that they are interested in promoting and expanding their activities but that some funding support may be required in order to make program expansion a reality.

Proposal for 2008/09 - Provide modest funding in budget for 2008/09, to support implementation of an event for 2008/09 and/or delivery of training program/s by Delta (or such other provider as may become relevant), utilising and building on community interest/participation generated by the training-education event in 07/08.

It is proposed that some capacity be built into the draft budget for 08/09 to enable modest support for either the delivery of training and education programs into the Blue Mountains areas or for a larger scale community event, incorporating some of the elements that have been included in Companion Animals Day in previous years.

It is proposed that the community be encouraged to participate more actively in the planning and running of that program or event. Promotion of that community involvement will seek to build upon community interest and participation in the training/education event discussed above.

### **The Way Forward - Training and Education Event**

The proposals for the training and education event in 2008 have been foreshadowed to the Delta Society with a view to holding more detailed preliminary discussions in early to mid December 2007. Delta has indicated some qualified level of support for the idea of exploring the potential of such a concept with the council and interested community, subject to agreement by the relevant Delta committee. Delta is also likely to seek concomitant support from the Council to the promotion of the SPOT program in the Mountains, a service which can be delivered as part of the planning and promotion of the training and education event.

### **Conclusion**

If the concept is agreed in principle by Delta, more detailed planning of the event will proceed, with the aim of moving quickly to identify the likely shape and timing of the event,

the availability of other suitable participants such as dog clubs and canine associations, the booking of venue and identification of ways in which community participation can be promoted.

As part of preliminary feedback, Delta has indicated that some funding support may be required from the Council if the programs are to proceed to delivery in the Mountains. Any such proposal would be subject to a further report to the Council.

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