

**Report to General Manager**

Attachments:

1. Submissions Summary
2. Final Events Strategy

SUBJECT: Events Strategy 2019-2021 - Post Exhibition**AUTHOR:** Sandra Moore, Manager Communications and Events**ENDORSED BY:** Margaret Palmer, Director Corporate Services**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

At its meeting on 22 July 2019, Council resolved (Min. No. 205):

1. *THAT the draft Events Strategy 2019-2021 be placed on public exhibition for 30 days.*
2. *THAT should Council receive submissions a further report be prepared for Council's consideration. Should Council receive no submissions, Council consider the draft Events Strategy 2019-2021 as adopted at the end of the closing period for submissions.*

Two submissions were received during the exhibition period. One related to the supply of ticketing services, which is covered in Council's purchasing policies. The second related to the installation of an electronic screen at the Coal Loader to promote upcoming events. A minor amendment has been made to the action plan, under Priority 1: Improve the strategic approach to event management, to include investigating the feasibility and costs of installing and maintaining a digital screen at the Coal Loader.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

As previously reported, the initiatives proposed in the Action Plan align to existing work plans/budget i.e. the remaining two years of the current Delivery Program. The action does not require a budget but allows for consideration of a screen in the development of the next Delivery Program and Financial Estimates.

Comment by Responsible Accounting Officer:

As previously reported, current funding for the Events Strategy is appropriate. As the current adopted Delivery Program expires in 2020/21, funding for Year 3 of the Action Plan must be considered as part of preparation of the new Delivery Program.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. **THAT** Council notes the submissions received.
2. **THAT** the Events Strategy 2019-2021 and amended Action Plan 2019-2021 be adopted.

LINK TO COMMUNITY STRATEGIC PLAN

The relationship with the Community Strategic Plan is as follows:

Direction: 4. Our Social Vitality

Outcome: 4.2 North Sydney is creative and home to popular events

BACKGROUND

At its meeting on 22 July 2019, Council resolved (Min. No. 205):

- 1. THAT the draft Events Strategy 2019-2021 be placed on public exhibition for 30 days.*
- 2. THAT should Council receive submissions a further report be prepared for Council's consideration. Should Council receive no submissions, Council consider the draft Events Strategy 2019-2021 as adopted at the end of the closing period for submissions.*

CONSULTATION REQUIREMENTS

Community engagement is not required.

SUSTAINABILITY STATEMENT

The sustainability implications were considered and reported on during the initiation phase of this project.

DETAIL

The Draft Strategy was publicly exhibited of from 1 to 30 August 2019.

Promotion/engagement included the following channels:

- Corporate advertisement in the Mosman Daily on 1, 15 and 22 August
- Facebook (1041 people reached, with 30 engagements, 3 shares and 3 likes)
- Your Say website where there were 76 views. Of these, 38 visited the project page only: 17 viewed or downloaded a document and made a submission online
- Council e-newsletter (522 unique opens and 0 clicks to strategy)
- Business e-newsletter (171 unique opens and 3 clicks to strategy)
- Precincts e-newsletter (65 unique opens and 1 click to strategy)

Two submissions were received during the exhibition period, as summarised in Attachment 1. One related to the use of a social enterprise for ticketing and has not been included in the Action Plan.

The second related to the installation of a digital screen at the Coal Loader to promote future events. Exploring the costs and feasibility of this has been incorporated into the revised Action Plan

Once adopted, all stakeholders (and submitters) will be notified of the final Strategy and Action Plan. Communications & Events will evaluate the progress of the Strategy and provide updates in the Annual Report and End of Term Report. Actions arising from the Delivery Program and Operational Plan will be reported as part of the reporting for these plans.

Draft Events Strategy
Summary of submissions received during public exhibition period

Prepared September 2019

The following criteria are used to analyse all submissions received, and to determine whether or not the plan would be amended:

1. The plan **would be** amended if the point:

- a provided additional information of relevance.
- b indicated or clarified a change in government legislation, Council's commitment or management policy.
- c proposed strategies that would better achieve or assist with Council's objectives.
- d was an alternate viewpoint received on the topic and is considered a better option than that proposed in the Draft Plan or;
- e indicated omissions, inaccuracies or a lack of clarity.

2. The plan **would not be** amended if the point:

- a addressed issues beyond the scope of the plan.
- b was already in the plan or will be considered during the development of a subordinate plan (prepared by Council).
- c offered an open statement, or no change was sought.
- d clearly supported the draft proposals.
- e was an alternate viewpoint received on the topic but the recommendation of the draft plan was still considered the best option.
- f was based on incorrect information.
- g contributed options that are not possible (generally due to some aspect of existing legislation or government policy) or; involved details that are not appropriate or necessary for inclusion in a document aimed at providing a strategic community direction over the long term.

IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT COUNCILLORS REFER TO THE COMPLETE SUBMISSIONS MADE AVAILABLE TO THEM, AND TO THE REPORT TO COUNCIL, WHICH EXPANDS ON THE ISSUES RAISED IN THE SUBMISSIONS.

| No. | Approach | Key Points Raised | Response | Recommend Plan be Amended Y or N | Criteria Code | Plan Page Number |
|------------|----------------------------|---|--|---|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 | Supportive with suggestion | Strategy should encourage the use of social enterprise ticketing companies for events | Council needs to consider a wide range of factors in the purchase of suppliers for events | N | g | |
| 2 | Supportive with suggestion | Coal Loader should have an electronic noticeboard that displays information about upcoming events and workshops | Not currently funded; strategy amended to include investigating options for consideration in future Delivery Program | Y | a | |



NORTH SYDNEY COUNCIL
EVENTS STRATEGY 2019 - 2021





VISION

Our vision is for North Sydney to be recognised for innovative events that support social cohesion and economic vibrancy within our community.

COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS

North Sydney Council initiates and delivers a wide range of local community and regional events. These receive strong support and positive feedback from our community. We also play a significant role in supporting local, regional and international events initiated by other organisations.

Our community continues to support long-running favourite events such as the North Sydney Art Prize, the Northside Produce Market and the Twilight Food Fair which have been operating successfully for 20 plus years. At the same time, our community has embraced new events including street festivals, dog shows, immersive lighting experiences, sculpture exhibitions and sports events. There is support for events of every size, from large festivals in Council's parks with 15,000 attendees through to history walks for small groups.

The commitment to events was affirmed in the North Sydney Community Strategic Plan 2018-2028 which incorporates the following strategies:

- promote and support a diverse range of events and street life across North Sydney through the staging of festivals, markets, fairs and major events (4.2.2)
- attract major sporting events to North Sydney Oval (1.4.4)
- promote, support and celebrate creative arts in North Sydney through facilities, spaces and programs (4.2.1)
- promote and enhance the night time/after hours and weekend offer (3.1.4)

Our community recognises North Sydney has a role to play in tourism and this role has also been identified in the Community Strategic Plan with the following strategies:

- foster and support tourism activity in North Sydney (3.1.5)
- advocate for the Sydney Harbour High Line (1.4.5), a plan to convert the train line between Lavender Bay and Waverton into a walking track and recreational space.

At the same time, there is a recognition that events can have a positive or negative impact on quality of life. This has been addressed in the following strategy:

- balance visitor impacts with residents' lifestyles and economic development (3.1.6)

In Council's previous Events Strategy balancing visitor impacts was identified as an individual priority area. In this updated strategy, it is incorporated into Priority Area 1 – Take a strategic approach to event management, as it is a core consideration in all event management planning and included in the guidelines provided to external event managers.



QBL FRAMEWORK

North Sydney Council applies a quadruple bottom line (QBL) to planning and decision making. This Strategy recognises that events must be sustainable and that decisions about events should be made with consideration of our environmental, social, economic and governance framework. The principles outlined below apply to all our events and are considered in the overarching objectives, key strategies and action plans for all events.

| Framework | Where possible, our events will: |
|-------------|--|
| Environment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider and manage the impact on the environment Use reusable, recyclable and recycled materials Avoid single use plastics Promote access by public and active transport |
| Social | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be diverse, ensuring there is something to attract people of all ages, backgrounds, cultures and interests Be inclusive and accessible Build social connections and encourage community participation Be vibrant and add life to our public areas |
| Economic | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support local businesses and promote economic development Activate our open spaces, CBD and village centres Consider the best use of Council's limited resources |
| Governance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be well planned, to reduce risk and duplication of events Seek partnership and sponsorship opportunities with other organisations |



Coalescence fashion show at the Coal Loader



RELATED PLANS

The North Sydney Council Events Strategy is to be implemented in conjunction with:

- Community Strategic Plan 2018-2028
- Delivery Program 2018/19-2020/21
- North Sydney CBD Marketing & Promotion Strategy
- Arts and Culture Strategy
- Coal Loader Platform Activation Strategy
- Visitor Economy Strategy
- Sustainable Public Events Policy
- Plans of Management/Business Plans for:
 - North Sydney Oval
 - North Sydney Olympic Pool
 - Stanton Library
 - Coal Loader Centre for Sustainability
 - Disability Inclusion Action Plan
 - External Communications Strategy
 - All parks and reserves
 - All our community centres

Events play a key role in placemaking, bringing people together and shaping the way areas are used. This Strategy informs Council's Placemaking Strategies and Masterplans, including:

- North Sydney CBD Public Domain Strategy
- CBD Laneways Project
- Draft Ward Street Masterplan
- Placemaking Policy

PARTNERSHIPS

The Strategy is dependent on North Sydney Council maintaining and developing relationships with other stakeholders, including:

- Residents of the North Sydney local government area
- Businesses operating within the North Sydney local government area
- Destination NSW
- NSW agencies including Department of Premier & Cabinet, Police, emergency services and transport agencies
- Mainstreet Committees and Chambers of Commerce
- Boards and volunteers of community centres
- Sporting organisations and associations
- Cultural and service organisations
- Neighbouring councils including the City of Sydney, Lane Cove, Mosman and Willoughby City Councils

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Council gathers feedback from event organisers, attendees and the community on an informal basis for all major events. Formal research on preferences for events has been included in the action plan for this Strategy.

For individual events, community engagement will be at the inform level through Council's main communications channels including the website, social media and newsletters. Residents and businesses near the event site will also be contacted by letterbox drop.

For events that may have a significant impact on residents (eg NYE) the community consultation will be at the consult level, with on-line surveys or polls supplementing the main communications channels.



WHAT THE COMMUNITY TELLS US

Events receive numerous shares and comments on Council's social media platforms. Below are some of the comments for events held from February to April 2019

NTH SYD events

You guys host the best lunch time activities - thanks so much xox (Facebook, 1 April 2019)

Loader Lights

What an amazing light & sound show. Loved visiting at night when it was empty & eery! (Facebook, 6 April 2019)

Anzac Park Community Gardens Open Day

It looks fantastic. Great use of a not well used space (Facebook, April 2019)

Twilight Food Fair

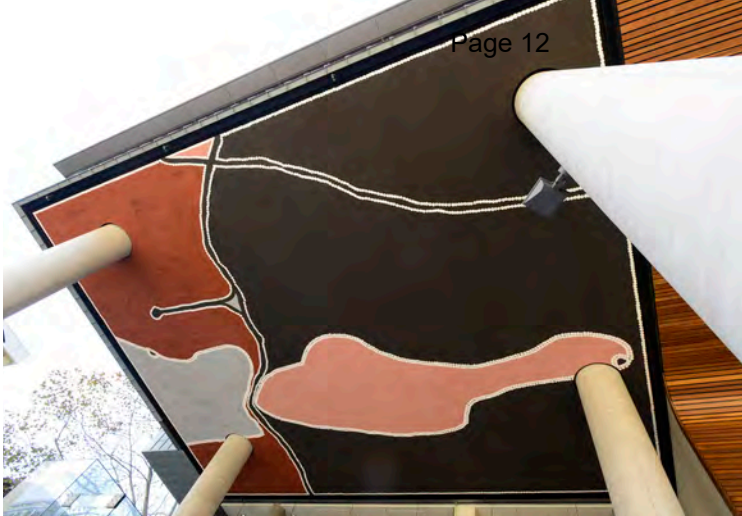
Went there last night for the first time. What a great atmosphere for enjoying good food and live music. Very relaxing and family friendly. (Facebook, 2 February 2019)

Picnic on the Platform

Great event at the Coal Loader Saturday, thank you. Danielle gave us a great tour. Complimentary bus transfers much appreciated and driver was so nice to all. (customer feedback, March 2019)

North Sydney ArtPrize

Fantastic collection of art, spent a couple of hours walking around. Worth a visit!! (Facebook, March 2019)



PRIORITY AREAS GOING FORWARD

1

Improve the strategic approach to event management

Council has a decentralised approach to event management with a number of departments within Council taking ownership of their events. This works well and should remain the model for event delivery. However, a more coordinated approach is needed to ensure that events are not conflicting or duplicated and Council's own events complement the events organised by external organisations.

The events resourced by Council need to meet a wide range of community needs. To this end, the event calendar needs to ensure there are events suitable for people of different ages, cultures and interests. There is also a need to ensure that events are timed to support community needs, for instance, supporting the local economy by phasing events to bring visitors during quieter economic periods of the year.

While the primary purpose of events is to create social vitality and connection within the community, each individual event can have a strategic purpose of its own. For example, a pet event encourages responsible pet ownership while the NTH SYD event

program is part of a broader goal to revitalise the North Sydney CBD.

This strategy introduces tourism related activities for the first time, including the development of a Visitor Economy Strategy and actively advocating for a Sydney Harbour High Line which could host events and draw additional visitors to the area.

Council has limited resources to deliver and support events so a continued focus on partnerships with other organisations is required as well as trialling new communication channels to promote events to a new and wider audience. Where possible, Council will seek to supplement resources by funding or in-kind sponsorship.

Council also needs to balance the impact of events on the environment, residents' lifestyles and economic development. This strategy recognises the importance of ensuring both Council and external event managers consider and ameliorate the impacts, where possible, and keep affected residents and businesses informed.



WHAT'S NEW

- A FOCUS ON TOURISM
- ADVOCACY FOR THE SYDNEY HARBOUR HIGH LINE PROJECT



New Years Eve, Bradfield Park, Mary Booth Reserve



WHAT'S NEW

- TWILIGHT FOOD FAIR CELEBRATES 30 YEARS
- THE COAL LOADER INTRODUCES AN INNOVATIVE EVENTS PROGRAM

2 Initiate and deliver new local and regional community events

Community events create a sense of belonging, contribute to people's wellbeing and provide opportunities for creative expression and learning. Council currently delivers a wide range of community events including the Twilight Food Fair, Writers@Stanton and Sustainability Workshops. These events primarily attract people from the North Sydney and neighbouring local government areas.

Because they engender belonging, the community often develops a sense of ownership of local events that ensures they are well supported year after year. Council needs to ensure that local events continue to meet the community need for social connection.

To expand Council's ability to host events in the future, it's important all opportunities are seized to make Council's open spaces accessible and suitable for events, especially when renewing, creating or planning new public spaces. Events can then be utilised to help activate these new and improved spaces, boost the local and night time

economy plus foster greater community spirit.

Regional events are those that have the capacity to attract audiences from across Sydney and beyond. These events contribute to North Sydney's reputation and provide an interest and atmosphere not possible on a smaller scale. They also support tourism and have a significant impact on the local economy. Council currently delivers a number of regional events including the North Sydney Art Prize, BBQ by the Bridge and Bradfield Bark.

Regional events generally operate on a more defined lifecycle, with people losing interest in a mature event unless it is significantly renewed in some way. Council needs to review its regional events to ensure that mature events are retired when appropriate and new events are developed to maintain broader community interest. Council also needs to ensure that regional events align with Council's overall vision of being progressive, vibrant and diverse.





WHAT'S NEW
 • EXPLORING PARTNERSHIPS WITH
 EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS TO OPTIMISE
 THE REACH AND INTEREST OF EVENTS

3

Support events organised by external organisations

There are a number of cultural and community organisations that currently deliver events in North Sydney and these require different levels of support from Council. Examples of local community events include carols in local parks organised by local churches and talks at community centres. The Crows Nest Festival and the markets organised by the North Sydney Community Centre and The Kirribilli Centre attract strong support from the local community, yet also attract people from other areas of Sydney.

Council partners with external organisations to deliver events organised by external organisations at our existing facilities. These events provide high-quality entertainment for our community. Examples include the Shute Shield (quarter, semi and grand finals), Women's State of Origin, Women's International T20 and one-day fixtures, Wallaroos Women's Rugby Union, and Sunset Cinema at North Sydney Oval, the screening of a Football World Cup qualifying match at North Sydney Olympic Pool (NSOP) and Ernest Place, and Loader Lights at the Coal Loader Centre for Sustainability.

Because of its location on Sydney Harbour, North Sydney attracts a significant number of large events organised by external organisations. These include events such as the Sydney Running Festival, Spring Cycle and 7 Bridges Walk.

However, some of the regional events in North Sydney that are initiated and managed by external organisations provide little benefit to the North Sydney community, as attendees start or pass through North Sydney without spending money or creating a vibrant event space that local residents can enjoy. There is room to explore how Council can better facilitate third party events in its public spaces and develop events that attract people to remain within the North Sydney local government area for a longer period.

Going forward, Council can investigate potential event partnerships that would be beneficial to the North Sydney community and local economy.



Picnic on the Platform at the Coal Loader

EVALUATING EVENTS

In addition to Council's regular reviews of the Delivery Program and associated tasks outlined in this Strategy's Action Plan, Council will continue to monitor event feedback from organisers, attendees and the community through surveys, social media, direct correspondence and media coverage.

A Council Customer Satisfaction Survey will be undertaken in 2019/20 which will gauge what type of events the North Sydney community values and would like to see going forward.



NTH SYD Carnivale

NORTH SYDNEY COUNCIL
EVENTS ACTION PLAN 2019 - 2021



1 ENSURE A STRATEGIC APPROACH TO EVENT MANAGEMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE

| Activity | Delivery Program linkages | Responsibility | Timeframe | Key services/actions to support strategy |
|-----------------------|--|---|---|---|
| Research | Provide engagement activities (5.3.3) | Manager Communications & Events and all event officers Team Leader Events/ Economic Development Officer | 2019-2021 | Monitor cultural trends. Consult the community on preferred events and monitor feedback from large events. Review Third Party Events Policy and explore options for an integrated events calander and potential marketing packages for external events. Identify economic and tourist patterns and align events to support resident/business needs |
| Resource Management | Investigate and implement ticketing for NYE (4.2.2.1) Initiate and/or explore partnerships when opportunities and funding present themselves (5.1.1.4) Increase promotion of Council's activities and achievements 5.3.1 | Manager Communications & Events | 2019-2020 Ongoing 2020-2021 | Investigate options for ticketing NYE - investigate portable heavy vehicle mitigation infrastructure. Identify events that would be attractive to sponsors and pursue partnerships and/or sponsorships. Trial use of influencers in event marketing. |
| Event Infrastructure | Install water and electricity supply in Bradfield Park to reduce generator hire costs for major events (4.2.2.6) Install water and electricity supply in St Leonards Park to reduce generator hire costs for major events (4.2.2.7) | Team Leader Events | 2019-2020 | Explore options for installing additional connection points for water and electricity in St Leonards and Bradfield Parks. Investigate purchase of portable water stations. Review infrastructure connections in all the parks regularly used for events to identify improvements. Investigate feasibility and costs of installing and maintaining a digital screen at the Coal Loader. |
| Tourism Planning | Prepare Visitor Economy Strategy (3.1.5.1) Advocate for the Sydney Harbour High Line (1.4.5.1) | Economic Development Officer General Manager | 2019-2020 2019-2021 | Identify events that would support the direction identified in the Visitor Economy Strategy. Incorporate the Sydney Harbour High Line into relevant strategies and plans. |
| Balance event impacts | Balance visitor impacts with residents' lifestyles and economic development (3.1.6) | Events Officer/Economic Development Coordinator | Ongoing | Ensure all large scale events have an event management plan that addresses impacts such as noise, access etc. Ensure residents are informed of events that may affect them including details of road closures, clearways and noise. Identify and monitor the economic impact of events on the local business community and ensure they are informed of events in their area. |

2 INITIATE AND DELIVER NEW LOCAL AND COMMUNITY EVENTS

| Activity | Delivery Program linkages | Responsibility | Timeframe | Key services/actions to support strategy |
|--|--|--|--------------------------|---|
| Community events | Provide and support a diverse range of events and street life across North Sydney through the staging of major events, festivals, markets and fairs (4.2.2.) | Manager Communications & Events All Council departments | 2019-2021 Ongoing | Deliver two hallmark events. Review Bradfield Bark and BBQ by the Bridge in context of staff resources, community support and attendance. Celebrate 30th anniversary of Twilight Food Fair (summer19/20). Ensure capability to host events is incorporated into all planning and project management when renewing, creating or designing Council's public spaces. Activate new public spaces with events. |
| CBD events | Implement the North Sydney CBD Marketing Campaign (3.2.2.2) | CBD Events Officer | 2019-2021 | Introduce a NTH SYD Lunch Club and NTH SYD Sessions. Expand the CBD online community through new digital communications. Develop connections with business leaders and the business community through targeted communications and events. |
| North Sydney Oval events | Identify major regional and sporting events that may be attracted to North Sydney (1.4.4.1) | Manager North Sydney Oval | 2019-2021 | Implement the North Sydney Oval Plan of Management. Work with local, state and national sporting groups to attract state and national titles Prepare bids to secure regional and sporting events |
| Coal Loader Centre for Sustainability events | Implement the Coal Loader Centre for Sustainability Business Plan (1.1.2.1) | Coal Loader Events & Engagement Officer | 2019-2021 | Make use of and showcase the new Coal Loader Platform by delivering a high quality and diverse events program. Deliver seasonal artisans markets. Partner with external organisations to deliver events with community interest. Implement events that attract new audiences to the Coal Loader and increase the use of the site as a community gathering place. |
| Stanton Library events | Review current library events and develop a tool to aid in creating and measuring outcomes (4.2.2.4) | Manager Library Services | 2019-2021 | Implement Writers@Stanton free author talks program. Review events program. |
| Arts and Culture events | Promote, support and celebrate creative arts in North Sydney through facilities, spaces and programs (4.2.1) | Team Leader Arts & Culture | 2019-2021 | Implement annual arts and culture events program (including Children's Festival, Senior's Festival, Shoreshocked etc). |

INITIATE AND DELIVER NEW LOCAL AND COMMUNITY EVENTS

| Activity | Delivery Program linkages | Responsibility | Timeframe | Key services/actions to support strategy |
|-----------------------|---|----------------------------------|-----------|--|
| Heritage events | Recognise, celebrate and promote North Sydney's history and heritage (4.4.1) Update heritage walking tours using new maps or apps (4.4.1.3) | Council Historian | 2019-2021 | Hold events to celebrate the history and heritage of the North Sydney area in conjunction with Heritage Week and History Week. |
| Sustainability events | Implement Green Events and Workshops Program (1.2.1.5) Implement the Bushcare Community Workshops and Events Program (1.1.1.1) | Manager Environmental Services | 2019-2021 | Facilitate community tree planting events. Facilitate community workshops, events and tours for sustainability and Bushcare programs. Facilitate Bridges to Booroowa annual weekend planting trip. |
| Business events | Conduct Business Network event series, including Business Buzz (3.1.2.2) | Economic Development Coordinator | 2019-2021 | Hold networking events. Promote business events through Council channels as appropriate. |
| Pool events | Update the NSOP Marketing Plan (1.4.1.24) Investigate feasibility of profit making services or activities to contribute to the financial performance of NSOP facilities (1.4.1.25) | Manager NSOP | 2019-2021 | Hold ticketed NYE Pool event. Hold free events as required. Hire Pool to external organisations for community events as appropriate. |

3 SUPPORT EVENTS ORGANISED BY EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

| Activity | Delivery Plan Strategy | Responsibility | Timeframe | Key services/actions to support strategy |
|------------------|--|---|-----------|---|
| Fees and charges | Identify commercial opportunities on Council's land and building assets (5.1.5.1) | Events Officer | Ongoing | Review external events to ensure all events pay appropriate fees and charges. |
| Partnerships | Initiate and/or explore partnerships when opportunities and funding present themselves (5.1.1.4) | Events Officer | 2019-2021 | Review external events to determine whether there is potential to expand an event through a partnership with Council. Provide in-kind, financial or promotional support to organisations whose events provide cultural or economic benefits to residents and businesses. |
| Markets | Support local weekend markets (4.2.2.5) | Director Community & Library Services Director Open Space & Environmental Services | 2019-2021 | Promote external markets through newsletters and social media. |