

11.2 Community and Cultural Services - January to March 2022 Quarterly Report

REPORT BY THE MANAGER, COMMUNITY & CULTURAL SERVICES
TO 18 MAY 2022 ORDINARY MEETING
GOV400098, COV400098, COS300010

RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

1. receive the report by the Manager, Community & Cultural Services on the Community and Cultural Services - January to March 2022 Quarterly Report; and
2. note the recent services provided and activities coordinated by Council's Community and Cultural Services Department.

Executive summary

This report aims to familiarise Council with services and activities provided by its Community and Cultural Services Department and to inform it for issues and events of note that arose during the period 1 January to 31 March 2022.

Disclosure of Interest

Nil

Detailed report

Details of Community and Cultural Services' quarterly activities, events, milestones and points of interest are contained within the attachment to this report. Of particular interest:

- Community Transport is in great need for new volunteer drivers to join the team;
- Council continues to consult with the Olinda community with respect to recovery and resilience projects;
- Youth Services staff remain busy with activities rolled out across the region for local youth becoming increasingly popular;
- Family Day Care child care vacancies remain highly sought after by local families.

Community Plan implications

Theme	Looking After Our Community
Goal	Effective and efficient delivery of infrastructure
Strategy	Provide infrastructure and services to cater for the current and future needs of our community

Strategic implications

Council Strategies

Not applicable

Council Policies

Not applicable

Legislation

Not applicable

Financial implications

Not applicable

Associated Risks

Not applicable

FIONA SHEARMAN
MANAGER, COMMUNITY & CULTURAL
SERVICES

SIMON JONES
DIRECTOR COMMUNITY

2 May 2022

Attachments: 1. Community and Cultural Services Quarterly Reports - January to March 2022.

APPROVED FOR SUBMISSION:

BRAD CAM
GENERAL MANAGER

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Mudgee and Gulgong Interagency

A guest speaker from Bila Muuji Aboriginal Corporation Health Service attended the February 2022 meeting and discussed the potential to establish a Community Drug Action Team group in Mudgee in the near future. Other issues discussed during the February and March meetings included Centrelink payments (including those relating to people affected by COVID-19, bushfires and flooding) and accommodation shortages.

Kandos and Rylstone Interagency

The Kandos and Rylstone Interagency meetings to date this year have had a strong focus on local housing shortages. The Government funded 'Link to Home' service (this service provides crisis accommodation) has been particularly impacted having been inundated partly by casual workers relocating from metropolitan areas without pre-arranged accommodation options. It was noted that Kandos did have crisis accommodation but no suitable public transport options.

An information session was also rolled out to both interagency groups on the topic of 'School Refusal' which is becoming increasingly prominent due to COVID lockdowns and home schooling arrangements.

Seniors Week

The 2022 Seniors Festival was celebrated from 25 March to 3 April with lunches in Gulgong, Mudgee, Rylstone and Kandos, including the presentation of the Seniors Citizen of the year Award for each town. The Committee also organised a concert with morning tea in Mudgee that was attended by 120 guests.

Wirambili-yanhi Wirambili Walan Indigenous Plants Community Garden establishment

Verbal confirmation of a \$20,000 grant from NIAA (National Indigenous Australians Association) for the community garden has been received. Once funding is formally confirmed, stakeholders are ready to commence works, including earthworks and setting up garden beds and a yarnning circle, establishing water tanks and purchasing gardening equipment and plants.

COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

Statistics by funding

Commonwealth Home Support Program	558
Community Transport Program	107
National Disability Insurance Scheme	99
Department of Veterans Affairs	22
Health Related Transport	57
Full cost recovery	70
Total	913

Volunteers

Volunteer numbers and availability have fluctuated due to illness or being able to travel now COVID restrictions have lifted. There are currently only two drivers willing to transport clients to and from Sydney. A campaign to recruit new volunteer drivers is currently underway.

All volunteer drivers will attend first aid training shortly as is required under Commonwealth Home Support Program guidelines.

General

Demand for transport is rising again due to medical specialists returning to the regional practices, elective surgery recommencing and COVID restrictions easing. The ability to pool clients within cars again is assisting to keep unmet demand low.

CULTURAL SERVICES

Guido Maestri: Stories from Homedale exhibition

Once the region came out of lockdown, visitorship over the holiday period increased, with a total of 6,754 people enjoying the inaugural exhibition. All works comprising the exhibition were sold by Guido’s gallery, including ‘Return to Berkeley’s Creek’ which was purchased by the prestigious Art Gallery of South Australia.

Linda Jackson: Retreat, Regeneration, Reflection exhibition

Mudgee Arts Precinct’s second exhibition, Linda Jackson AO: ‘Retreat, Regeneration, Reflection’ opened in mid-January. The photographic exhibition explored a year documenting Linda’s property near Kandos after the 2020 bush fires devastated the area. In total, 4,240 visitors came through Mudgee Arts Precinct throughout the period of the exhibition and Mudgee Region Tourism estimates that approximately a quarter of these attended especially to see Linda’s exhibition. These numbers were down from the gallery’s inaugural exhibition.

Linda’s exhibition was accompanied by artist’s talks and personal tours by the artist herself which were all largely well patronised. The Precinct also co-hosted the ‘Colourful Recovery Day’ with Council and Resilience NSW. Visiting services included Gateway Family Services, the RFS and Fire & Rescue who assisted in delivering the message of art providing assistance in recovering from the harm caused by bushfires, as well as resilience in the community.

Animation Introduction Workshop

The Cultural Officer hosted a workshop for local youth in January which introduced a brief history of animation and explored its diversity as a medium. The practical component allowed participants to build their own DIY Thaumatrope (a pre-cinematic optical illusion device).

Council’s Cultural Officer continues to forge strong relationships with the art teachers from the local schools, with smaller groups starting to attend the exhibitions once they were able to have excursions. It appears that many teachers are starting to link their curriculums to coincide with forthcoming exhibitions at the gallery.

Digital Engagement

Mudgee Arts Precinct continued with the content for educational videos that are supported by a grant from Museums & Galleries NSW’s ‘Let’s Get Digital’ program. Linda Jackson was interviewed with further imagery created by the Cultural Officer for our Making Conversations on Mudgee Arts Precinct’s YouTube Channel.

January - March 2022		
Facebook		
Facebook Page Reach	Facebook Page Visits	New Facebook Page Likes
13381	974	187
Instagram		
Instagram Reach	Instagram Profile Visits	New Instagram Followers
2138	508	98
YouTube		
Views		
108		

Town Hall Cinema

The Mudgee Town Hall Cinema continued its partnership with the combined Rotary Clubs of Mudgee. Screenings throughout January and February had restricted ticket sales due to NSW Public Health Orders. In March ticket sales returned to full capacity with the cinema exhibiting advanced charity screenings of The Duke. Rotary donated its entire proceeds from the March movie weekend to ‘End Polio Now’.

JANUARY	
FILM	VISITORS
Ainbo: Warrior Princess	53
No Time To Die	106
TOTAL	159

FEBRUARY	
FILM	VISITORS
Clifford The Big Red Dog	147
West Side Story	179
TOTAL	326

MARCH	
FILM	VISITORS
The Duke	92
Ghostbusters: Afterlife	91
House of Gucci	120
TOTAL	303

LGA Funding

Council has submitted an application for further funding from Create NSW and will be notified in early May 2022. The funding will enable us to continue to program exhibitions of artistic excellence, the accompanying educational resources, digital resources, the exhibition openings and ensure the artists and curators are properly compensated.

FAMILY DAY CARE

Family Day Care continues to provide education and care to the families within Mudgee, Gulgong and Kandos, as well as Wellington.

In January, educator numbers reduced to twelve: seven in Mudgee, one in each of Gulgong and Kandos, and three in Wellington. Recruitment of additional educators continues, with a prospective educator in Gulgong having moved into the second stage of recruitment (training).

The Family Day Care waiting list continues to grow with currently 16 families seeking care for their children (predominantly aged under 3 years).

The pandemic is still having a negative impact on our educators and families – if an educator’s household member contracts COVID, they are required to close and are unable to provide education and care to the children and families. This impacts their income as well as that of the Scheme; the levies charged are generated from the hours and days an educator is operating.

MEALS ON WHEELS

Statistics

Main meals

January	591
February	583
March	704
TOTAL	1878

Frozen meals

January	8
February	8
March	11
TOTAL	27

Clients

32 active clients

Volunteers

109 volunteers in total.

It is now mandatory for Commonwealth Home Support Program funded services to ensure all staff and volunteers be fully vaccinated.

RECOVERY AND RESILIENCE

Colourful Recovery community engagement

In March, the arts and local emergency and recovery services joined forces to inform and educate as part of a community day at Mudgee Arts Precinct. The day included a combination of workshops and an exhibition to create, learn and connect. The event, entitled 'Colourful Recovery' ran in conjunction with Linda Jackson's exhibition, *Retreat, Regeneration, Reflection*, and provided opportunities to share referral pathways for emergency and recovery assistance, as well as volunteering opportunities. The day was highly patronised and children enjoyed goodie bags and storytime with Linda Jackson. Members of the community were also invited to engage with Rural Fire Service, VRA Rescue and NSW Fire + Rescue.

Resilience NSW Liaison

Flooding delayed and impacted on recovery and resilience priorities, as staff from several agencies have been deployed across the state. This has impacted Resilience reimbursements for Council, as well as the moving forward with other projects, such as the pilot for the Community Resilience Network project, being one of the Resilience NSW funding deliverables. This will be followed up at a later date.

National Recovery and Resilience Agency

An intergovernmental relationship has been established with the Dubbo-based National Recovery and Resilience Officer. This officer attended the Olinda Community Meeting following the February floods.

The Agency is also undertaking its own investigations regarding the Black Summer grants within the Mid-Western region.

Get Ready Workshops

The Community Recovery officer is working on a community "Get Ready" program which aims to continue building resilience and better prepare communities for future emergencies.

The 'All Hazards, All Agencies' interactive workshops aim to support communities in reconnecting, identifying risks, and establishing a call for actions amongst themselves. Overall, communities should feel empowered to make safer and more effective decisions regarding emergency planning and management. Without the need to duplicate any services or groups, the use of established community groups will be engaged.

Olinda Community

Two Community Recovery meetings have been facilitated at Olinda since the February 2022 floods. Contentious issues identified included the disposal of damaged fencing and concerns around a lack of community consultation with respect to grant allocations. The community was also provided with detail as to services available to assist, as well as current funding opportunities.

Consultation with this community will remain ongoing.

YOUTH SERVICES

Youth Services on behalf of Youth Council hosted a range of activities for young people over the January school holidays. Events were well received and most booked out well in advance. COVID isolation requirements at the time did result in numerous last minute attendee cancellations and some facilitators also needed to cancel. Unfortunately, a planned excursion to Ganguddy also had to be cancelled due to unfavourable weather.

In March, the Youth Council met for the first time since June 2021. New office bearers were elected, as well as new applicants being welcomed to the group after receipt of a number of resignations.

The Inspirational Speaker tour with young Indigenous woman, Kiara Harris was once again unable to proceed due to COVID impacts. Youth Services have been trying to secure this speaker since early 2020. It has been determined that the project will not be able to proceed within the current funding period.

Youth Services/Youth Council have continued to sponsor the minimum fee for youth interest films as part of the monthly Town Hall Theatre cinema screenings. Attendance at these films has been good in light of the continued COVID impacts this quarter.

The Youth Services Officers held some skatepark events across the region at the start of Term 1. The Mudgee and Gulgong events were particularly well received with 90 people in total in attendance. There were many requests for more activities at the skateparks to be held in the future and Youth Services have taken this into consideration in regards to future planning.

Youth Services have revamped their suite of after school monthly programmes being run across the region, adjusting age ranges and trialling different programmes in different locations. The success of these changes will be evaluated at the end of June, with changes made as necessary. The Manga and Anime Squad and Level Up programmes in Mudgee continue to be popular with local youth, and booking enquiries are increasing.

Youth Services are supporting the MWRC Library's youth book club 'Page Turners' with packs of books for the group to use. The rebranded group has grown in support and attendance over the last quarter and the attendees have expressed their thanks to Youth Services/Youth Council for the resources.