

## 11.2 Regional Arts Development Organisation Representation

REPORT BY THE MANAGER, COMMUNITY & CULTURAL SERVICES  
TO 17 MARCH 2021 ORDINARY MEETING  
GOV400088, REC800019

### RECOMMENDATION

#### That Council:

1. **receive the report by the Manager, Community and Cultural Services on the Regional Arts Development Organisation Representation;**
2. **accept the Mid-Western Regional Council Cultural Development Committee's recommendation that it replace Orana Arts as its Regional Arts Development Organisation with an Arts OutWest membership;**
3. **authorise the General Manager to finalise arrangements to replace Council's Orana Arts membership with one for Arts OutWest from 1 July 2021; and**
4. **amend the 2021/2022 Budget to increase Community Services Administration Donations and Contributions by \$16,000 (funded from unrestricted cash) to meet the financial obligations of Arts OutWest annual membership.**

### Executive summary

Mid-Western Regional Council traditionally seeks representation on its own behalf and on behalf of the Mid-Western community for arts representation; creating and advocating for opportunities for artists and cultural institutions and to increase arts and cultural participation across the community; both as recreational pursuits and commercial enterprise opportunities. Strong Regional Arts Development Organisation representation for Council is particularly relevant as it approaches completion of construction of, and commencement of operations for, the Mudgee Regional Art Gallery. The Cultural Development Committee has considered and assessed the performance and future potential offerings of Orana Arts and Arts OutWest, respectively, and now recommend to Council that stronger representation is able to be provided by the latter.

### Disclosure of Interest

Nil.

### Detailed report

Throughout the past year, Council's Cultural Development Committee has assessed that the opportunities being offered by Orana Arts as not being as rich and productive as those potentially available through Arts OutWest. Only three Councils (including Mid-Western) remain with Orana Arts and it appears that its future focus does not take into account Councils' interests.

Arts OutWest's Strategic Plan 2021-2024 (draft attached to this report) provides tangible outcomes and good vision in terms of gallery operations and community engagement for Council going forward. Further, it is anticipated that Arts OutWest is a stronger organisation for service delivery based upon its greater geographical footprint and larger Council membership, lending to increased opportunities for inter-Council partnerships (see below).

Current Arts OutWest membership Councils:



Services currently being offered by Arts OutWest include:

- Arts event promotion support
- Networking
- Funding application support
- Information and resources
- Research
- Small grants
- Arts Outwest Cultural Fund
- Project auspices or funding management (not relevant for Council, but relevant for artists and small local arts organisations)
- Contacts and connections
- Professional development
- Advice and support
- Regional events calendar
- Cultural and strategic planning
- Advocacy
- Project and partnership development

In the event that the recommendations in this report are endorsed by Council, staff will make arrangements to cease its membership with Orana Arts and join with Arts OutWest from 1 July 2021.

### Community Plan implications

Theme	Looking After Our Community
Goal	Meet the diverse needs of the community and create a sense of belonging
Strategy	Support arts and cultural development across the Region

## Strategic implications

### Council Strategies

Council staff are commencing a revision of the now-outdated Cultural Plan; the revision of which will have more relevance to a community with a regional art gallery. It is anticipated that membership to a proactive regional arts development organisation will be a key theme in stakeholder development and strategies within the new Plan.

Council's Public Art Plan recognises the benefits of a range of partnerships to contribute to arts and cultural development, including those with regional arts bodies, such as Orana Arts (or Arts OutWest). Further, the Public Art Plan notes that the Cultural Development Committee will advise Council on its relationship with Orana Arts or any other peak regional arts body as applicable from time to time.

### Council Policies

Not Applicable.

### Legislation

Not Applicable.

## Financial implications

Whilst Orana Arts has varying levels of membership investment required by Council over the past decade (more recently up to \$14,000 per annum), it is anticipated that membership with Arts OutWest will cost Council approximately \$18,000 annually (calculated on population numbers). This is because Arts OutWest is a larger arts development organisation with a greater geographical footprint (and greater Council memberships) and then Orana Arts, and its service delivery has a wider scope. The increase in Council contribution, however, is expected to result to increased service delivery to the Mudgee Regional Art Gallery and the region's arts and culture community. The increased budget can be funded from Council's unrestricted cash.

Budget Year	Operating Performance Ratio	Own Source Revenue	Building & Infrastructure Renewal
2019/20	✘	-	-
Future Years	✘	-	-

## Associated Risks

In the event that Council fails to endorse the decision to change Regional Arts Development organisations, there is a risk that Council will continue to pay for an Orana Arts membership that fails to deliver value-for-money, tangible services to the Mudgee Regional Art Gallery, as well as unknown, potentially limited, services to the Mid-Western arts community. The difficulty in assessing this risk lies in the failure by Orana Arts to disclose to Council its Strategic Plan (and, historically, its draft Strategic Plan) as at the date of drafting this report.

FIONA SHEARMAN  
MANAGER, COMMUNITY & CULTURAL  
SERVICES

SIMON JONES  
DIRECTOR COMMUNITY

25 February 2021

*Attachments:* 1. Arts OutWest Strategic Plan 2021-2024 (Draft). (separately attached)

APPROVED FOR SUBMISSION:

BRAD CAM  
GENERAL MANAGER