

COMMUNITY, CULTURE, ARTS AND SPORT COMMITTEE LATE REPORTS

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** Item includes confidential papers

COMMUNITY, CULTURE, ARTS AND SPORT COMMITTEE NO. 2

17 SEPTEMBER 2020

LATE REPORTS

6. **2020 CHRISTMAS IN IPSWICH PROGRAM**

This is a report concerning the planned approach to the 2020 Christmas in Ipswich program of events under the Industry Framework for COVID Safe Events in Queensland.

The format of the program has been adapted due to COVID-19 to minimise risk to Council and the community while promoting social and economic recovery.

Key considerations for the COVID Safe adaption of the Christmas in Ipswich Program is the potential introduction of a low cost paid ticketing model for Christmas Wonderland and a new approach to New Year's Eve events.

RECOMMENDATION

- A. That Council endorse low cost ticketing of Christmas Wonderland with proceeds going to a local charity selected through an expression of interest process.
- B. That the General Manager (Community, Cultural and Economic Development) be authorised to finalise the terms of the agreement with the selected charity.
- C. That Council approve sponsorship of the New Year's Eve events at Tivoli Drive-In to the maximum cash and in-kind value of \$20,000.

** Item includes confidential papers

and any other items as considered necessary.

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This matter has been determined to be of a significant nature and approval has been given to refer this report to the Community, Culture, Arts and Sport Committee as a late item.

ITEM: 6

SUBJECT: 2020 CHRISTMAS IN IPSWICH PROGRAM

AUTHOR: CITY EVENTS MANAGER

DATE: 11 SEPTEMBER 2020

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This is a report concerning the planned approach to the 2020 Christmas in Ipswich program of events under the Industry Framework for COVID Safe Events in Queensland.

The format of the program has been adapted due to COVID-19 to minimise risk to Council and the community while promoting social and economic recovery.

Key considerations for the COVID Safe adaption of the Christmas in Ipswich Program is the potential introduction of a low cost paid ticketing model for Christmas Wonderland and a new approach to New Year's Eve events.

RECOMMENDATION/S

- A. That Council endorse low cost ticketing of Christmas Wonderland with proceeds going to a local charity selected through an expression of interest process.**
- B. That the General Manager (Community, Cultural and Economic Development) be authorised to finalise the terms of the agreement with the selected charity.**
- C. That Council approve sponsorship of the New Year's Eve events at Tivoli Drive-In to the maximum cash and in-kind value of \$20,000.**

RELATED PARTIES

Tivoli Social Enterprises – Colours of Christmas Festival – represented by My Fred Muys

Brassall Christmas in the Park Committee – represented by My Gregory Wilson

Disciples Church Springfield Lakes on behalf of Greater Springfield Combined Churches – Greater Springfield Carols – represented by Mr John Van Bennekom

Focal Community Services – Community Christmas Event – represented by Ms Tracy Warren

Gailes Residents Committee – Christmas on Karina – represented by Ms Delphine Legros

Ipswich City Orchestras Incorporated – Spirit of Christmas – represented by Ms Julie Sibley

Lions Club of Rosewood Inc – 2020 Rosewood Lions Christmas Street Carnival – represented by My Clyde Nicoll

Marburg Community Carols – Marburg Community Carols Evening – represented by Mrs Shirley Dance

Raceview Congregational Fellowship Inc – Christmas Carols in front of the Christmas Tree – represented by Mr Cliff Phillips

ADVANCE IPSWICH THEME

Caring for the community

PURPOSE OF REPORT/BACKGROUND

COVID-19 has had a significant impact on our local community. Most major community events have been cancelled or postponed due to the imposed restrictions on massed gatherings, which has prevented Ipswich residents celebrating as a community.

Christmas is a time when residents ordinarily would come together at major events. Given massed gathering restrictions are predicted to remain in place until next year, Council is proposing an adapted Christmas in Ipswich program of events compliant with the Industry Framework for COVID Safe Events in Queensland.

The COVID Safe adapted format of the program will minimise risk to Council and the community while promoting social and economic recovery at a time when it will be most needed.

A high level Christmas in Ipswich program overview has been provided as an attachment, with key events and format adaptations noted below:

Council Produced Events:

- City Christmas Tree at d'Arcy Doyle Place.
- Christmas Lights Competition – focus on generating an increased number of entries to encourage the community to visit their 'suburban wonderlands'.
- Finding Santa augmented Reality Trail – 40+ locations across Ipswich.
- Christmas Wonderland – reduced capacity, increased number of nights and introduction of low cost paid ticket (\$5 per individual of \$15 per family of 5) to facilitate 30 min sessions, contact tracing and manage nightly attendance. Ticket revenue would be donated to a local charity that is selected through an EOI process. In return, the charity would provide much need volunteers to deliver the COVID Safe event format. A digital 'walk through' Christmas Wonderland experience will also be available on-line.
- Santa on Tour – additional free activity for families in region – COVID Safe format that takes Santa to the suburbs.

- New Year's Eve – event traditionally held at Len Johnson Oval will be replaced with 6pm and 9.30pm low cost ticketed events at Tivoli Drive-In (including fireworks), two additional major fireworks displays from high points in Ipswich and a collated program of local NYE offerings across the region. The key message will be 'celebrate locally and stay COVID Safe'.

Community Produced Events:

- Brassall Christmas in the Park – live streamed format with community watch parties encouraged, possible live fireworks.
- Carols at the Robelle Domain – live streamed format with community watch parties encouraged, possible live fireworks.
- Colours of Christmas Festival – Live carols format utilising COVID Safe 'drive-in' format.
- Council supports a number of smaller community Christmas events through grant funding. Due to the impacts of COVID-19, the number of applications for support has reduced this year with six (6) community Christmas events (open to the public) receiving funding as compared to 17 in 2019.
- Other Community Events – a number of other events in region will be included in the Christmas in Ipswich campaign. Many are still determining whether they will proceed and in what adapted format.

LEGAL/POLICY BASIS

This report and its recommendations are consistent with the following legislative provisions:
Local Government Act 2009

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

The Christmas in Ipswich program will be compliant to the Industry Framework for COVID Safe Events in Queensland. This will reduce council's risk exposure as this framework is endorsed by Queensland Health, however a residual risk of a person contracting COVID-19 at a Christmas in Ipswich event will still remain.

Council produced events will largely be delivered under a COVID Safe Event checklist (fewer than 500 people on-site at any one time). Discussions with Queensland Health around the New Year's Eve fireworks are still pending and this may require a dedicated COVID Safe Event Plan to be produced.

Should Queensland Health impose greater restrictions due to ongoing COVID-19 developments, events may need to be cancelled and Council will have some level of financial exposure. The level of this exposure will be largely depend on the timing of the direction.

COVID Safe event plans and checklists rely on the public to adhere to social distancing. Should the public not follow the direction of event staff, Public Health Officers or Queensland Police, events may be closed down to ensure the safety of the community.

The reduced capacity and ticketing of Christmas Wonderland represents some reputational risk to Council and is likely to generate some negative media coverage. However retaining Christmas Wonderland, strong safety messaging, the donation of ticketing income to a local charity and addition of other free event elements will assist to generate positive coverage.

The City Events team completes a risk assessment on each produced event to identify and mitigate Council's risk exposure.

FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The scale of the Christmas in Ipswich program of events requires the dedication of the City Events team's resources from September to December 2020. The added layer of COVID Safe planning will place additional pressure on the team this year.

The project will be funded through the approved Christmas in Ipswich budget allocation of \$489,000 within the 2020-2021 City Events budget. The following is the current projected breakdown between projects:

	Expenditure:	Revenue:
Christmas Lights Competition	\$15,000	\$25,000
Christmas Wonderland	\$229,000	
Finding Santa	\$20,000	
New Year's Eve	\$60,000	
Santa on Tour	\$45,000	
Christmas Tree and Street Banners	\$30,000	
Other minor events	\$10,000	
Digital events	\$10,000	
Christmas Marketing	\$70,000	
TOTAL	\$489,000	\$25,000

Note: Sponsorship negotiations are ongoing and in-kind media partnerships are yet to be negotiated. New Christmas tree branches are not reflected in this budget as these have been funded as a capital expense.

COMMUNITY AND OTHER CONSULTATION

The Christmas in Ipswich program is delivered on a city-wide scale and involves a significant number of external stakeholders. Meetings and ongoing discussions have been held with:

- Representatives from Tivoli Social Enterprises, Greater Springfield Combined Churches and the Brassall Christmas in the Park committees to assist them to adapt their Christmas events into a COVID Safe format.
- Representatives of Tivoli Social Enterprises to develop the format and concept of the two New Year's Eve events at the Tivoli Drive-In.

- Local companies to invite their sponsorship of events within the Christmas in Ipswich program.
- Venues and community groups known to host Christmas events across the region to invite their participation in the Christmas in Ipswich marketing campaign

The following internal stakeholders have also been consulted:

- Community Engagement to ensure Christmas events funded through Council's grant funding program are invited to be included in the Christmas in Ipswich campaign.
- Tourism and Destination Development to ensure leveraging of opportunities by ITON members.
- Infrastructure and Environment to plan the Christmas Wonderland event.
- Council's Legal Services Section in the development of terms and conditions for the Christmas Lights Competition and Christmas Wonderland ticketing conditions.
- Council's Senior Insurance and Risk Officer to confirm that Council's insurance provider has not enforced a 'listed human diseases by WHO or the Biosecurity Act 2015' exclusion.

Significant consultation has been undertaken with industry stakeholders to ensure robust COVID Safe planning, including:

- Attendance at the local government consultation group for the development of the Industry Framework for COVID Safe Events in Queensland.
- General meeting held with Mark Myerson, Acting Director Public and Environmental Health, West Moreton Public Health Unit and John Holdcroft, Senior Sergeant, Disaster Management Support Officer, Queensland Police Service (plus other WMH, PRS and City Events reps) to discuss the Industry Framework.
- Ongoing attendance and Tourism and Events Queensland webinars on the Industry Framework for COVID Safe Events in Queensland.
- Attendance at the South East Queensland Councils - Events Reference Group – directly initiated to discuss the return to COVID Safe events and recovery of the events industry.



CONCLUSION

COVID-19 has had a significant impact on our local community. Most major community events have been cancelled or postponed due to the imposed restrictions on massed gatherings, which has prevented Ipswich residents coming together to celebrate as a community.

Council is proposing an adapted Christmas in Ipswich program of events to minimise risk to Council and the community while promoting social and economic recovery at a time when it will be most needed. Significant consultation has been completed with the community and stakeholders.

Key considerations for the COVID Safe adaption of the Christmas in Ipswich Program is the potential introduction of a low cost paid ticketing model for Christmas Wonderland and a new approach to New Year's Eve events.

ATTACHMENTS AND CONFIDENTIAL BACKGROUND PAPERS

1.	Christmas In Ipswich Overview  
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Joanna Jordan

CITY EVENTS MANAGER

I concur with the recommendations contained in this report.

Carly Gregory

MANAGER, MARKETING AND PROMOTION

I concur with the recommendations contained in this report.

Ben Pole

GENERAL MANAGER - COMMUNITY, CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

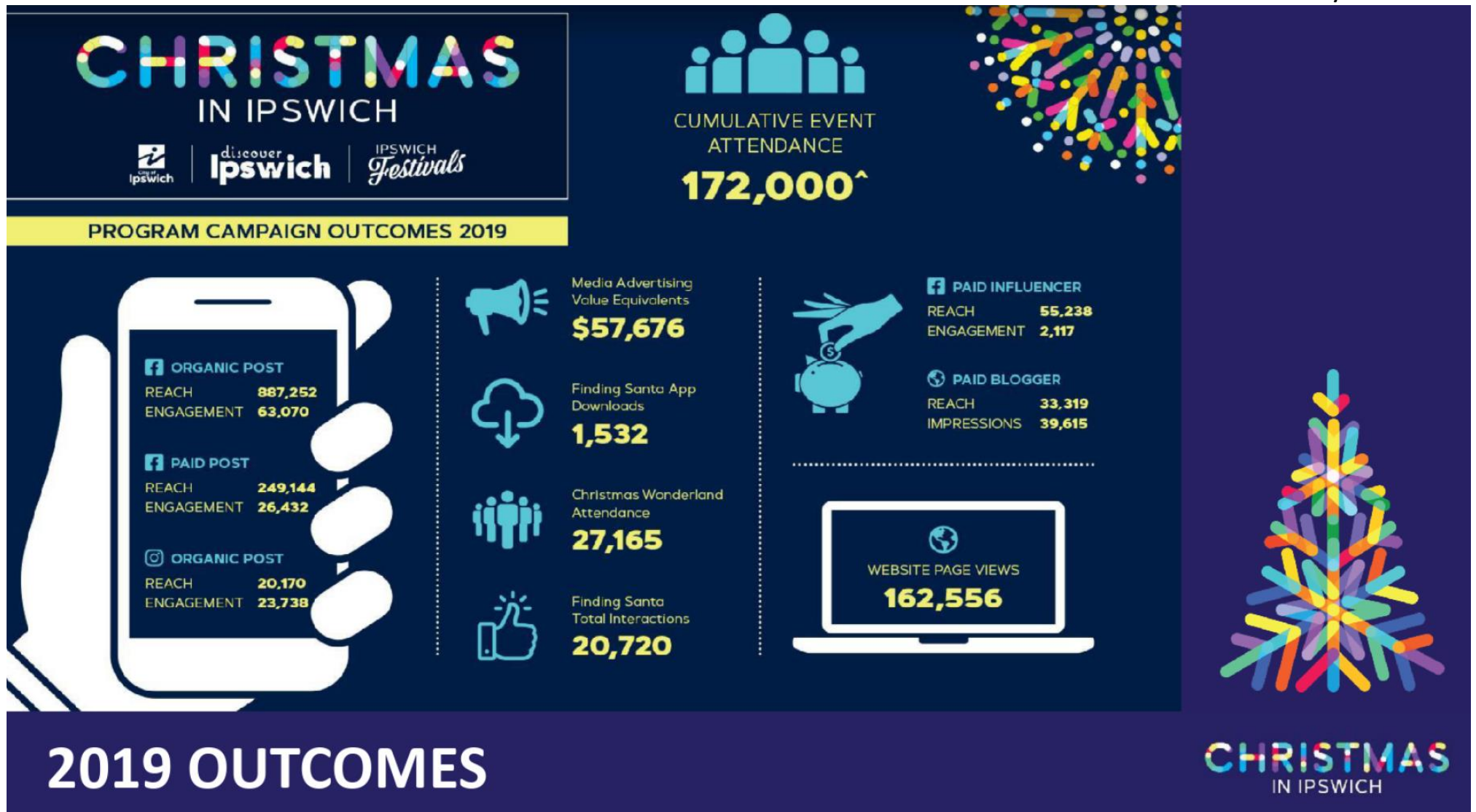
"Together, we proudly enhance the quality of life for our community"

Christmas in Ipswich 2020 Briefing Session

Jo Jordan







Lights On: 13 November – 5 January

- **Location:** d'Arcy Doyle Place
- **2019** New decorations
- **2020** New branches and tree top star
- Opportunity to **live stream** the turn on of the lights



CITY CHRISTMAS TREE

CHRISTMAS
IN IPSWICH

Key Dates:

- **Entries Open:** 2 November
- **Entries Close:** 30 November
- **Lights On:** 1 – 31 December
- **On-site Judging:** 3 December
- **Winners Announced:** 10/11 December

- 2019: **65 Entries**
- **Categories:** Best business, Best New Entry (NEW), Best Residential, Best Street, Best Sustainable Display (NEW) and People's Choice
- Introduction of a listing only option in 2020
- **City-wide** focus
- **COVID Safe event format** – visit the 'suburban wonderlands'
- **Partners:** IGA, Energex, River 94.9, Premier Transport, Burn Bright, and Infants' Friend.



CHRISTMAS LIGHTS COMPETITION

CHRISTMAS
LIGHTS
Competition

13 November – 31 December

- 2019: **20,720** interactions
- **40+ locations** across the city
- Augmented Reality **App**
- **COVID Safe** event format



FINDING SANTA



Item 6 / Attachment 1.

Preview Night: 10 December

Open to public: 11 – 22 December

Location: Nerima Gardens, Queen's Park, Ipswich

COVID Safe event format – 120 people in Nerima Gardens at any one time

2019

- **27,165** Visitors
- **10 Nights** + Preview Night
- **Free entry** – No ticket required
- Food vendors + Markets + Seated area + Queue Entertainment

2020

- **Approx 8,000** Visitors in COVID Safe event format
- **12 Nights** + Preview Night
- Recommend **low cost ticket**
- **Ticket revenue** to given to local charity
- **No** food vendors, markets or seated areas
- Promote **dining before and after** at local restaurants instead
- **Queue entertainment**
- **Virtual tour** for those at home



CHRISTMAS WONDERLAND

Christmas
WONDERLAND

4-6 December & 11-13 December

- **Santa and his helpers** take Christmas to the suburbs
- **Double decker red bus**
- **Socially distanced** Santa, local choirs, Christmas characters, personalities on board
- Target an **Ipswich region/suburb** each evening
- Each morning we announce where the big red bus will be travelling that night
- The public can **track the big red bus** by GPS
- **COVID Safe** event format



SANTA ON TOUR (in concept development)

CHRISTMAS
IN IPSWICH

Brassall Christmas in the Park – 30 Nov

Live streamed concert with community watch
parties encouraged + fireworks

Carols at Robelle Domain – 5 Dec

Live streamed concert with community watch
parties encouraged + fireworks

Colours of Christmas Festival – 12 Dec

Proceeding in live format at Tivoli Drive In
Low cost family ticket

Redbank Plains Christmas Carols

Cancelled



MAJOR COMMUNITY CAROLS

CHRISTMAS
Carols

- **Community Christmas events receiving grant funding – less applications this year**
- **Christmas Train Ride – Queensland Pioneer Steam Railway**
- **Ipswich Toy Run**
- **Christmas Markets**
- **Orion Christmas Street Party**

*Currently confirming these events



OTHER COMMUNITY EVENTS

COMMUNITY
CHRISTMAS *Events*

2019

- **2,720 attendees**
- Event for young families
- Attendance lower than other years as **fireworks cancelled**
- **Len Johnson Oval, North Ipswich**
- **Free entry** – no ticket required
- Food vendors + amusement rides + stage and roving entertainment

2020

- **6pm & 9:30pm ticketed events at Tivoli Drive In** with movie, entertainment and fireworks
- **9pm Fireworks** from two elevated locations (Ipswich Central and Springfield) and broadcast to families at home
- Assessing if **Springfield** are proceeding with their annual NYE event and/or fireworks
- Collation of NYE offering across the City
- Promote **‘celebrate locally and stay COVID Safe’**
- All subject to Queensland Health approval



NEW YEAR'S EVE

NEW YEAR'S EVE
IN IPSWICH