



MINUTES

Community Development Committee

held at

Council Administration Centre
Committee Room
180 Mort Street, Lithgow

on

Tuesday 11th April 2023

at 4:00 PM

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1. Present

Councillor Maree Statham, Mayor; Deputy Mayor Cassandra Coleman, Cr. Almudena Bryce, Leanne Walding, Glenda Anthes, Gaye MacFarlane, Nathan Mas-Stephens from Lithgow Information and Neighbourhood Centre and Rachael Young.

Meeting Opened 4:13pm

Staff

Kylie Blakemore

2. Apologies

Matthew Johnson

3. Declaration of Interest

Nil

ACTION

THAT the Present, Apologies and Declarations of Interest be noted.

Moved by Cr Maree Statham, Seconded by Leanne Walding

4. Previous Minutes

The Minutes of the 14th February 2023 CDC meeting were ratified by the committee and reported to Council on 27th Feb 2023

4.1 Business Arising

There was no new business arising.

Moved: Mayor Maree Statham Seconded: Cr Cassandra Coleman

5. Staff Reports

5.1 Opera Gala Event at the Union Theatre

- The potential holding of an Opera Gala event was discussed at the previous meeting after the success of the previous Opera Gala held at the Union Theatre in April 2022.
- After considering other venues including the State Mine & Blast Furnace, the Union Theatre is deemed the most appropriate for best potential return on ticket sales to cover costs of production.
- A tentative booking of the Union Theatre has been made for Friday 3 and Sat 4 November for two performances of 55 minutes each over 2 nights with ticket prices to be tentatively set at \$70, and \$65 concession, including a complimentary glass of wine and canapes.
- Gaye MacFarlane will be the lead organiser for this event, working with acclaimed artistic director John Wregg who will be adapting a comic opera by Donizetti 'Rita, translating it into English.
- The cast will be a soprano, a tenor and a baritone accompanied by pianist Sharolyn Kimmorley and directed by John Wregg.
- Preliminary costs have been estimated based on the costs for the 2022 event at between \$16,000 –\$25,000, with the aim that costs be covered by ticket sales and some financial support from Council and local business sponsorship.
- Discussions will be held with Mitchell Conservatorium to include some professional/ semi-professional local singers and classical musicians performing while patrons arrive to showcase local talent.

- Council will assist with event marketing, booking the venue and technicians and liaising with event organisers and stakeholders and also assist with any grant applications and sponsorship requests to reduce reliance on ticket sales to cover costs.
- A formal agreement will be developed with John Wregg detailing responsibilities for event organisation.
- Local cafes and restaurants will be invited to offer 'meal deals' for patrons to have dinner prior to the event starting.
- A Food and Wine Festival will be held on the day after the Opera Gala Event (Sunday 5 Nov 2023) which will be a great opportunity to encourage patrons and visitors to the area to stay for the whole weekend and enjoy local produce.
- Kylie Blakemore noted that the Union Theatre new seating installation is due to occur in July 2023 and this will have an impact on the number of seats (and perceived quality) available for purchase. She is also in the process of upgrading the operational plan for running the Union Theatre, setting up a working group/ advisory committee and working with various local creatives to source grant funding for new event programs.
- The Union Theatre will also soon have its own website, social media pages and much more proactive marketing presence, to help attract a wide variety of touring and local events, raise expectations and support for the venue as a vibrant, multi-arts performance space, not just a hall for hire.

ACTION

THAT

- 10 sponsorship request letters be provided to the Mayor for sending to local businesses and organisations.
- The committee would like to be updated on progress of this event at the next meeting and would like to be informed when promotional materials – and ticket sales – are ready to share among their networks.

Moved: Gaye MacFarlane **Seconded:** Rachael Young

5.2. Union Theatre Upgrade

- The ongoing renovations of the Union Theatre include the installation of new seating in the main theatre and upstairs mezzanine, new carpet, and a new kitchen.
 - The seating installation has been delayed from April to July 2023 due to supply chain delays faced by the supplier. The kitchen works will require a Development Application which will be lodged shortly and with works to hopefully occur in the second half of 2023.
 - The Union Theatre will need to be closed while the new seating is installed so cannot be completed during the Lithgow Musical Society's bookings in May – June and Nov – Dec 2023, nor other pre-booked events like the Fleetwood Mac Tribute Show in late July 2023.
 - The 300 new seats are theatre-style seating in rows that can be removed but removal will incur an additional cost to be included in the venue's fees and charges.
 - Kylie Blakemore is organising a new website, social media pages, brochure and much more proactive marketing campaign for the Union Theatre, in collaboration with Council Corporate Communications, IT and Tourism. She is also overseeing a major audit of the Union Theatre's booking system, operational plan and OHS requirements, consulting with professionals in the local and regional Theatre/ Multi -Use Performing Arts Venue Industry, including Arts Out West, BMAC, Cowra Performing Arts Centre, Blue Mountains Theatre and Community Hub
 - It was noted by the committee that the new seating and venue upgrades, website and marketing materials will be a great asset for the venue in general, and for high-profile and higher priced events like the Opera Gala.
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ACTION

THAT

The committee be updated when the dates for the new seating/ renovations and marketing materials are confirmed and appropriate media coverage is organised to showcase Council's ongoing commitment to the preservation and restoration of this iconic venue.

Moved: Leanne Walding **Seconded:** Glenda Anthes

5.3 Waste 2 Art program

- The Annual Waste 2 Art Community Art Exhibition, sponsored by Net Waste showcases reused and recyclable waste materials in a series of local and regional competitions.
- The theme for 2023 is Textiles and Fast Fashion which allows lots of opportunities for creative projects by locals and a fashion show at the closing ceremony.
- The Lithgow Competition officially opened in March with the unveiling of the Sutton Quilt at Eskbank House and with entry forms available on the Council website.
- The venue for the main competition/ exhibition showcase in June is yet to be determined, due to a scheduling conflict at the Union Theatre.
- Several workshops and talks have been arranged at Eskbank House and Gang Gang Gallery and more are currently in development in liaison with local schools and artists.

ACTION

The committee would like to be informed of any marketing materials they can share for up-and-coming events and suggested having a Waste 2 Art trail across multiple venues in Main Street including the library and retail premises.

Moved: Gaye MacFarlane **Seconded:** Glenda Anthes

5.4 Update on Current Projects, Youth and Community Development

No update was provided due to staff being unavailable.

ACTION

THAT

The absence of staff reports on recent youth, multicultural and community development projects for this meeting be noted and followed up at the next meeting.

Moved: Cr. Cassandra Coleman **Seconded:** Gaye MacFarlane

6.0 General Business

6.1 Directional Signs on Highway to Adventure Playground

ACTION

THAT

Council follow up on the commitment by the RMS to install signs.

6.2 Trip Hazard at Blast Furnace Park

Committee members have witnessed several occasions where members of the public have tripped over the concrete parking barriers.

ACTION

THAT

Staff follow up and possibly have them painted bright yellow

6.3 Proposed performance by Kamahl at Portland Crystal Theatre

Council has received a request for assistance with running a Fundraising Concert at Portland's Crystal Theatre proposal featuring Kamahl. The request would involve Council being the organiser and underwriting event costs. No Council funds have been allocated for this.

ACTION

THAT

Further discussions be held with the event proponent to determine the details of their requirements and costs.

6.4 Food and Wine Festival at Queen Elizabeth Park and Farmers Markets at Cook St Plaza

Councillor Bryce spoke about these events that are proposed for Sunday 5 November, the day after the Opera Gala. Cr Bryce is working with a committee that is liaising with the 7 Valleys Hotel who is organising the Farmers Markets at Cook St Plaza, to start in Sept 2023. 15 Stall holders have signed up so far.

ACTION

THAT

Cr Bryce will report back at next meeting

Moved: Leanne Walding **Seconded** Cllr Bryce

7. Meeting Close

The meeting closed at 5.15pm