

AGENDA

Community and Culture Committee

Monday, 12 February 2024

6:00 PM

Dragon Room

Georges River Civic Centre

Hurstville



OATH OF OFFICE OR AFFIRMATION OF OFFICE

All Georges River Councillors are reminded of their Oath of Office or Affirmation of Office made at the time of their swearing into the role of Councillor.

All Councillors are to undertake the duties of the office of Councillor in the best interests of the people of the Georges River Council area and are to act faithfully and impartially carry out the functions, powers, authorities and discretions vested in them under the *Local Government Act 1993* or any other Act to the best of their ability and judgement.

DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

All Georges River Councillors are reminded of their obligation to declare any conflict of interest (perceived or otherwise) in a matter being considered by Council or at any meeting of Council.

COMMUNITY AND CULTURE COMMITTEE MEETING

ORDER OF BUSINESS

OPENING

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Council acknowledges the Bidjigal people of the Eora Nation, who are the Traditional Custodians of all lands, waters and sky in the Georges River area. I pay my respect to Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who live, work and meet on these lands.

APOLOGIES / LEAVE OF ABSENCE

REQUEST TO JOIN VIA AUDIO VISUAL LINK

NOTICE OF WEBCASTING

DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

PUBLIC FORUM

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

COM001-24	Confirmation of the Minutes of the Community and Culture Committee Meeting held on 11 December 2023 (Report by Executive Services Officer)	4
------------------	--	---

COMMITTEE REPORTS

COM002-24	Verge Garden Program Review (Report by Research and Social Policy Officer)	13
COM003-24	Minutes of the Sports Advisory Committee meeting held 1 February 2024 (Report by Personal Assistant to Manager, City Life)	73
COM004-24	Adoption of the Georges River Council Events and Festival Charter, Event Guide and Event Toolkit (Report by Coordinator Events and Sponsorship)	80
COM005-24	Quarterly Community Property Report - 1 October 2023 to 31 December 2023 (Report by Coordinator, Programming and Operations)	140

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Item: COM001-24 Confirmation of the Minutes of the Community and Culture Committee Meeting held on 11 December 2023

Author: Executive Services Officer

Directorate: Office of the General Manager

Matter Type: Previous Minutes

COM001-24

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Minutes of the Community and Culture Committee Meeting held on 11 December 2023, be confirmed.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment [↓](#)1 Minutes of the Community and Culture Committee Meeting held on 11 December 2023



MINUTES

Community and Culture Committee

Monday, 11 December 2023

6:00 PM

Dragon Room

Level 1, Georges River Civic Centre

Hurstville



UNCONFIRMED MINUTES

PRESENT

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Councillor Lou Konjarski (Acting Chairperson), Councillor Ashvini Ambihaipahar, Councillor Kathryn Landsberry, Councillor Natalie Mort, Councillor Sam Stratikopoulos, and Councillor Benjamin Wang.

COUNCIL STAFF

General Manager - David Tuxford, Director Community and Culture - Kristie Dodd, Director Environment and Planning - Meryl Bishop, Director Assets and Infrastructure - Andrew Latta, General Counsel - James Fan, Manager City Life - Margaret Le, Manager Community and Early Learning Services - Jodi Tweed, Manager Cultural Engagement and Library Services - Justin Yeomans, Coordinator Programming and Operations - Andrew Williams, Coordinator Community Capacity Building - Alexis Drevikovsky, Community Safety and Inclusion Officer - Kaitlyn Ewings, IT Service Desk Technician - Chris Stojanovski, Executive Services Officer - Marisa Severino, Executive Assistant to the Director Community and Culture - Franziska Mintus (Minutes) and Acting Personal Assistant to the Manager City Life - Joeme Severino.

PROCEDURAL MOTION

ELECTION OF CHAIRPERSON

MOTION: Councillor Ambihaipahar and Councillor Stratikopoulos

That as the Community and Culture Committee Chairperson, Councillor Liu, is an apology for tonight's meeting, a vote be taken of the Councillors present, appointed to the Community and Culture Committee, to elect a Chairperson for this meeting.

That Councillor Konjarski assume the position of Chairperson for the Community and Culture Committee Meeting of 11 December 2023.

Record of Voting

For the Motion: Councillor Ambihaipahar, Councillor Konjarski, Councillor Landsberry, Councillor Mort, Councillor Stratikopoulos, Councillor Wang

On being PUT to the meeting, voting on this Motion was UNANIMOUS. The Motion was CARRIED.

OPENING

The Acting Chairperson, Councillor Konjarski, opened the meeting at 6.01pm.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

The Acting Chairperson, Councillor Konjarski acknowledged the Bidjigal people of the Eora Nation, who are the Traditional Custodians of all lands, waters and sky in the Georges River area. Councillor Konjarski paid their respect to Elders past and present and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who live, work and meet on these lands.

APOLOGIES/LEAVE OF ABSENCE

MOTION: Councillor Stratikopoulos and Councillor Ambihaipahar

That an apology on behalf of Councillor Nancy Liu and Councillor Nick Smerdely be accepted and a Leave of Absence granted.

Record of Voting

For the Motion: Councillor Ambihaipahar, Councillor Konjarski, Councillor Landsberry, Councillor Mort, Councillor Stratikopoulos, Councillor Wang

On being PUT to the meeting, voting on this Motion was UNANIMOUS. The Motion was CARRIED.

REQUESTS TO ATTEND MEETING VIA VISUAL AUDIO LINK

There were no requests to attend via Audio Visual Link.

NOTICE OF WEBCASTING

The Acting Chairperson, Councillor Konjarski advised staff and the public that the meeting is being recorded for minute-taking purposes and is also webcast live on Council's website, in accordance with section 5 of Council's Code of Meeting Practice. This recording will be made available on Council's Website.

CODE OF MEETING PRACTICE

Council's Code of Meeting Practice prohibits the electronic recording of meetings without the express permission of Council.

DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

There were no disclosures of interest made.

PUBLIC FORUM

There were no registered speakers.

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

COM039-23 Confirmation of the Minutes of the Community and Culture Committee Meeting held on 20 November 2023

(Report by Manager Office of the General Manager)

RECOMMENDATION: Councillor Stratikopoulos and Councillor Landsberry

That the Minutes of the Community and Culture Committee Meeting held on 20 November 2023 be confirmed.

Record of Voting

For the Motion: Councillor Ambihaipahar, Councillor Konjarski, Councillor Landsberry, Councillor Mort, Councillor Stratikopoulos, Councillor Wang

On being PUT to the meeting, voting on this Motion was UNANIMOUS. The Motion was

CARRIED.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

COM040-23 Community Safety Education Program (Report by Community Safety and Inclusion Officer)

RECOMMENDATION: Councillor Mort and Councillor Landsberry

That Council note the development of the Community Safety Education Program and acknowledge the extensive consultation undertaken with key community stakeholders, including community organisations and government agencies in the development of the program.

Record of Voting

For the Motion: Councillor Ambihaipahar, Councillor Konjarski, Councillor Landsberry, Councillor Mort, Councillor Stratikopoulos, Councillor Wang

On being PUT to the meeting, voting on this Motion was UNANIMOUS. The Motion was CARRIED.

COM041-23 Public Exhibition of the Draft Georges River Community Infrastructure Needs Assessment and Acquisition Area Strategy (Report by Coordinator, Programming and Operations)

RECOMMENDATION: Councillor Mort and Councillor Ambihaipahar

- (a) That Council approve the draft Georges River Community Infrastructure Needs Assessment and Acquisition Area Strategy to be placed on public exhibition for a period of no less than 60 days.
- (b) That a further report be submitted to Council on feedback from any public submissions made during the exhibition period, together with any recommended changes to the draft Georges River Community Infrastructure Needs Assessment and Acquisition Area Strategy prior to adoption.

Record of Voting

For the Motion: Councillor Ambihaipahar, Councillor Konjarski, Councillor Landsberry, Councillor Mort, Councillor Stratikopoulos, Councillor Wang

On being PUT to the meeting, voting on this Motion was UNANIMOUS. The Motion was CARRIED.

PROCEDURAL MOTION

MOVE TO CLOSED SESSION

At this stage of the meeting, time being 6.12pm, the Acting Chair, Councillor Konjarski, advised that the meeting would move into Closed Session in accordance with Section 10A of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

Accordingly, members of the press and public are excluded from the Closed Session and access to the correspondence relating to the item considered during the course of the Closed Session will be withheld.

This action was taken to allow discussion of the following item:

COM057A-23 Lease Renewal for Crisis Accommodation - Kingsway Community Care Inc (Location Undisclosed)

(Report by Coordinator, Programming and Operations)

THAT in accordance with the provisions of Part 1 of Chapter 4 of the Local Government Act 1993, the matters dealt with in this report be considered in closed Council Meeting at which the press and public are excluded. In accordance with Section 10A(2) (f) it is considered the matter affects the security of council, councillors, council staff or council property.

THAT in accordance with Section 10D it is considered that if the matter were discussed in an open Council Meeting, it would on balance, be contrary to the public interest as it affects the security of council, councillors, council staff or council property.

THAT in accordance with the provisions of Section 11(2) of the Act, the reports and correspondence relating to these matters be withheld from the press and public.

The Acting Chair, Councillor Konjarski, asked the Director Community and Culture, Kristie Dodd, if any representations had been received from the public that the item should not be discussed in Closed Session.

The Director replied that no representations had been received in relation to the item in Closed Session.

Councillor Konjarski asked if there were any members of the public gallery who would like to speak on the reasons Council proposes to consider the item in Closed Session. There were none.

MOTION: Councillor Wang and Councillor Mort

That in accordance with Section 10A Clause 2 of the Local Government Act 1993, the Committee enter into Closed Session to discuss item **COM057A-23 Lease Renewal for Crisis Accommodation - Kingsway Community Care Inc (Location Undisclosed)**.

Record of Voting

For the Motion: Councillor Ambihaipahar, Councillor Konjarski, Councillor Landsberry, Councillor Mort, Councillor Stratikopoulos, Councillor Wang

On being PUT to the meeting, voting on this Motion was UNANIMOUS. The Motion was CARRIED.

Note: The Committee meeting moved to Closed Confidential Session at 6.14pm.

CLOSED CONFIDENTIAL SESSION

CONSIDERATION OF CONFIDENTIAL RECOMMENDATIONS

COM057A-23 Lease Renewal for Crisis Accommodation - Kingsway Community Care Inc (Location Undisclosed)

(Report by Coordinator, Programming and Operations)

RECOMMENDATION: Councillor Landsberry and Councillor Mort

That Council approve the General Manager to enter a renewal Option Lease with Kingsway Community Care, Crisis Accommodation (location undisclosed) as per the Lease Terms and as further detailed within this confidential report.

Record of Voting

For the Motion: Councillor Ambihaipahar, Councillor Konjarski, Councillor Landsberry, Councillor Mort, Councillor Stratikopoulos, Councillor Wang

On being PUT to the meeting, voting on this Motion was UNANIMOUS. The Motion was CARRIED.

PROCEDURAL MOTION

RETURN TO OPEN SESSION

MOTION: Councillor Landsberry and Councillor Mort

That the meeting revert to Open Session, the time being 6.18pm.

Record of Voting

For the Motion: Councillor Ambihaipahar, Councillor Konjarski, Councillor Landsberry, Councillor Mort, Councillor Stratikopoulos, Councillor Wang

On being PUT to the meeting, voting on this Motion was UNANIMOUS. The Motion was CARRIED.

Note: The Committee meeting returned to Open Session at 6.18pm.

OPEN SESSION

CONFIRMATION OF CONFIDENTIAL RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CLOSED SESSION

RECOMMENDATION: Councillor Stratikopoulos and Councillor Landsberry

That the recommendations from the Closed Session in relation to item **COM057A-23 Lease Renewal for Crisis Accommodation - Kingsway Community Care Inc (Location Undisclosed)** be confirmed as recommendations of the Committee.

Record of Voting

For the Motion: Councillor Ambihaipahar, Councillor Konjarski, Councillor Landsberry, Councillor Mort, Councillor Stratikopoulos, Councillor Wang

On being PUT to the meeting, voting on this Motion was UNANIMOUS. The Motion was CARRIED.

CONCLUSION

The Meeting was closed at 6.19pm.

Chairperson

UNCONFIRMED MINUTES

UNCONFIRMED MINUTES

COMMITTEE REPORTS**Item:** COM002-24 Verge Garden Program Review**Author:** Research and Social Policy Officer**Directorate:** Community and Culture**Matter Type:** Committee Reports

COM002-24

RECOMMENDATION:

- (a) That Council note the findings and outcomes from the review of the Verge Garden Program (the Program) detailed within this report.
- (b) That Council approve the continuation of the Verge Garden Program.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. On 22 November 2021, Council adopted the following resolution (CCL-092-21/COM036-21):
 - a) *“Council endorses the establishment of a Verge Garden Program (the Program) for the Georges River local government area as detailed within this report.*
 - b) *That Council approves the establishment of a trial competition for verge gardens in the local government area.*
 - c) *That a review of the Program be undertaken after 12 months of implementation.”*
2. On 28 February 2022, the Verge Garden Program (the Program) was launched with the publication of Council’s Verge Garden Program Guidelines (the Program Guidelines). As of 15 January 2024, there have been 76 registrations in the Program.
3. This report represents the completion of a review of the Program as resolved in part (c) of the above resolution CCL-092-21/COM036-21 and details the review findings, which are significantly informed by community engagement, along with how the Program is proposed to be adjusted in response to such findings. Overall, the review has found that the Program:
 - a) Has universal support amongst respondents surveyed;
 - b) Community members who are already engaged in verge gardening are cognisant about the benefits of verge gardening. Further, promotion could instill greater understanding about the benefits of verge gardening amongst community members more broadly;
 - c) The need to further refine the Program Guidelines to provide more creative freedom – with a new version of the Guidelines having been developed to accommodate such while still providing guidance.
4. The Verge Garden Competition was launched by Council on 20 August 2023 and concluded on 15 January 2024. A winner emerged with the highest number of votes and was awarded a \$250 voucher to be redeemed at the local gardening retailer, Altra Nursery, located in Mortdale – this successful outcome signifying the fulfillment of the resolution.

BACKGROUND

Objectives and methodology of the review

5. The objectives of the review of the Program were to determine how the Program, including the Program Guidelines, can better:
 - a) meet the needs of community, including prospective and existing verge gardeners along with other community members;
 - b) maximise the potential adoption for verge gardening, without unreasonably encroaching on public amenity; and
 - c) provide clear, specific and exhaustive guidance without being overly prescriptive or complex for community members to follow.
6. The review of the Program included the following components being undertaken:
 - a) community engagement via a survey available to both registered verge gardeners and the wider community and a call for written submissions;
 - b) external engagement with local community organisations with an interest in permaculture and horticulture;
 - c) external engagement with academia and other organisations specifically focused on verge gardening in neighbourhoods;
 - d) internal engagement across relevant Council business units;
 - e) a desktop review of other verge gardening focused programs from other local governments; and
 - f) attainment of feedback on the Program from verge garden workshop participants.

Design of the Verge Garden Program

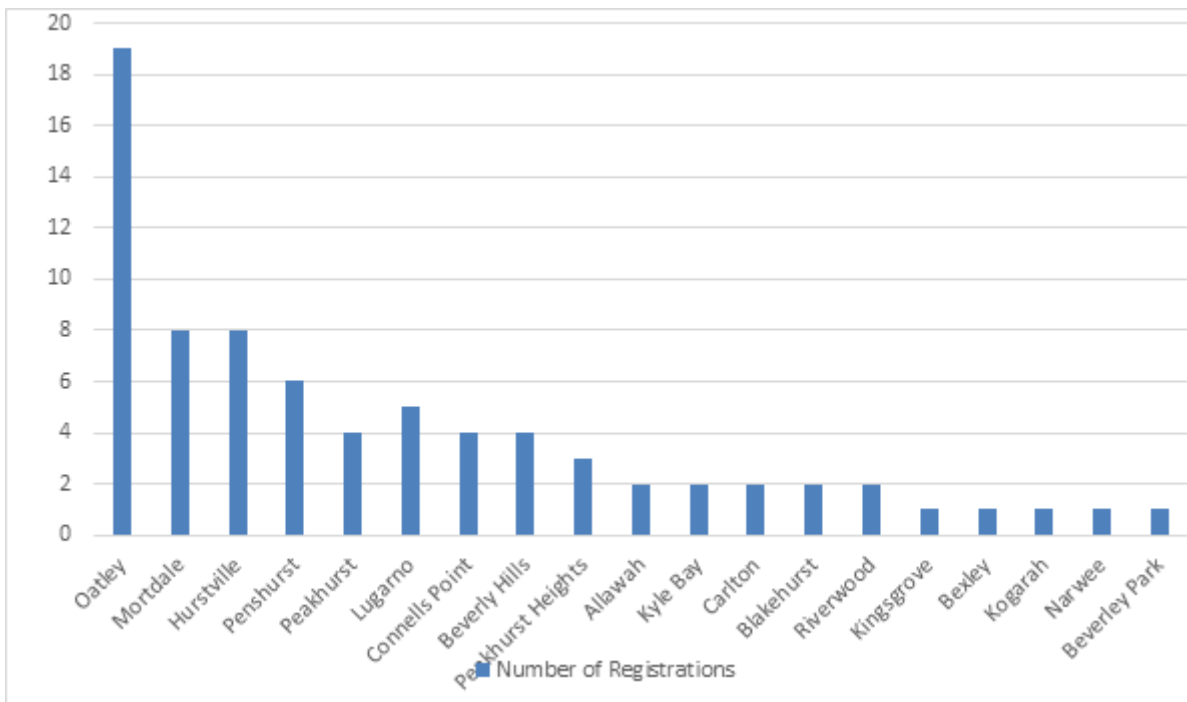
7. A verge garden is where the street verge is transformed into a garden by nearby residents or businesses, rather than having a grassed or paved verge. A verge garden might have native plants, shrubs, groundcovers, vegetables and/or flowers; and may range from being just a couple of plants, to sustainable vegetable patches collectively maintained by neighbours.
8. As stated in the report to Council (CCL-092-21/COM036-21), there is an array of recognised benefits associated with verge gardening programs, including (but not limited to):
 - a) providing residents with a meaningful outlet for outdoor recreation and exercise (providing derivative benefits to both physical health and mental health);
 - b) cultivating relationships between community members in collectively caring for verge garden areas;
 - c) improving the visual amenity of local streets and other neighbourhood areas;
 - d) providing a greater filtration of airflow, shade and heat dissipation;
 - e) utilisation of the otherwise wasted natural runoff from rainwater into the soil enrichment of verge garden beds;
 - f) creating beneficial corridors for wildlife; and

- g) reducing carbon emissions via photosynthesis of planted vegetation and sequestration of carbon in the soil of garden beds.
- 9. The Interim Verge Garden Program Guidelines were developed by officers from relevant Council directorates with consideration given to the learnings from the previous ‘Pilot Verge Garden Program’ and were implemented as part of the trial period of the Verge Garden Program (see **Attachment 1**). As part of this review and incorporating community feedback, the Program Guidelines have since been revised (see **Attachment 4**).
- 10. Additional resources have also been published on Council’s website including a ‘Program Guidelines Checklist’ to enable prospective verge gardeners to self-assess whether their verge is able to accommodate a verge garden within the Program Guidelines; and a ‘tips for creating a verge garden’ supporting document, for capacity building.

Implementation of the Verge Garden Program

- 11. As at 15 January 2024, there have been 76 registrations in the Program. The distribution of registered verge gardens across suburbs in the Georges River Council local government area is detailed in Graph 1 below.

Graph 1 – Distribution of Registered Verge Gardens across the Georges River Council LGA



- 12. As shown, registrations are predominately concentrated within suburbs situated within the south and west of the local government area (LGA), which largely reflects such suburbs having the greatest concentration of wide verge areas, and consequently, significant potential for verge gardening. There are also suburbs with wide verge areas sporadically distributed across the LGA which however appear to be underrepresented in registrations, such as: Riverwood (2); Narwee (1); and Kingsgrove (1).
- 13. While some promotional material about the Program has been specifically targeted at suburbs within the north of the LGA, the current skewed distribution suggests greater efforts are required to promote the Program beyond the south-west of the LGA.
- 14. From 21 June to 31 July 2023, Council held three workshops at Carss Park Community Garden with community members about how to create a verge garden. All workshops

received over 20 registrations, out of 25 places available, and received positive feedback from attendees.

15. As part of promoting the Program amongst community members, Council has undertaken promotional initiatives across the following platforms:
 - a) Multiple circulations of advertisements and/or editorials across Council's community e-News and quarterly magazine along with the Program being regularly featured within the section of the Leader reserved for communications from Council;
 - b) Media releases and social media posts about specific milestone events within the Program such as: the launch of the Program; call for registrations ahead of the inaugural Verge Garden Competition (the Competition); and the Competition;
 - c) Letterbox flyer drops at residential addresses across the LGA identified to have significant potential for verge gardening (such as wide verges);
 - d) Partnering with local nursery, Altra Nursery based in Mortdale, to display flyers about both the Program and Competition at their premises;
 - e) Circulating information about the Program with residents who are registered with 'Grow it Local' – the online permaculture education platform;
 - f) Circulating posters in public spaces with high incidental viewing, e.g., shopping centres, community centres, and cafes; and
 - g) Circulating information about the Program to seniors through intermediaries such as clubs, RSLs, health centres and pharmacies.
16. Since the Program launch on 28 February 2022 to 15 January 2024, Council received complaints relating to eight verge gardens, however only one of which is registered in the Program. This complaint was made by the registered participant directly in requesting recourse from Council in response to alleged theft of plants.
17. On 20 August 2023, Council launched the Verge Garden Competition to promote the benefits of verge gardening to the community and incentivise registration to the Verge Garden Program. The competition, managed through Georges River Your Say, featured a deadline extension from 30 November 2023 to 15 January 2024, providing residents with an extended timeframe to craft their distinctive verge gardens. Council received a total of 3 entries, all submitted by registered participants of the Verge Garden Program. After a period of public voting, the participant whose verge garden received the highest number of votes was named winner and awarded a \$250 voucher to be redeemed at the local gardening retailer, Altra Nursery, located in Mortdale.

Community Engagement Findings

18. Community engagement was undertaken as part of this review, and involved surveying community members through Council's Your Say, and seeking targeted feedback from organisations and verge garden workshop participants. See **Attachment 2** for the detailed findings of each of these community consultations.
19. Many survey respondents focused on the need for Council to undertake further promotional, capacity-building and collaboration efforts, with many suggested initiatives provided, which widely vary in resourcing required.

Analysis of Aggregated Survey Responses

20. Verge gardening is universally supported by survey respondents and therefore likely to have significant support amongst community members. There also appears to be cognisance about the benefits of verge gardening amongst those interested (i.e. survey

- respondents), with improvements to street amenity and the local environment being the most cited benefits of verge gardening.
21. Of the respondents who are registered in the Program but yet to create a verge garden (5) personal circumstances (4), limited time (3) and financial constraints (2) were cited as the reasons for not yet embarking on verge gardening to date. 'More freedom' and 'guidance' were cited as activities which would however encourage some of such respondents to create a verge garden.
 22. In presumably seeking to reflect their appreciation for verge gardening across the community more broadly, many respondents focused on the need for Council to undertake further promotional and collaboration efforts, with many considered suggested initiatives provided for Council to undertake. While Council has already undertaken some of the suggestions to date, such as advertising at a local nursery (Altra Nursery Mortdale), the extent and variety of the initiatives canvassed highlights the potential to significantly scale-up the community footprint of the Program.
 23. The need to further refine the Program Guidelines to better balance the need for prescriptive guidance while still supporting the creative aspirations of community members potentially interested in verge gardening was evident in the survey responses. Some respondents were also confused about spatial requirements, renters' participation, insurance, and underground services. Amendments made to the Program are summarised in the report under '*New Program Guidelines*'.

Feedback from Organisations

24. As part of the review, the following organisations were contacted to provide feedback on the Program (see **Attachment 2**):
 - a) Oatley Flora and Fauna Conservation Society (OFFCS) and Permaculture South Sydney (PSS) – as local organisations with a focus to enhance the natural environment and horticulture – feedback was provided by OFFCS but not PSS;
 - b) Peter Carroll (SCRAP Ltd) – from a not-for-profit organisation based in Holsworthy providing education on environmental sustainability which delivered multiple verge gardening workshops on behalf of Council; and
 - c) Kristina Ulm (UNSW) – a doctoral candidate undertaking research on verge gardening (as part of a PhD at UNSW) in which Council officers previously contributed.
25. OFFCS noted that they have previously promoted the Program via social media and also provided comments related to public liability cover, "exotic" and "weed" species, reducing the financial burden of the Verge Garden Program to increase uptake, and the provision of additional workshops, on behalf of their membership.
26. Peter Carroll from SCRAP Ltd provided feedback about 'Dial before you dig' and suggested 'No Dig Gardening' as an alternative that solves issues related to the inaccuracy of the process. Further investigation into liability insurance was also recommended.
27. Kristina Ulm (UNSW) provided feedback on how to make the Program Guidelines more encouraging through simplified, ameliorative language and verge gardening imagery.
28. The majority of feedback has been incorporated into the Program Guidelines, or otherwise earmarked for implementation, as discussed under '*Outcome of the Review*'.

Feedback from Verge Garden Workshop Participants

29. Council held three free workshops on verge gardening for anyone living or working within the LGA to attend across June and July 2023. As part of attending the workshops, participants were able to provide feedback on the Program to Council officers. Comments captured from participants predominately focused on whether there was scope for the Program Guidelines to:
- a) be reduced in length and made more concise with concepts expressed using simpler language;
 - b) permit dwarf species of trees, rather than blanketly prohibiting trees altogether;
 - c) permit above-ground garden beds that are 0.2m, rather than 0.3, high as most available timber to construct garden beds is 0.2m in thickness;
 - d) enable prospective verge gardeners to check with Council directly about the existence of any underground services, rather than using the free national 'Before You Dig' service;
 - e) clarify the impact of any applicable constraints on verge gardening within heritage areas; and
 - f) highlight the benefits of using native plants specifically.

Case Study Analysis: Other local governments

30. Desktop analysis has been undertaken of the publicly available instruments governing verge garden programs of local governments identified to either:
- a) operate under a similar model to Georges River Council's Program (i.e. voluntary opt-in with compliance requirements);
 - b) retaining comprehensive yet succinct requirements; or
 - c) being nearby to the Georges River Council LGA.
31. See **Attachment 3** for the notable requirements from other local governments' verge garden programs and any equivalent counterpart under Council's own Verge Garden Program Guidelines.

Outcome of the Review

32. Following the analysis of the information collected as part of the review:
- a) a new version of the Program Guidelines has been developed (see **Attachment 4**) with various amendments from the previous version (see **Attachment 1**) as discussed below; and
 - b) the process to register in the Program, and thereby be permitted to verge garden, has been modified slightly; and
 - c) various promotional and capacity-building initiatives have been earmarked for future implementation where resources permit (at present no funding allocated to the administration of the Verge Garden Program).
33. While the majority of suggestions provided by stakeholders have been adopted, a minority are not recommended, for reasons discussed under 'New Program Guidelines'. The Program Guidelines will continue to be reviewed and amended as the Program continues.

New Program Guidelines

34. The new Program Guidelines have been developed in incorporating the suggestions received while seeking to:

- a) express concepts using simpler language with greater clarity and succinctness, so the document is accessible and avoids dissuading potentially interested community members from participating;
 - b) restructure content to reduce duplicative material and reduce the number of pages;
 - c) only adding additional guidelines where essential to ensure either:
 - i. verge gardeners and prospective verge gardeners understand what gardening activities are permissible and in which such locations; and
 - ii. the safety, health and wellbeing of other community members.
35. The following amendments to the previous Program Guidelines that have been reflected in the new version (see **Attachment 4**) that are noteworthy include:
- a) including photos, rather than only concept designs, of verge gardens specifically;
 - b) highlighting the benefits of verge gardening and importance of registering the verge garden with Council upfront;
 - c) explicitly stating that renters and people living in apartments are also able to verge garden (pending any applicable strata approval);
 - d) better defining eligible verge areas by explicitly excluding the following from being in-scope of the Program: state-controlled roads; Council parks and reserves; areas surrounding bus stops; areas surrounding parking spaces reserved for emergency vehicles or work zones; or any other Council owned or managed parcels of land that is not a street verge;
 - e) reflecting the need for residents within one of Council's three Heritage Conservation Areas to seek approval via a Development Consent Requirement Exemption Form before creating a verge garden;
 - f) further detailing how the 'Before You Dig' process operates (i.e. online enquiry rather than phone enquiry) since being renamed from 'Dial Before You Dig';
 - g) reducing the minimum height of garden beds from 0.3m to 0.2m to enable people to use timber (which is commonly sold in 0.2m widths) for above-ground garden beds;
 - h) permitting tree species to be planted but only if they do not grow beyond 1 metre high at maturity;
 - i) highlighting the benefits of using native plants specifically;
 - j) decreasing the area in which people can plant groundcovers within the circumference of a tree from 1m to 0.5m, which is consistent with the approach taken by other local governments.
 - k) extending coverage under Council's liability insurance program to third-party claims for injury or property damage relating to a verge garden that is compliant with the entirety of the Program Guidelines; and subject to the participant taking all care to prevent loss or injury to others.

Modification to Registration Process

36. Due to difficulty of ascertaining the actual number of verge gardens under the current registration process, it is proposed that registration should only occur once a verge garden has been created.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

37. The total cost of the three free community workshops held across June and July 2023 by external provider, SCRAP, on verge gardening was \$2,904.00 with \$1,804.00 (incl GST) funded from Cost Centre 460007.6000.64656 and \$1,100.00 funded from Cost Centre 4900.1001.64804.

RISK IMPLICATIONS

38. Consistent with the initial report to Council about the establishment of the Program (COM036-21), the risks relating to verge gardening are mitigated further through the improvements made to the Program Guidelines, as well as ensuring compliance with the new Guidelines by widely promoting the Guidelines through workshops/webinars, distributing the Guidelines in community languages to ensure equitable access to Council information, and responding to notifications of non-compliance. The potential liability to Council associated with the inherent risks of greater activity occurring on the street verge will be addressed and mitigated through the disclosure (which residents receive upon seeking to register in the Program) regarding insurance claims relating to injury arising out of verge gardens.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

39. Community engagement undertaken to date is summarised in **Attachment 2** and above under '*Community Engagement Findings*'.
40. The new version of the Program Guidelines will be published via Council's communications channels including but not limited to: Council's website, e-newsletter, current registrants to the Verge Garden Program, and Altra Nursery as the trial Program's key promoter.

FILE REFERENCE

D23/160625

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment [↓1](#) Verge Garden Program Guidelines August 2023



Attachment [↓2](#) Verge Garden Program - Community Engagement Findings



Attachment [↓3](#) Comparison of Verge Garden Programs of Other Local Governments



Attachment [↓4](#) Verge Garden Program Guidelines - Proposed amendments from review - For design



Item: COM003-24 Minutes of the Sports Advisory Committee meeting held 1 February 2024

Author: Personal Assistant to Manager, City Life and Manager City Life

Directorate: Community and Culture

Matter Type: Committee Reports

COM003-24

RECOMMENDATION:

That the recommendations contained within the Minutes of the Georges River Council Sports Advisory Committee Meeting held on 1 February 2024 be submitted to the Community and Culture Committee for consideration and to be adopted by Council.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The recommendations contained within the Minutes of the Georges River Council Sports Advisory Committee Meeting held on 1 February 2024 are submitted to the Community and Culture Committee for consideration and to Council for adoption.

BACKGROUND

2. At the meeting of Council on the 31 October 2022, the establishment of Georges River Council Sports Advisory Committee (The Committee) was approved by Council for considering and disseminating information to local, regional, and state sporting bodies, as well as cross-code collaboration between local sporting bodies to achieve greater utilisation of facilities and fields.
3. The Georges River Council Sports Advisory Committee Meeting was held on 1 February 2024 allowing members to attend in-person and/or via Teams.
4. Minutes of this meeting are now submitted to the Community and Culture Committee for consideration and for adoption by Council.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5. No budget impact for this report.

FILE REFERENCE

D23/282037

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment [↓](#)1 Unconfirmed Minutes - Georges River Council Sports Advisory Committee - 1 February 2024



Item: COM004-24 Adoption of the Georges River Council Events and Festival Charter, Event Guide and Event Toolkit

Author: Coordinator Events and Sponsorship

Directorate: Community and Culture

Matter Type: Committee Reports

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council adopts the Events and Festivals Charter, Event Guide and Event Toolkit.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. On 27 November 2023, Council endorsed the Draft Events and Festivals Charter, Draft Event Guide and Draft Event Toolkit for the purpose of public exhibition for a period of no less than 28 days (COM037-23).
2. Throughout the period of public exhibition from 18 December 2023 to 15 January 2024, Council received correspondence from one (1) community group via direct email, nil (0) submissions were received via Council's community consultation platform, 'Your Say' or any other medium.
3. The final versions of the Events and Festivals Charter (Attachment 1), Event Guide (Attachment 2) and Event Toolkit (Attachment 3) are now presented to Council for adoption and implementation.

BACKGROUND

4. Council's Events Strategy was due for review in 2020, however, due to COVID-19 and the teams required action to the delivery of the COVID-19 Safe Events Program, the review was delayed.
5. Community feedback was captured over a three-year period to evaluate our existing event program and determine opportunities for future events to meet community expectations and needs. This feedback along with extensive research informed the review and development of The Events and Festivals Charter, The Event Guide and The Event Toolkit. These documents support good governance and provide a framework to deliver and support events in the Georges River Council local government area (LGA).
6. The following internal and external plans and strategies were reviewed as part of the extensive research in developing this suite of event documents:
 - Council's Community Strategic Plan; Customer Experience Strategy; Open Space, Recreation and Community Facilities Strategy; Create Georges River; Disability Inclusion Action Plan; Economic Development Strategy; Night-time Economy Study; Social Justice Charter; and
 - The NSW Government Destination Management Plan and the NSW Government Visitor Economy Strategy and the Event Guide.
7. Following the adoption of the final versions of the Events and Festivals Charter, Event Guide and Event Toolkit, Council officers will host community capacity building workshops to implement this suite of new event resources. These workshops aim to provide valuable

information and practical guidance, enabling community groups to host successful and compliant events.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8. No budget impact for this report.

RISK IMPLICATIONS

9. If Council does not have a framework for Council run and community led events, there is potential for safety risks such as food non-compliance, traffic and crowd management issues, and lack of appropriate permits for events being run within the LGA.
10. There is also the possibility of reputational risk if events within the Georges River LGA are not compliant and are not meeting community expectations or goals found within Council's Community Strategic Plan.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

11. Following the resolution of Council in November 2023 (COM037-23), the Draft Events and Festivals Charter, Draft Event Guide and Draft Event Toolkit were placed on public exhibition from 18 December 2023 to 15 January 2024 and public submissions were sought via 'Your Say'.
12. The community were made aware of the public exhibition period through the fortnightly Your Say newsletter and email notifications to Council's database, which included stallholders, local businesses, and community groups.
13. The documents were open for community feedback for a period of not less than 28 days. Feedback was received from one (1) community group, The Lugarno Lions noting documents were reviewed and raised no concerns.

FILE REFERENCE

D24/9306

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment [↓](#)1 Events and Festivals Charter



Attachment [↓](#)2 Event Guide



Attachment [↓](#)3 Event Toolkit



Item: COM005-24 Quarterly Community Property Report - 1 October 2023 to 31 December 2023

Author: Coordinator, Programming and Operations

Directorate: Community and Culture

Matter Type: Committee Reports

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council receive and note the Quarterly Community Property Report for the period 1 October 2023 to 31 December 2023.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This report details lease and licence agreements within Georges River Council's Community Property portfolio for the period 1 October 2023 to 31 December 2023.

BACKGROUND

2. Council manages a portfolio of sixty-three (63) community properties under a community lease or community licence.
3. There are thirty-seven (37) community facilities in the community property portfolio, which are divided into forty (40) separate tenancies (Table 1 - 6 in the attached Community Properties Listing).
4. There are twenty-six (26) community/sporting amenity buildings in the community property portfolio which are divided into thirty-one (31) separate licensable areas. One licensable area is shared seasonally between two different tenants (Table 7 in the attached Community Properties Listing).
5. During the period 1 October 2023 to 31 December 2023, there were three (3) leases and two (2) licence agreements executed:
 - i. On 20 November 2023, Council resolved to approve the General Manager to enter into a renewal Option Licence Agreement between Georges River Council and Jubilee Community Services Inc for being Part Jubilee Park Community Centre, 2B-2C Boundary Road, Mortdale. The term is for seven years (7) from 1 July 2022 to 30 June 2029 with a further seven (7) years Option Period from 1 July 2029 to 30 June 2036 (COM038A-23);
 - ii. On 11 December 2023, Council resolved to approve the General Manager to enter into a renewal Option Lease Agreement for one (1) year between Georges River Council and Kingsway Community Care Inc (Location Undisclosed) from 23 December 2023 to 22 December 2024 (COM057A23);
 - iii. On 12 December 2023, the General Manager approved to enter into a Licence Agreement between Georges River Council and Narwee Pre-School Kindergarten Incorporated, being a Ground Lease, Whole of Lot 432 DP752056 and Part of Lot 3 DP 1046103, including the footpath Access. The Licence Agreement term is for ten (10) years from 18 August 2023 to 17 August 2033;
 - iv. On 18 December 2023, Council resolved to approve the General Manager to enter into a Lease Agreement between Georges River Council and Narwee Baptist

Community Broadcasters Limited (90.1 2NBC-FM) for Part Auto Console 5115-226 being the whole of Level 1 of the building at 84 Railway Parade, Kogarah. The Lease term is five (5) years from 1 August 2022 to 31 July 2027, with a further five (5) year Option Period from 1 August 2027 to 31 July 2032 (CCL059A-23); and

- v. On 19 December 2023, the General Manager approved to enter into a new lease agreement between Georges River Council and Riverwood Community Centre being 31 Thurlow Street, Riverwood for five (5) years from 1 January 2024 to 31 December 2029.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

6. Council's Community Property portfolio is forecast to receive a total annual income of \$102,204 (excluding GST).
7. An annual rental subsidy of \$1,053,898 (excluding GST) is applied across Council's community property portfolio based on current market rental rates. Subsidies are determined in accordance with Council's Community Lease Policy.

RISK IMPLICATIONS

8. A failure to enact the leases and licences in accordance with Council's Community Lease Policy could have a negative reputational impact on Council.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

9. Community engagement was undertaken in accordance with the Council's Community Lease Policy.

FILE REFERENCE

D24/11331

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment [↓](#)1 Community Property Report - Community Properties Listing - 1 October to 31 December 2023



