



ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL 5 SEPTEMBER 2018

12.1 2018/19 VISITOR AND SUMMER MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: FIONA BLAIR, GENERAL MANAGER, INFRASTRUCTURE AND AMENITY

PREPARED BY: DAVID HEHIR, FORESHORE COORDINATOR
ANTHONY TRAILL, MANAGER OPEN SPACE AND RECREATION

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To advise Council on actions taken in response to its 21 March 2018 resolution in relation to new/altered alcohol restrictions, investigation of a Christmas season event on St Kilda foreshore and outline the 2018/19 Visitor and Summer Management Program.

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 2.1 The foreshore is enjoyed by residents and is a tourist destination. The limited alcohol restrictions and the Visitor and Summer Management Program are intended to assist Council to achieve its vision 'we are beautiful, liveable, caring, inviting, bold, real' by balancing the ability of people to enjoy our foreshore and City, while protecting public safety.
- 2.2 Our foreshore and public spaces are easily accessible and attractive locations for people to congregate in large numbers and consume alcohol. There have been incidents requiring large clean-up operations, closure of parks and beaches, harm to people and damage to property as a result of alcohol gatherings.
- 2.3 This report responds to Council's previous visitor and summer management resolutions including investigation of a Christmas season event, and details Council's extensive budgetary and service investments for the coming 2018/19 peak season.

3. RECOMMENDATION

That Council:

- 3.1 Notes the extensive planning, resources and financial investments to deliver the 2018/19 Visitor and Summer Management Program for people to enjoy our foreshore and City while protecting public safety.
- 3.2 Notes a Christmas season event was investigated with a preference to maintain free public access to the area for all.
- 3.3 Acknowledge the role backpacker, short-term accommodation establishments and traders have in assisting to promote the area as a safe and inviting destination for tourism.
- 3.4 Notes that Officers will hold another meeting to ensure backpacker and short-term accommodation establishments understand the role they can play in promoting the area and ensuring their guests understand alcohol restrictions, appropriate behaviours and educational approach to glass and litter impacts.



4. KEY POINTS/ISSUES

4.1 History

- 4.1.1 Council implements an extensive Visitor and Summer Management Program every year for people to enjoy our foreshore and City while protecting public safety.
- 4.1.2 Since it originated in 2012, Council's Visitor and Summer Management Program has grown in size and complexity. In 2012 the budget was \$26,000 and the primary focus was on coordinating a New Year's Eve operation. In 2017-18 the budget was \$442,000, which included additional local laws, waste education rangers, New Year's Eve response, Australia Day response, proactive communications, illegal camping management, litter picking service, additional waste services and public toilet cleaning. In 2018-19 the budget is \$1.13 million.
- 4.1.3 Previous summer seasons have presented significant challenges including increased visitation, increased frequency and severity of weather events and large unplanned gatherings. This resulted in public safety risks, anti-social behaviour, litter, waste, reduced amenity and impacts from alcohol consumption.
- 4.1.4 Council, at its meeting on 21 March 2018, resolved the following in relation to alcohol on the foreshore:

4.2 That Council:

- 4.2.1 *Amends the City of Port Phillip Procedures and Protocols Manual to designate alcohol restrictions along the St Kilda foreshore precinct from 12.01 am on 24 December to 11.59 pm on 26 December inclusive. The St Kilda foreshore is defined as waters and Crown land within the municipality boundary up to the adjoining road, and includes all beaches, reserves and parkland from Langridge Street to Wordsworth Street, St Kilda.*
- 4.2.2 *Amends the City of Port Phillip Procedures and Protocols Manual section 54.1(d), to designate alcohol restrictions throughout the municipal district, in any year, on road and Council land, between the hours of 8 pm and 12 pm on the following day.*
- 4.2.3 *Amends the City of Port Phillip Procedures and Protocols Manual section 54.1(f), to designate alcohol restrictions apply on Australia Day within the whole of the municipality between the hours of 12.01 am and 11.59 pm.*
- 4.2.4 *Notes that Council is implementing various additional strategies in combination with alcohol restrictions, including investigating a Christmas season event, delivering a backpacker establishment forum, further developing strategies that minimise harm to vulnerable people and considers an increased budget and summer management services levels as part of the 2018/19 budget process.*



- 4.3 Subsequent to this resolution, Officers have held a backpacker establishment forum; investigated a Christmas season event and Council has allocated additional budgetary investments for 2018/19. This includes an increase of \$596,864 in capital (\$190,000) and operational costs (\$406,864).
- 4.4 Plan for 2018/19 Visitor and Summer season.
- 4.4.1 In preparing for the upcoming Visitor and summer season officers are developing an updated New Year's Eve (NYE) and Visitor and Summer Management Program that will seek to:
- Ensure residential amenity values are protected whilst encouraging visitation and tourism.
 - Maximise safety of residents and visitors using Council's public open spaces during the visitor and summer season including Christmas period, NYE and Australia Day.
 - Ensure Council Services are coordinated and prepared to facilitate the return of public open space to normal activity in a safe and clean condition throughout the visitor and summer season.
 - Support businesses to operate consistently with legislation and local laws.
- 4.5 Both the NYE and the Visitor/Summer Management and Operational Plans:
- 4.5.1 Provide a coordinated response across the municipality.
- 4.5.2 Provide a comprehensive action plans for the visitor and summer season, Christmas, NYE and Australia Day.
- 4.5.3 Details all known risks and requirements for Council responses during summer.
- 4.5.4 Provides guidelines for the delivery of services during summer.
- 4.5.5 Facilitate the clean-up public spaces throughout the visitor and summer season and following Christmas, NYE and Australia Day.
- 4.6 Increased 'levels of service' in 2018/19**
- 4.7 In addition to the increases in the 'levels of service' set in previous years, the 2018-19 additional budgetary and service level investments will include:
- 4.7.1 Updated foreshore beach signs (200+ signs) and new reserve/park signs (estimated 50 signs) advertising the updated alcohol and glass local laws.
- 4.7.2 Local law pool vehicle, patrol buggy and beach and street services pool vehicle from existing fleet capital budget to increase coverage and on-site presence throughout the day and weekends.



- 4.7.3 Additional two part-time Local Laws Officers for the Glass Ban (Nov- March, roving patrols) including local laws overtime allowances covering weekends and public holidays.
- 4.7.4 Additional two part-time Waste Education Rangers will also provide an on-site presence.
- 4.7.5 Distribution of communication materials directly to backpacker establishments, traders and liquor outlets.
- 4.7.6 Increased social media monitoring to inform planning and resourcing for peak season and peak days.
- 4.7.7 Additional two litter pickers x 4hrs/day for 50 days.
- 4.7.8 Provisional clean response (allowance one major clean).
- 4.7.9 Service enhancements with improved visitation data collection via a time-lapse camera to inform education and manual litter collection resourcing. This would include crowd counts of South Beach Reserve and St Kilda Beach.
- 4.7.10 Parks Reserve Cleaning including Litter pickers foreshore sites, O'Donnell Gardens and Slopes. Fri, Sat & Sun, 1 Nov- 30 April plus 26, 27, 31 Dec, 1, 26 Jan. Littering pickers Australia Day Botanic Gardens 26 Jan.
- 4.7.11 Litter pickers foreshore sites, O'Donnell Gardens and Slopes when daytime temps 30oC or nights 20oC.
- 4.7.12 Post event clean-up and reinstatement (TBC on hours required/amount to be reinstated post event).
- 4.7.13 Additional roadside variable message signs (VMS) for glass restrictions.
- 4.7.14 Development of extensive communication including updated banners, posters, fliers, postcards, newspaper advertisements, media releases, website content, letters to traders and liquor outlets, staff and contractor briefings, event launch and ongoing geo-targeted social media posts to visitors.

5. CONSULTATION AND STAKEHOLDERS

5.1 Backpacker Establishment Forum

- 5.1.1 On the 26 March 2018 a forum was held for backpacker establishments and short-term accommodation providers regarding visitor and summer management in the municipality.
- 5.1.2 A wide variety of experiences, priorities and concerns were put forward. A high priority for many attendees was the promotion of stories about the city and its attractions especially via social media.



- 5.1.3 The attendees considered the reputation of the foreshore as a safe and inviting destination vital to tourism. There was specific interest in an organised event for backpackers particularly during the Christmas season.
- 5.1.4 Following the forum officers provided a copy of the material presented on the day including minutes of the discussions and weblinks to the: '*don't waste your summer*' videos on litter, alcohol and glass; explore Port Phillip campaign, the foreshore activities and beach cleaning schedule and public health information - sharps (syringes).
- 5.1.5 A further forum is proposed before the summer peak for backpacker and short-term accommodation establishments.

5.2 Christmas Season Event

- 5.2.1 Officers investigated a St Kilda Christmas season event to deal with the unplanned events occurring at South Beach reserve and the associated risk issues and costs.
- 5.2.2 Consultation as part of the March 21, 2018 Report found 54% of respondents were in favour of programming permitted event on public holidays in which 75% of the respondents lived in the City of Port Phillip.
- 5.2.3 Considerations with a permitted Christmas Season event included:
- Reduced access to the park for a minimum of three days due to set/pack up days i.e. Christmas Eve until after Boxing Day.
 - St Kilda is a popular destination on Christmas Day, and South Beach Reserve is heavily used during this period by both tourists and locals. Reducing free access to the reserve during this time may impact these people.
 - Residents have always enjoyed an event free Christmas period while noise management plan will be in place, any level of noise from the events may be considered a significant impact by residents on traditional days of rest.
 - Fencing South Beach may move unplanned gatherings to alternate locations such as St Kilda Beach, O'Donnell or Catani Gardens.
- 5.2.4 It was determined introducing an event this year that would impact community access to a popular residential space was not appropriate with our new restrictions for Christmas Day introduced this year.
- 5.2.5 The changed alcohol restrictions will assist in mitigating the risks of unplanned events within the period between Christmas Eve and Boxing Day with the assistance of Victoria Police.
- 5.2.6 A Christmas Day event can be a future consideration in future years if a high-quality event provider with a unique and inclusive event could be attracted through our expression of interest process for outdoor events. The event



concept would need to have plans to limit the impact on residential and visitor amenity.

5.3 Strategies that minimise harm to vulnerable people

- 5.3.1 Councils Health and Wellbeing Plan highlights that reduction of alcohol related harm is a Council priority. By reducing public space where alcohol is permitted, overall consumption will be reduced and improve public health.
- 5.3.2 Victoria Police has made a commitment to exercise powers of discretion to request tip-out and issues warnings with our community during alcohol restrictions on our foreshore and streets.
- 5.3.3 Since December 2017 the State Department of Justice and Regulation has introduced simpler ways for people to deal with fines. This includes increased options for vulnerable and disadvantaged people to work off or wave fines under the 'work and development permit' scheme.
- 5.3.4 Councils protocol for assisting people who are sleeping rough recognises 'all people have a right to be in public spaces and live in a safe environment'. There is no enforcement requirement with respect to homelessness itself. Council Local Laws and Housing and Homelessness Service will check a site if concerns are raised about a person sleeping rough. Council staff will also contact local outreach services who will try to engage with the person to offer assistance while Council continues to manage the amenity of a site. Enforcement applies when a law has been breached and it becomes a Police issue.
- 5.3.5 At the 1 August 2018 meeting Council resolved to *'dedicate resources for project management and commits to the maintenance of the system to meet the requirements of the grant endorsed by Council on 16 May 2108 for \$132,000 from the Victorian Government to fund the design and installation of CCTV on the St Kilda Foreshore'*.
- 5.3.6 The foreshore CCTV is estimated to be operational before the upcoming Summer.

6. LEGAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 A number of legal and risk implications were considered in previous reports to Council on 7 February, 21 March and 16 May 2018 in relation to:
- 6.2 Risks arising from large unauthorised group gatherings involving consumption/excessive consumption of alcohol.
- 6.3 A changed security environment for "crowded places".
- 6.4 Reputational damage – to the foreshore as a destination, and to Council.
- 6.5 Council is responsible for setting local laws to respond to amenity and risk issues in its role as land manager of public spaces.



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- 6.6 Council is responsible for the safety and well-being of its staff and contractors. Council cannot undertake truck, staff or contractor operations in crowds or unsafe situations and avoid escalating anti-social behaviour and potential harm to staff and public. Any reactive and major clean operations will be undertaken after the event peak and typically between 4am to 9am to ensure the safety of staff, contractors and public from heavy vehicle movements.
- 6.7 In the event of the environment being unsafe for staff, staff will be removed and only return when it is safe to do so.

7. FINANCIAL IMPACT

- 7.1 In 2018-19 the approved budget investment is \$1.13 million. This includes an increase of \$596,864 in capital (\$190,000) and operational costs (\$406,864).

8. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 8.1 A high volume of litter waste generated on the foreshore is from alcohol related products.
- 8.2 The draft Council Waste Strategy seeks to reduce the amount of waste created, reuse and recycle as much as possible and treat what is left over in the most sustainable way, within the context of an increasing population and significant recycling and landfill industry changes.

9. COMMUNITY IMPACT

- 9.1 Community impacts and drivers for expansion of the Visitor and Summer Management Program includes: anti-social behaviour and recorded crime offences associated with alcohol consumption/misuse; ongoing water safety risk from combining alcohol consumption and a beach/water environment; impacts on residents' amenity, traders and vulnerable people.
- 9.2 Council's Visitor and Summer Management program seeks to minimise negative impacts and harm during warm weather and summer along the foreshore and Council's inland reserves.

10. ALIGNMENT TO COUNCIL PLAN AND COUNCIL POLICY

- 10.1 Direction - We embrace difference, and people belong
- 1.1 - A safe and active community with strong social connection. Priority to collaborate with partners to understand and minimise the harms associated with alcohol and drug use.
- 10.2 Direction - We have smart solutions for a sustainable future
- 3.5 - A sustained reduction in waste. Work towards outcome by managing waste collection to improve amenity and achieve cleaner streets, public spaces and foreshore areas.



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- 10.3 Direction - We are growing and keeping our character
 - 4.1 – Liveability in a high density City. Work towards outcome by designing, activating and managing public spaces that are safe and inviting places for people to enjoy.
- 10.4 Direction - We thrive by harnessing creativity
 - 5.2 – A prosperous City that connects and grows business. Work towards outcome by partnering to promote Port Phillip as a visitor destination in a way that respects local amenity.

11. IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

11.1 TIMELINE

- 11.1.1 Monthly NYE and Summer management planning meetings with State Agencies between August 2018 and March 2019.
- 11.1.2 Whilst the planning has been occurring throughout the year the majority of the increased operational 'service levels' will occur between 1 November and 3 April.
- 11.1.3 An overview of the 'service levels' for the Visitor and Summer Management program are detailed in Attachment One. This includes local laws, waste education rangers, New Year's Eve response, Australia Day response, park and reserve cleaning, beach cleaning, waste management, public toilet cleaning, BBQ cleaning, parking enforcement, communication and media plan.

11.2 COMMUNICATION

- 11.2.2 Updated signage along the beaches and adjoining reserves the length of the foreshore.
- 11.2.3 Development of extensive communication including updated banners, posters, fliers, postcards, newspaper advertisements, media releases, website content, letters to traders and liquor outlets, staff and contractor briefings, event launch and ongoing geo-targeted social media posts to visitors.
- 11.2.5 Waste Education Rangers will also provide an on-site presence and distribute fliers directly to backpacker establishments, traders and liquor outlets.

12. OFFICER DIRECT OR INDIRECT INTEREST

- 12.1 No officers involved in the preparation of this report have any direct or indirect interest in the matter.

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ATTACHMENTS 1. Visitor and Summer Management Program Overview 2018/19