

<p><b>ORDINARY MEETING</b></p> <p><b>23 FEBRUARY 2022</b></p>	<p><b>8</b></p>
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**HANDPICKED EVENTS & MARKETING PTY LTD – SOUNDS BOUT RIGHT  
- FUNDING APPLICATION**

Holly Barker | 52/1/16 | #6887939

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**That Council:**

- 1. Enters into a funding agreement (2022) with Hand Picked Events & Marketing Pty Ltd in relation to the Sounds Bout Right music festival 2022; and**
- 2. Delegates authority to the Chief Executive Officer in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2009* to finalise any and all matters relating to the above.**

**INTERESTED PARTIES:**

- Hand Picked Events & Marketing Pty Ltd (Hand Picked Events)
- Tourism Tropical North Queensland (TTNQ)

*Note: The identification of interested parties is provided on a best endeavours basis by Council Officers and may not be exhaustive.*

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

Hand Picked Events have submitted a funding application requesting \$50,000 ex GST cash for the Sounds Bout Right music festival to be held in Cairns on 1 May 2022.

Requests for Council support for events from private sector entities are considered in accordance with Council's procurement policies. Council Officers have assessed the application against the relevant assessment criteria for Economic Events.

The event performed to a reasonable level in this assessment, aligning with Council's strategy for events that deliver strong economic impact to the region and foster community pride. Council Officers note the short lead time to deliver the event and funding deliverables.

Based on this assessment, it is recommended that Council enters into a one-year funding agreement with Hand Picked Events to a total value of \$25,000 cash (ex GST) to support Sounds Bout Right in 2022.

**BACKGROUND:**

Sounds Bout Right is a new music festival for Cairns aimed at the youth market. The event will be held at the Cairns Showgrounds and takes place on 1 May 2022. Artists performing include What So Not, Boy & Bear, and The Veronica's.

The organisers (Hand Picked Events), have previously run The Grass is Greener concerts in Cairns since 2016, with the 2021 event delivering 6,464 attendees and \$1.34M in total direct and incremental expenditure for Cairns. Council entered a funding agreement with Hand Picked Events to deliver The Grass is Greener in 2019, 2021 and 2022 (2020 cancelled).

Sounds Bout Right was previously held on the Gold Coast in January 2021. The event attracted 3,474 attendees despite COVID-19 lockdowns and border closures at the time.

The application has been assessed by Council Officers and this report provides an overview of that assessment and associated recommendations.

**COMMENT:**

Requests for Council support for events from private sector entities are considered in accordance with Council's procurement policies. In considering applications for support, the assessment criteria set out in the Economic Event Partnerships stream of Council's Community Grant Policy (which applies to community-based groups and organisations rather than private sector entities) are applied.

The objective of the Economic Event Partnerships funding is to nurture and grow a diverse portfolio of events that will drive economic development, raise the profile of the Cairns region nationally and internationally, generate positive social and cultural benefits and inspire the residents of Cairns. The assessment criteria has a strong focus (weighting) on the economic benefits that an event is expected to deliver through visitation and destination profile. A panel of two Council Officers has undertaken an assessment of the application, which scored 3.1 out of 5.

Sounds Bout Right is expected to attract 5,000 people, with 27% of event attendees forecast to be out of region visitors who are expected to stay for approximately three nights in the region.

The primary focus of the Economic Event Partnerships funding is to support events which deliver a positive economic impact for Cairns. Sounds Bout Right is expected to deliver:

- 3,993 hotel nights generated by 1,331 out of region visitors;
- visitor expenditure of \$746,691;
- an increase of employment equivalent to 10 annual local jobs located in the Cairns region; and
- a total direct and indirect impact on the Cairns economy of \$1.17M.

The event has a digital marketing plan, that includes destination promotions through their social media channels. They also work with ambassadors and influencers to further the reach of these promotions.

Sounds Bout Right will engage with the local community via offering local businesses the opportunity to have free market stalls at the event. In addition, the event will arrange a letterbox drop within a 1.5km radius of the event to advise the community of the event and any potential noise impacts.

Tourism Tropical North Queensland (TTNQ) has been consulted regarding the event. TTNQ have indicated the event will be positively received in the region and are happy that Council can support events of this nature. However, they can not offer direct support to the event given the short lead time and ongoing conversations with Hand Picked Events regarding the marketing deliverables for The Grass is Greener 2021.

Based on the application assessment, Council Officers recommend that Council enter into a one-year funding agreement with Hand Picked Events to the value of \$25,000 cash (ex GST) to support the Sounds Bout Right 2022 music festival.

### **OPTIONS**

#### Option 1 (Recommended):

That Council:

1. Enters into a funding agreement (2022) with Hand Picked Events & Marketing Pty Ltd in relation to the Sounds Bout Right music festival 2022; and
2. Delegates authority to the Chief Executive Officer in accordance with the *Local Government Act 2009* to finalise any and all matters relating to the above.

#### Option 2:

That Council **does not** support the Economic Event Partnership grant application from Hand Picked Events & Marketing Pty Ltd at this time.

### **CONSIDERATIONS:**

#### Risk Management:

COVID-19 and resulting government restrictions on gatherings of all sizes has caused cancellations of many events that have been booked in the region. Additionally, COVID-19 restrictions have increased the costs to deliver events, activities and projects in the region as organisers comply with COVID-19 requirements. The applicant has advised Council that they are complying with relevant COVID-19 requirements. Currently there are no restrictions on attendee numbers for outdoor events.

Council Finance and the Local Economy:

The estimated economic benefits the event will deliver are discussed in the body of this report.

Budget remains in the 2021/22 operational budget (Economic Events) for the payment of \$25,000 cash (ex GST) for the 2022 event. Although no allowance was made for the funding of this specific event in Council's 2021/22 operating budget, the cancellation of other events means there is capacity to support the event and remain within Council's overall 2021/22 operating budget allowance for economic events.

Policy:

Council's Procurement Policy has been considered in the assessment of the application.

**CONSULTATION:**

Tourism Tropical North Queensland were consulted during the assessment of the funding application.



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