

Coffs Harbour Events Strategy 2020

Attachment 1

June 2016



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preface

In 2009 Council engaged William O'Toole - Events Development Specialist, to create the *Coffs Harbour City Council Events Strategy 2009* (2009 ES). This strategy was developed following significant consultation with the local event industry (organisers, suppliers, venue owners and businesses) and Council (Councillors and staff), as well as review research and event strategies from various towns, cities and regions of Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom. The strategy was adopted by Council on 17 December 2009.

In addition, a report on Major Events Funding was adopted by Council on 12 April 2012. This report confirmed a funding allocation to pursue major events as a driver for economic growth and community benefits, as well as the process by which this funding could be allocated.

In 2014, Council commenced a three year Transformation to Sustainability (T2S) program to set the organisation on a path to financial sustainability. As a result, the City Prosperity Group was formed in 2015 within the Sustainable Communities Directorate. It includes two sections: Stadium & Major Events (S&ME), and Industry & Destination Development (I&DD).

The S&ME Section is responsible for delivering specific customer outcomes as well as results for the community, such as: championing Coffs Harbour as a premier regional events destination, being recognised as a sector leader, enriching the community through events, having a positive impact on the local economy, delivering excellence in Stadium management, encouraging increased sporting participation and making Coffs Harbour an event-friendly city.

One of the first priorities of the City Prosperity Group was to align existing and current organisational strategies, therefore a complete review and refresh of the 2009 ES has been undertaken.

The *Coffs Harbour Events Strategy 2020* is based on the foundation of the 2009 ES, and credit is given to the original author William O'Toole as many of the key issues and strategic directions remain largely valid in today's market, and aspects from the 2009 ES will appear within the *Coffs Harbour Events Strategy 2020*.

Additions have also been included to reflect the current status of the event industry, Council's event portfolio and its new focus on leadership in the event space including capacity building. The *Coffs Harbour Events Strategy 2020* has also incorporated relevant aspects from the following Council Strategies and documents:

- The 2030 Community Strategic Plan
- The Coffs Coast Strategic Tourism Plan 2020
- The Coffs Harbour Sports Facility Plan 2016
- The Economic Development Strategy (Live Love Coffs) 2014 - 2017
- The 2011 International Stadium Business Plan
- The Cultural Plan 2013 – 2016

This strategy has included new research from other city events strategies, and involved consultation with the Council Group Leadership Team and external stakeholders including:

- Dr Dave Arthur (author of the 2015 Coffs Harbour Centre of Excellence Feasibility Study)
- Dr Meredith Wray (co-author of The Coffs Coast Strategic Tourism Plan 2020)
- William O'Toole (author of *Coffs Harbour City Council Events Strategy 2009*)

executive summary

Coffs Harbour is highly valued as a place to live, and is a popular visitor destination (approximately 1.6 million annually), and continues to attract people seeking a lifestyle change or place to retire. The expected population for the Local Government Area is 100,000 by the year 2030*.

Events play a significant role in attracting large volumes of new and repeat visitors to Coffs Harbour, as well as providing a vibrant backdrop of activity, entertainment, education and wellbeing for residents of the broader Coffs Coast community. To date, not all events in the region are measured, however it is estimated that events at the C.ex Coffs International Stadium alone deliver more than \$30 million back to the community every year**.

Council, through its City Prosperity Group: Stadium & Major Events team, now has a dedicated and holistic focus on events (Stadium Events, Sport Events, Major Events, Civic Events, as well as other events including Business Events, Community Events and so on), for Council and the Coffs Coast. This Group and Section has full ownership and accountability for the preparation and delivery of this strategy.

As identified in the *Coffs Coast Strategic Tourism Plan 2020*, (see Appendix 2 for exact excerpt) Council aims to position the Coffs Coast as the leading regional destination for sports, tourism, events and innovative festivals that support the Coffs Coast brand and positioning to 2020.

To achieve this, the following strategic objectives were identified and used to help shape the direction of this strategy:

- Position Coffs Harbour as the leading regional sports tourism destination to 2020

- Position the Coffs Coast as the foremost regional destination for vibrant and exciting events and festivals to 2020
- Encourage event and festival visitors to stay longer, spend more and enjoy the diversity of visitor experience on the Coffs Coast
- Support community based organisers to manage and deliver viable and sustainable events and festivals
- Develop a coordinated marketing strategy for events and festivals
- Develop a strategic approach to streamline and consolidate event and festival planning across the Coffs Coast, and promote best practice for internally and externally run events.

Successful festivals and most other events cannot be run on a nine-to-five basis. They are projects that have a high input of creativity, innovation and decision making, and a 'one size fits all' events strategy simply will not work.

One of the aims of this strategy is to support this level of enthusiasm and creativity within the community, to enable events to launch, develop, grow and succeed.

By increasing the capacity of the region to hold events, and increasing the competency of the people to run events, it in turn drives more visitation, tourism and investment, delivering a consistent and continually increasing economic and socio-cultural value back to the community.

* Regional Development Australia (Mid North Coast) website 2015, and Statistical Overview 2013

** Economic benefit calculated by Destination NSW domestic overnight spend per visitor to the Coffs Harbour Region

Putting it simply, the purpose of the Coffs Harbour 2020 Events Strategy is to:

- Attract, grow and retain events in Coffs Harbour
- Generate economic, social and community benefits
- Provide expertise, frameworks and support for others to run successful events

why does Coffs Harbour need an events strategy?

The *Coffs Harbour Events Strategy 2020* reflects the needs of a diverse and growing regional city.

Coffs Harbour is highly valued as a place to live and a popular holiday destination, and continues to attract people seeking a lifestyle change or place to retire. The expected population for the Local Government Area is 100,000 by the year 2030*. The annual tourism visitation is estimated at approximately 1.6 million**.

Coffs Harbour is the major city within the Coffs Coast region and provides event visitors a traditional summer holiday destination with a mild sub-tropical climate, stunning beaches and a friendly atmosphere. Accommodation is plentiful with more than 72 hotel options and 20+ caravan park and camping grounds providing more than 5,000 beds***.

Coffs Harbour is known regionally for the diversity of the events it hosts. These range from the Coates Hire Rally Australia, the Touch Football World Cup, to the Multicultural Harmony Day Festival and an array of events and festivals of all shapes and sizes in between.

We like to be seen and considered as a vibrant, forward-thinking city dedicated to driving economic outcomes through year-round events. In 2015 Coffs Harbour won a globally-acclaimed **International Festivals and Events Association (IFEA) World Festival and Event City Award**, gaining recognition alongside major cities around the world. This strategy aims to cement that recognition and further grow our reputation as a premier event friendly regional city.

Competition for events has increased significantly, particularly as local government areas (LGAs) understand the importance and magnitude of the economic impact that the right events can provide the community. In addition, large scale event promoters are also aware of the value their events can bring to a region or city, and therefore demand large hosting fees.

While Coffs Harbour has a relatively healthy event calendar, there is a somewhat disjointed approach in attracting, running and collaborating on events between Council, business and community stakeholders, as well as promoting events to relevant audiences.

Having an events strategy provides clear direction on the events that Council should be seeking to support and attract, while identifying tools and measures to determine the level of support for the large variety of events presented to Council each year.



* *Regional Development Australia (Mid North Coast) website 2015, and Statistical Overview 2013*

** *Coffs Coast Strategic Tourism Plan 2020*

*** *Coffs Coast Visitor Information Centre, 2015 Room and Bed Statistics*

strategic planning approach

The strategic planning approach discussed in the 2009 ES remains largely valid today, and is reiterated below. With the recent implementation of the new City Prosperity Group structure, Council is now well placed to deliver on this approach:

Developing a successful event portfolio is a complex task and cannot be undertaken in a one - purpose strategy. In particular, a strategy that is imposed on the event community will not work. Successful regional events such as the Tamworth Country Music Festival, Tropfest, Sculpture by the Sea, all the way up to the Olympics, were started by enthusiasts. These events grew due to the unfailing passion of the organisers and their foresight to meet ever changing visitor expectations over time to create and deliver memorable event experiences.

One of the aims of this strategy is to support this enthusiasm to enable events to launch, develop, grow and succeed.

Successful festivals and most other events cannot be run on a nine-to-five basis. They are projects that have a high input of creativity, innovation, flexibility and decision making. Innovation is also essential to marketing and sponsorship. A seemingly simple community festival, such as the Curry Festival, is in fact, a complex recipe of decisions, goodwill and commitment to succeed. It cannot be captured by an imposed bureaucratic process. The *Coffs Harbour Events Strategy 2020* must support these events without diminishing the passion and creativity necessary for event success.

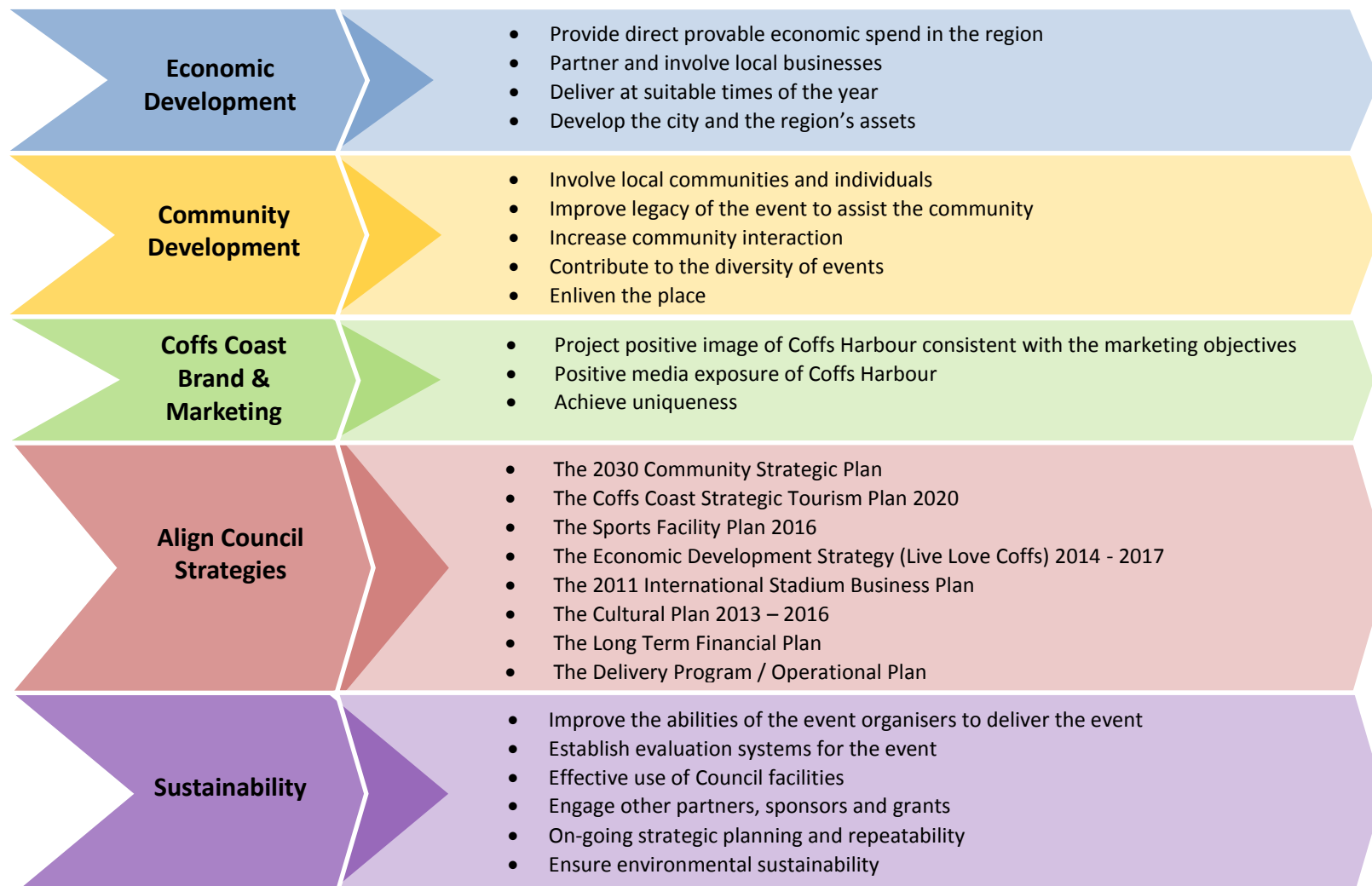
The conditions necessary for success in the implementation of an events strategy are:

- 1. Council and Councillors' support.** The parts of Council that provide the supporting functions to events need to understand and appreciate the importance of events to the region. Events and an event program requires a 'chain' of support and if one link is broken then the event as a whole cannot be of benefit to the region.
- 2. The Strategy must be incremental in approach.** There is no big solution. Events are complex involving a host of stakeholders. To expect any major change to occur is unrealistic. Small changes have been made and more are already underway and this strategy will guide Council through many more.
- 3. The Strategy must include recommendations for ongoing training, for the event organisers and the staff at Council who are involved in events.** Competency must be raised at the same time as events are developed. This must be shared with other stakeholders through capacity building.
- 4. The Strategy depends on the experience, skills and attitude of the Council's events staff.** Events are a specialised form of a project. They require project portfolio skills, risk and procurement management to create a viable program, as well as a great deal of 'people skills'. Council now have the right mix of practical event experience and knowledge of the industry with a passion for events and best practice.

By increasing the capacity of the region to hold events, increasing the competency of the people to run events, it in turn drives more visitation, tourism and investment, delivering a consistent and continually increasing economic and socio-cultural value back to the community

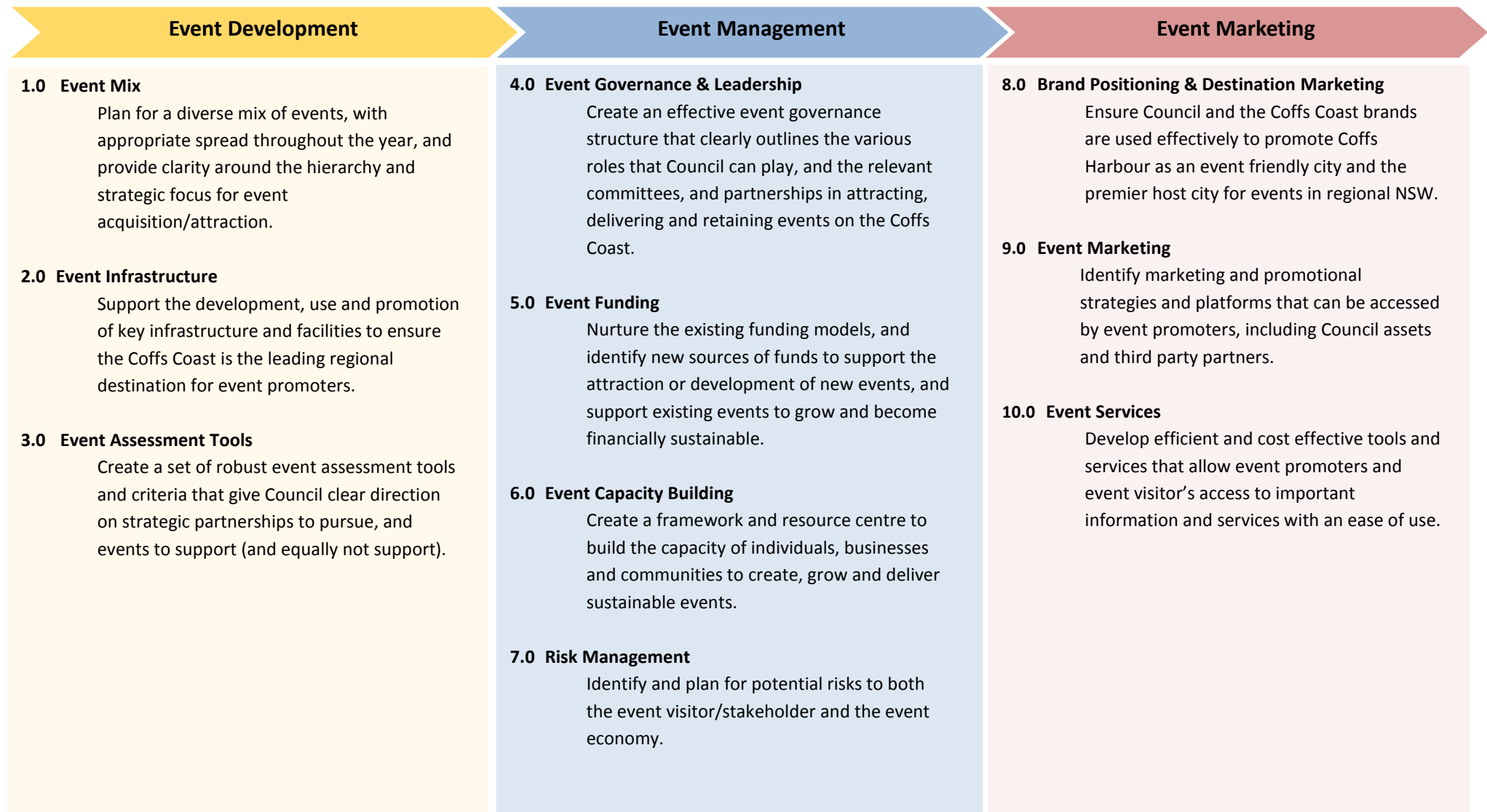
strategic focus & outcomes

To effectively develop a diverse event program that meets the needs of the people of Coffs Harbour and the objectives of Council, the following strategic focus and outcomes have been identified. Four of the five focus areas remain valid from the 2009 ES and have been modified to suit current market conditions, and a new focus area has been introduced; Align Council Strategies.



key directions

An effective events strategy must have clear direction and outcomes in order for it to be implemented successfully. Council has identified the following key directions that are reviewed in depth throughout this document, resulting in measurable strategic actions.



event development

1.0 Event Mix

Plan for a diverse mix of events, with appropriate spread throughout the year, and provide clarity around the hierarchy and strategic focus for event acquisition/attraction.

To effectively develop a diverse event program that meets the needs of the people of Coffs Harbour and the objectives of the Council, it is vital that Council aligns support of events that fit with its strategic directions.

While every event is important to each event promoter, Council needs to maintain an objective view on which events do, and potentially can, deliver specific outcomes and benefits back to the community, and adjust its level of support accordingly. A diverse mix of events in the region recognises that a greater number of outcomes can be delivered.

There is no such thing as a perfect Event Mix for the Coffs Harbour LGA. This mix will be a continually evolving and developing program that is fluid to meet the needs of an ever changing and growing community. Due to a complex matrix of measures, indicators and variables, Council has deliberately simplified the strategic direction of the Event Mix to fall within three simple considerations:

- **Timing:** Ensure events are spread as consistently as possible over a calendar year, minimising down time, and maximising low periods.
- **Event Types:** Ensure a consistent and healthy balance of major events (attracting high interstate and overnight visitation) right through to community events (that engage and involve community participation), and everything in between, occur every year.
- **Event Categories:** Strive for a strong cross section of events that appeal to broad and varied audiences.

The below table takes a more in-depth look at the three ingredients that make up the Event Mix:

1. Timing

Timing is a critical consideration for Council in determining events to attract and support on the Coffs Coast. Not only must each event proposition be assessed on its own merits, consideration needs to be given to community amenity and industry conditions.

For example, traditionally the downtime in events on the Coffs Coasts exists in April, May and June, and to a lesser extent December and January. From a tourism perspective, December and January is high season, therefore visitation to the area is already high, and accommodation availability low, so priority to attract events would not be December / January, versus the low season of April, May and June.

See Appendix 1 for the current 2016 calendar of event

2. Event Types

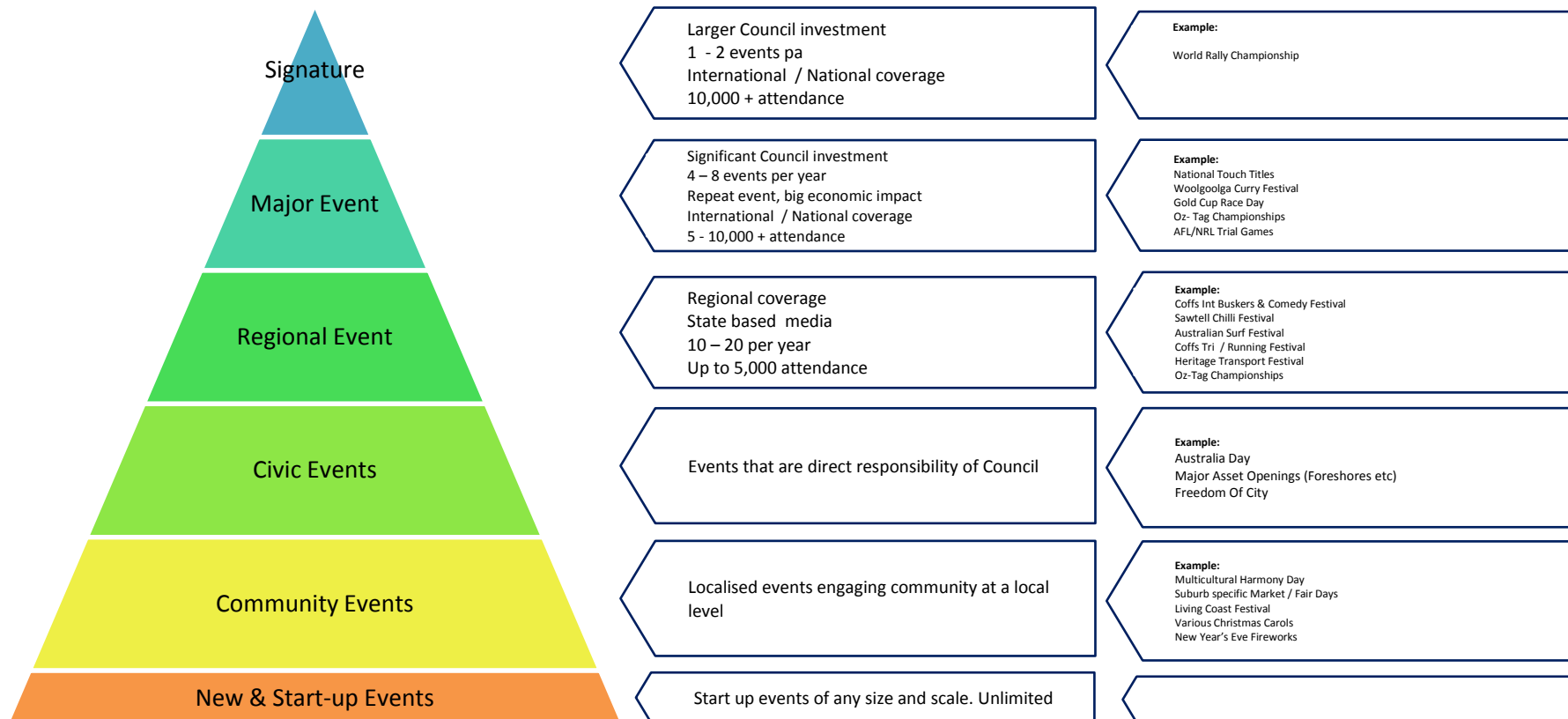
Creating Event Types will assist in identifying the size and scale of an event, regardless of whether it is a spectator event or participant event. Ultimately this creates a hierarchy of priority for Council support and focus.

It must be noted that some events may not fit directly into these definitions.

Signature Events	Signature Events become so identified with the character and culture of an area, the event name becomes synonymous with the place or region. They have the potential to attract high tourism levels from people outside the region including interstate and international visitors. Generally Signature Events will occur annually or biannually, and will attract significant media exposure.
Major Events	A major event is typically a repeat event that attracts or has the potential to attract, significant visitor numbers, media coverage and creates economic benefit. They can develop from community events as a result of their growth.
Regional Events	A regional event is an event that attracts or has potential to attract large to significant visitor numbers, drawing largely from the immediate area and from within the state. They have the potential to develop into major events over time.
Community or Local Events	A community event is directed at the local community with a local audience. It is staged for reasons of community participation and enjoyment. They can attract large and small audiences.
Civic Events	A Civic Event is a direct Council function, which involves guests of honour and invited guests. Generally local governments will deliver many of the same Civic Events such as Australia Day and Citizenship Ceremonies, as well as unique civic functions.
New & start-up Events	New and Start-Up events can be of any size and scale, whereby Council can determine anticipated benefits and provide relevant level of resource, expertise and potentially funding.

In utilising these Event Types, an Event Pyramid is a helpful tool to provide strategic direction on the volume and different types of events that Council wants to attract and retain.

The below diagram illustrates both how this is applied, and an example of how some of the current Coffs Harbour events would be represented.



3. Event Categories

There are an infinite number of events and event categories that exist in Australia, however in ensuring that Coffs Harbour continues to thrive around its core values, 4 key event categories have been identified to provide a structure and framework around the type of events that Council wishes to attract, retain and support.

Sport	There is no doubting that Coffs Harbour is an active community. With the geographical diversity of mountains to the sea, the ideal climate, and the range of infrastructure that the Coffs Coast provides, outdoor pursuits and sports are highly attractive for both residents and visiting events. Due to assets like the C.ex Coffs International Stadium and the Coffs Coast Sport & Leisure Parks Precinct, Coffs Harbour is able to host major sport events that other regional areas cannot cater for. This is a category in which Coffs Harbour is strong and proud of, and will continue to maintain and grow.
Culture Music and Arts	The Coffs Coast is proud of and enjoys its cultural diversity. From major multicultural events, festivals, local markets and music, it is supported by libraries, the Jetty Theatre, Botanic Gardens, Regional Museum, Regional Galleries, the Conservatorium of Music as well as a range of open spaces and unique boutique venues. Whilst there are pockets of activity in these areas throughout the Coffs Coast, there is also great opportunity for future growth in this event space.
Business Learning and Knowledge	Between the Coffs Harbour Education Campus consisting of Southern Cross University, North Coast TAFE and Coffs Harbour Senior College, plus Bishop Druitt College as well as professional conference facilities of Opal Cove Resort and Pacific Bay Resort, there is a natural alignment to encourage learning and business events on the Coffs Coast.
Lifestyle, Wellbeing and Entertainment	Coffs Harbour is highly valued as a place to live and a popular holiday destination, and continues to attract people seeking a lifestyle change or place to retire. Events that enhance this lifestyle experience and contribute to the values of being a great place to live are highly desirable.

Sporting Events:

From a sports perspective, to date Council has formed important strategic partnerships with national and state based bodies of Cricket, AFL, and the FFA. These partnerships have been sought and nurtured due to each Sport Bodies commitment to increase their regional focus (and therefore continual support of our region generally and investment in our community and amenities).

In addition, many of the major events currently supported by Council are high volume participation events – such as national and state OzTag and Touch Football tournaments. These events bring a high volume of players to the region for extended periods. Junior sporting events generally deliver 2.5 - 3 times the economic value and benefit to the region when compared to senior competition, due to accompanying family members. This strategic direction and focus on junior participant events will continue.

Signature Events:

As identified in the event pyramid on page 12, there is scope for more events to be added to the Coffs Coast event portfolio. The WRC Coates Hire Rally Australia currently sits in the Signature Event category due to the size and scale of the event, its international exposure, and the value it delivers to the Coffs Coast region.

Coffs Harbour has many amazing, natural, and infrastructural assets that could be used to assist in the development of the Signature Event category. Whilst the opportunity to create an event is exciting and can tie in with other existing Council strategies (such as Industry and Destination Development strategies of supporting agri food industries, of which a signature event could be created around), the challenge in this space is that any new events of this calibre need to be unique and not a 'me too' event that is already existing in another region.

Of course if an event of mass appeal and interest was presented to Coffs Harbour and did not fall within the above categories, this does not mean it would be disregarded. Any event outside these categories would be assessed on its individual merit in line with the Event Selection Criteria, see page 21.

Strategic Actions		Timing
S1.1	Adopt the Event Mix and use it consistently in evaluating Councils level of support	Immediate & Ongoing
S1.2	Continue to prioritise the support and attraction for high volume participant sport events	Ongoing
S1.3	Investigate future major event generation / attraction for the Coffs Coast	Ongoing
S1.4	Deliver new events in either the Signature Event and or Major / Regional events range	Ongoing
S1.5	Prioritise support for new events and event generation in the low season	Ongoing

2.0 Event Infrastructure

Support the development, use and promotion of key infrastructure and facilities to ensure the Coffs Coast is the leading regional destination for event promoters.

Event Precincts

To assist in attracting new events and festivals to the Coffs Coast, further thought must be given to the diversity of event locations and precincts available to event promoters. In addition, there is a need for some clarity around the capacity, rules, regulations and limits to events that can be held at various venues/locations.

Council own and operate a number of assets that are designed and suitable for event delivery and activation, as well as non-traditional event venues/locations that could be better utilised for event activation.

There are also a number of exciting projects in Coffs Harbour that have been scoped with funding identified, and scheduled for development in 2016, such as the **Jetty Foreshores** project that incorporates a whole new event activation space, **The Stadium and Coffs Coast Sport and Leisure Park transport hub**, as well as **CBD master plan upgrade** which features a revitalised events space in **City Square**, and longer term plans to upgrade **Brelsford Park** in the future.

CHCC has also recently allocated funds for the development of the Cultural Strategic Plan 2017 – 2020 and **Performing Arts Centre** Feasibility and Cost Benefit Assessment to determine the potential strategic impacts and benefits of a new Performing Arts Centre for the region. Detailed research and concept planning are also underway for the proposed expansion of the Harry Bailey Memorial Library and the Coffs Harbour Regional Gallery. Both feasibility projects are due for competition in mid 2016 which will greatly enhance arts and culture experiences in Coffs Harbour.*

* The Coffs Coast Strategic Tourism Plan 2020

The table below outlines key Council venues / locations suitable for event use.

It should be noted that there are a number of additional third party owned venues and locations that are also ideal for events.

Event Type	Locations
Large scale sport events	C.ex Coffs International Stadium Coffs Coast Sport and Leisure Park Precinct 20+ sport fields throughout greater Coffs Harbour Sportz Central Indoor Stadium
Mid - Large scale Outdoor or Indoor music / arts festival / concerts	C.ex Coffs International Stadium Coffs Coast Sport and Leisure Park Precinct Jetty Foreshores The Jetty Memorial Theatre Botanical Gardens City Square Cavanbah Hall Brelsford Park Plus selected Parks and Reserves

2.1 C.ex Coffs International Stadium

The C.ex Coffs International Stadium (and the Coffs Coast Sport & Leisure Precinct) provides Coffs Harbour with a versatile, multi-functional sports and entertainment event space making it an appealing choice for major regional sporting events in NSW.

It has the capacity to hold 15,000 spectators, with a 936 seat grandstand. In 2011 a two million dollar upgrade to the stadium lighting was conducted, providing 1,500 LUX lighting, enabling the venue to host international and national standard televised matches of a professional nature, a feature which makes Coffs Harbour unique from other regional LGA's and venues.

The C.ex Coffs International Stadium is now considered one of Australia's leading regional sporting venues and is widely regarded as having one of the premier playing surfaces in the country. It has been the asset that has allowed Council to deliver many major sporting events such as Rugby League, AFL and FFA trial matches, first class cricket, as well as other major events like WRC Coates Hire Rally Australia, three major Oz-Tag competitions annually and National Touch League, to name only a few.

Being a multi-purpose sport and event precinct, there is high demand for use, and users range from local level sports, through to elite level large scale competitions and events.

Priority and Hierarchy

While the Event Mix and Pyramid identified on Page 12 provide an over-arching strategic direction for Council support of events, the below prioritisation has been identified in the Sports Facility Plan 2016, for use within this precinct.

For example if there are conflicts in availability for hirers, priority will be given in the following order:

1. International
2. National
3. State
4. Regional
5. Local
 - 5.1 Local Seasonal Bookings
 - 5.2 Local Casual Bookings
6. Community

Key Infrastructure Projects:

Transport: In 2016 Stadium Drive will be upgraded, through the National Stronger Regions Funding, to include a new transport hub for event days featuring a formal bus stop, taxi drop off, curb, guttering and footpaths linking the road to the front gates.

Centre Of Excellence: The 2015 Centre Of Excellence Feasibility Study (adopted by Council on November 26, 2015) has identified the scope and opportunity to create a Sports Village located at the C.ex Coffs International Stadium, which would provide shared work and meeting spaces for local sport organisations, as well as increased amenities that could be utilised on event days.

Grandstand Upgrade: There is also a proposal (November 2011 - Council International Stadium Business Plan, and ISFM Strategy Masterplan) to increase the number of fixed grandstand seats (from 936 to become 3,120 undercover grandstand seats with the development of two new seating areas to the north and south of the current seating section), and improve the provision and quality of spectator and team amenities. The 2015 Centre Of Excellence Feasibility Study further supports this proposal. A Business Plan on the Grandstand Upgrade will be developed in 2016.

All above infrastructure and priorities are in line with the goals and strategic directions identified in the Sports Facility Plan 2016.

Combining the existing television broadcast standard lighting, the upgrade of transport infrastructure planned for 2016, and the proposed upgraded Stadium facilities, this would help deliver Council and the broader Coffs Harbour region an improved and more valued community asset, and helps strengthen our competitive position from neighbouring LGA's.

This competitive advantage also allows Council to aim for the highest possible level of event. It is in our interest to focus on actual sport / event fixtures where possible (opposed to trial games), because unlike other LGA venues, Coffs Harbour have the facilities to cater to it, and the visitor appeal is much higher.

2.2 The Jetty Foreshores (Jetty4Shores)

In 2013 Council endorsed a concept plan for the Jetty4Shores project in 6 stages. Stage 1, the Jetty Walkway, linking the Jetty Strip shops to the timber Jetty structure, was completed in 2015. In 2016, work will commence on stages 2-4 which will see the Active Recreation and Market Hub. This project includes landscape improvements, parking, and improved access within the reserve and to the beach, new event activation areas, and upgrades to allow for night-time activation. These works will be completed by 2018.

Future works identified in the Jetty4Shores project include Stage 5 – Jetty Pier Precinct, with upgrades including community spaces and possible restaurant / eateries; and Stage 6 – Boardwalk south of the Jetty Pier. However these two stages are not yet funded.

Once works are complete in this precinct, community and residents will expect to see new activities and events brought to the Jetty Foreshore area, as justification for the investment from Council in developing this area.

2.3 The Botanical Gardens

The Botanical Gardens is a truly beautiful space that can be better utilised for event activation. Currently a number of commercial, community, cultural and civic events are held in the Botanical Gardens. As a drawcard it provides peaceful and exclusive surrounds, along with ample parking. On the downside the wet weather contingencies, toilet and catering options in this space are limited. It is recognised that the Botanical Gardens primary purpose is not for event hosting, however it has great potential to be better utilised as an event asset of Council. Strategic Planning around the Botanical Garden is currently underway.

2.4 The Jetty Memorial Theatre

The Jetty Memorial Theatre serves as an important arts hub and performance venue for the Coffs Coast region. Users can enjoy the special atmosphere of this unique, historical venue which can be configured to host a wide variety of events, meetings and seminars from small intimate groups up to 250 guests.

Set in the picturesque and historic Jetty precinct which boasts a great variety of contemporary cafes & restaurants, the theatre offers state of the art audio visual facilities, intimate auditorium with excellent acoustics, cosy bar with a spacious deck, full wheelchair accessibility and loop system for the hearing impaired.

2.5 Other Council cultural venues

Coffs Harbour Regional Gallery: From staging community launches to concert recitals, the Coffs Harbour Regional Gallery continues to host a variety of arts events and business gatherings. With a versatile 200 square metres of available floor space, the gallery is an ideal venue for small events. Intimate and sophisticated with an ever-changing collection of visual art on display, the facility also includes movable internal walls to better define the space, variable lighting grids for setting the right mood, a built-in PA with Bose music playback, digital projection, a concert grand piano, a welcoming front desk, a kitchen for serving gourmet meals to buffet style refreshments, and a license to serve alcohol.

Coffs Harbour Regional Museum: Moved to its new home in August, 2014. The building was the first Police Station and Courthouse in Coffs Harbour and dates from 1907. The museum has various exhibitions throughout the building, including a space dedicated to changing exhibitions. Staff and volunteers work hard to use the space for school visits and also focus on Aged Care Facilities. Among some of the recent innovations is the introduction of Museum in a Box that can be tailored to specific aspects as requested. The new Museum is a fantastic Council asset and will prove to be a very popular visit for locals and tourists, however is limited by space issues and this does affect versatility as an events venue.

Coffs Harbour Regional Library: With branches located in Coffs Harbour, Toormina, and Woolgoolga the Library provides access to a wide range of physical and digital resources. Each branch provides free wifi access as well as computers for public use. A number of regular events are hosted throughout the year, including children's storytime, targeted information sessions, and visiting author talks. Event space is limited at each location. Woolgoolga Library has a small meeting room which is regularly used by local groups such as U3A. Coffs Harbour Library is capable of hosting events with up to a maximum of 100 participants.

2.6 Other infrastructure

Council own, operate or manage a range of other infrastructure that plays an important role in the delivery of events. Coffs Harbour Regional Airport and the Coffs Coast Holiday Parks are just two examples of other infrastructure that assist the delivery of events, or deliver visitors to events. Open communication, transparency and aligned strategic goals must be shared by and with the City Prosperity Group across the varied Council infrastructure to ensure continuous growth and opportunities for improvement are identified.

It must be noted that in addition to Council assets there are numerous third party owned or operated venues and locations, including nature based areas, suitable for event activation.

Strategic Actions		Timing
S2.1	Create a Coffs Coast Event Precinct map and guide (including Council assets and third party operators)	2017
S2.2	Incorporate the hierarchy of international/national/state/regional/local & seasonal/local v casual local bookings to prioritise bookings at Stadium and CCSLP, and amend booking forms and agreements to reflect this hierarchy	2016
S2.3	C.ex Coffs International Stadium to target highest level of sporting code possible utilising existing and future facilities i.e. broadcast lights	Ongoing
S2.4	Continue to seek funding for further infrastructure upgrades, for example: C.ex Coffs International Stadium - grandstand extensions; CCSLP Masterplan - develop new fields, additional spectator facilities eg access and parking; Jetty Foreshores; Cultural event facilities Parks & Reserves that are regularly used for event activation	Ongoing

3.0 Event Assessment Tools

Create a set of robust event assessment tools and criteria that give Council clear direction on strategic partnerships to pursue, and events to support (and equally not support).

As listed on page 7, Council have identified strategic focus and outcome areas. The Event Mix as detailed on page 9 outlines the key elements in driving a well-balanced calendar of events. To ensure these strategic directions are effectively implemented, an evaluation system (using a Low / Medium / Strong weighting) will be applied to each of the focus areas ensuring a consistent methodology is applied in assessing event attractiveness. It must also be noted that Council plays a different role in how it assesses the value of events and partnerships compared to how some third party operators may. For example Council's goal is not always to reach capacity of a venue as such; rather it takes a more holistic view and must assess the value the audience can bring to the broader community, not just the immediate facility. Furthermore Council will strategically attract events that other LGA's cannot host due to Coffs Harbour's more superior facilities - broadcast quality lighting at the Stadium for example.

Economic Development	Community Development	Coffs Coast Brand & Marketing	Align Council strategies	Sustainability
Direct Provable Economic Spend	Legacy of the event to assist the community	Project positive image of Coffs Harbour consistent with the Marketing objectives	The 2030 Community Strategic Plan	Abilities of the event organisers to deliver the event
Partnering or involving local business	Involving local communities & individuals	Positive media exposure of Coffs Harbour	The Coffs Coast Strategic Tourism Plan 2020	Evaluation system for the event
Suitable time of year	Increasing community interaction	Uniqueness	The 5 year review 2010 Sports Facility Plan	Use of Council facilities
Develop the city and regions assets	Contributing to the diversity of events		The Economic Development Strategy (Live Love Coffs)	Other partners, sponsors and grants
	Enlivening the place		The International Stadium Business Plan	Strategic planning and repeatability
			The Cultural Plan 2013 – 2016	Environmental Sustainability
			The Long Term Financial Plan	
			The Delivery Program / Operational Plan	

Strategic Actions		Timing
S3.1	Adopt event assessment criteria to evaluate all event submissions	Immediate & Ongoing
S3.2	Progressively implement a cost / benefit analysis of all events to optimise full assessment and development of the event portfolio	Ongoing

Event management

4.0 Event Governance and Leadership

Create an effective event governance structure that clearly outlines the various roles that Council can play, and the relevant committees, and partnerships in attracting, delivering and retaining events on the Coffs Coast.

Roles of Council

Council has typically played many roles in supporting and hosting many different events, often without strategic consideration. There is no desire by Council to take over, acquire and control all events on the Coffs Coast. Rather, Council aims to provide a dependable, accessible resource and information base that event promoters can use, if and when required, for all types and size of events. Council also recognise we cannot be all things to all events. Being clear in the role Council will (or will not) play ensures stakeholders understand where we are able to most add value.

Council's roles can be defined as follows:

Owner	<p>Council's primary function is not to own events, but rather to help build the capacity of other stakeholders to run successful events in our region.</p> <p>In some instances Council owns / operates venues or precincts (see Venue Management role below) that create or own events.</p> <p>In other instances Council may nurture an event in its infancy, however after 3 – 5 years, should consider transferring management and operation to a suitable partner. For example; the International Buskers & Comedy Festival is currently owned by Council. Now a mature event, it will deliver stronger strategic benefits back to Council or the community, and be able to be more financially sustainable under an external management model.</p> <p>In select circumstances, Council may choose to retain ownership of events that are commercially beneficial for Council, or for strategic reasons. However, the management and running of the event should be divested in an open and transparent way to the event market (Council may choose to continue to have one or more other roles despite relinquishing ownership where there is benefit in doing so). For example; the Local Government IT Conference delivers Council a significant commercial return and ensures Council's IT practices are at the leading edge for Local Government. In this</p>
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	instance, Council should retain ownership of the Local Government IT Conference, however outsource the day to day coordination of the event.
Facilitator	Council will always assist event promoters in accessing and acquiring the relevant information to seek approvals, permits and licenses for the coordination of events. We are an event friendly city and will work proactively across all of the organisation to facilitate the effective delivery of events that support our region.
Sponsor	Council may invest in the creation or acquisition of new events, or support existing events, which fit within strategic goals. Investment may be in the way of financial contribution or value-in kind.
Supporter	Council may provide support and resources to actively plan, promote, market and facilitate events that bring value to the community of Coffs Harbour.
Venue Manager	Council owns / operates a number of event venues or precincts, such as the Jetty Foreshores, C.ex Coffs International Stadium, Coffs Harbour Regional Botanical Gardens, Jetty Memorial Theatre, Coffs Harbour Regional Gallery, along with a variety of open spaces. These venues will often create or 'own' their own events, and this should continue. Their processes and approach to events should however be aligned to the <i>Coffs Harbour Events Strategy 2020</i> .

Relationships

Council has developed and nurtured strong working relationships with various stakeholders at a local, state and national level. These relationships continue to be important in retaining and attracting more events to Coffs Harbour.

The term stakeholder is broad and is open to interpretation, however in attracting and delivering events, our main stakeholders can be defined as follows:

Strategic Partnerships: these are long term partnerships that share mutual interest and goals. They are not short term one off engagements. Partnerships exist with the business community, the Chambers of Commerce, key tourism stakeholders and operators, event owners, national and state sport bodies and teams, entertainment entrepreneurs, and other significant event partners.

Suppliers and Partners: are instrumental in providing services to attract, deliver and retain events on the Coffs Coast. Suppliers and partners range from the airport to accommodation providers, restaurant/hospitality industry, event service providers, visitor services, retailers, waste management, marketing/promotions and media partners.

Government: State (notably Destination NSW), and Federal government departments and authorities play a role in not only event (and destination) development and marketing, but also event related infrastructure development.

Council: various departments play an important role in the event life cycle.

Committees: range in size, strength and focus, however all play an important role in the representation of different segments of the event community that need a voice and engagement with Council.

Community: being our ultimate stakeholder - all the activity, investment and energy put into events within Coffs Harbour are approached with community values, benefits and outcomes in mind.

It is important that there is a relationship between all stakeholders, and clear communication channels are in place to support collaboration, learning and best practice. A number of events focused working groups have been identified to achieve this outcome.

Strategic Actions		Timing
S4.1	Continue to review ownership / management of events as required	ongoing
S4.1.1	Divest ownership / management the Coffs Harbour International Buskers and Comedy Festival	2017
S4.1.2	Retain ownership and divest management of LGIT Conference	2016
S4.2	Develop CRM tools to assist with the management of stakeholders relationships	2016 / 2017
S4.3	Continue to foster key strategic partnerships with relevant government agencies and event owners	Ongoing
S4.4	Review relevant committee structures within Council, and implement most appropriate stakeholder format to guide Council's role in events	2016 / 2017
S4.4.1	Create a new events focused working group (with a skill set and expertise in events, business and tourism, for the strategic purpose of the creation and /or attraction of new events, and/or the expansion of existing events in the region)	2016 / ongoing
S4.4.2	Initiate event industry stakeholder education and networking forum.	2016 / ongoing
S4.4.3	Develop an internal event working group with other Council departments, to increase efficiencies and create more versatile event spaces	2016 / ongoing

5.0 Event Funding

Nurture the existing funding models, and identify new sources of funds to support the attraction or development of new events, and support existing events to grow and become financially sustainable.

In a highly competitive market, event promoters are increasingly aware of the economic benefit an event can bring to a region and therefore hosting fees, or substantial investment in infrastructure is often required to stage events.

It is imperative that Council has funding sources clearly identified, and the frameworks in place so it is prepared to seize opportunity as it is presented, and can invest and support events (following suitable evaluation) with speed and confidence without drawn out approvals or wide deliberation.

This strategy proposes that the assessment criteria listed on page 21 be utilised to allocate funding for events, from a variety of sources

Current Council funding includes:

Major Events Funding - an allocation within City Prosperity. For events with:

- A significant economic impact of at least \$500,000
- Generally large spectator events or participant (often sporting) events
- Align with signature or major events identified on page 12
- These events may be co-funded by third party
- Often contracted years in advance and for multiple years
- Unspent funds are recommended for annual revote, due to the nature of these events, the advance booking cycle and multi year partnerships.

Event Seed Funding - This has been established to support new start-up events in what is considered to be the most critical stage of their development, and has the primary aim of stimulating business activity via events in the region.

- New events – or new to Coffs Harbour (in their first three years) that align with strategic goals for events for the LGA
- Allocation of \$1,000- \$10,000 per year, up to three years

- Funding is generally provided on a sliding scale (decreasing each year) to encourage the event to become financially sustainable
- These events can be co-funded by third parties
- Often contracted at least 12 months ahead of first event
- Unspent funds are recommended for annual revote, as part of the SRV.

Proposed event grant allocation – reallocated from within City Prosperity funding, this funding round will be allocated twice yearly and aims to fill the historical funding gap between **Event Seed Funding** and **Major Events**. It is possible the Council funds may be bolstered by other sponsorship funds.

- The ‘medium’ events that are neither start ups or major events
- Biannual application process
- Small grants to help grow existing events or re-energise mature events that align with strategic goals for events for the LGA

Other Council funding areas: other areas of Council also fund events either directly, as venue/infrastructure managers, as sponsors, or as charitable donations. It is recommended that any support from the above areas will also use the Event Assessment Criteria on page 21 for consistency. It is recommended that in the first instance Council only funds any one event from a single budget source to avoid double dipping.

Note – outside of financial sponsorship support that Council provides, Council can also provide sponsorship support in the way of marketing and other expertise. However, ‘contra’ sponsorship (receipt/provision) is not recommended.

Other funding sources

Events can attract funding and support from external sources, such as the business community and governments (i.e. Destination NSW Flagship Funding). Council is able to access funding from these areas upon successful application, or can assist in connecting event promoters with external organisations for funding opportunities.

Strategic Actions		Timing
S5.1	Implement clear reporting metrics on the return on investment of all event funding provided	annual
S5.2	Clearly promote all funding opportunities to event stakeholders, including accessible application forms and criteria	2016/2017
S5.3	Investigate other non-financial ways Council can support events	2016/2017
S5.4	Adopt a strategic approach to develop successful submissions to state and national government grant opportunities	2017/Ongoing

6.0 Event Capacity Building

Create a framework and resource centre to build the capacity of individuals, businesses and communities to create, grow and deliver sustainable events.

To assist Council build the capacity of individuals, businesses and communities to create, grow and deliver sustainable events, a series of activities, tools, resources and new initiatives will be introduced to ensure Coffs Harbour stays at the forefront of being an 'Event Friendly City' and builds the region as a premier event city.

Council has a wealth of event information, experience and expertise, plus local knowledge that needs to be shared and accessible for event promoters. Notwithstanding this, Council are also largely responsible for the majority of permits, licenses and approvals required by event promoters to get their events up and running.

The concept of on a one stop event shop (OSES) is not new, and was previously identified in the 2009 ES, however the timing is now right to expand on this concept and deliver in its full capacity.

The OSES concept does not need to exist in the physical meaning of the term, however Council and in particular the Stadium and Major Events team, must be regarded as the 'go-to' for anything event related, and as such have the necessary tools, resources, frameworks, and support available for any event scenario.

From an online perspective there are some relatively simple things that can be introduced to achieve these goals:

- Review Council website for practicality, relevance and ease of use for event promoters.
- Review Coffs Coast .com.au as the primary events based platform for people to access information about events (both consumer and trade).
- Introduce a functional calendar of events (that links to the 101 Things To Do on Coffs Coast APP) – See Event Services on page 34.
- Create an online helpdesk that navigates event promoters through Council applications and approvals.
- Create a series of toolkits and guides to assist event promoters in delivering best practice for event management (including commercial sustainability, environmental sustainability, risk management, compliance, logistical and marketing support, etc)

Many of the above tools and resources that will be accessible online, can also be produced into handy brochures or books and used in conjunction with training days (see below) and meetings with prospective event promoters.

Training and Up-skilling (external / internal)

From 2016, Council's Stadium and Major Events section is responsible for a broader range of events across Coffs Harbour and Council, and can now effectively review, and develop standard operating procedures and models for all types of events.

This will ensure that Council staff will be trained across a wide variety of events, as well as ensuring consistency in event coordination and delivery. It will also result in satisfied staff who have diversity of work, and Council has mitigated risk of knowledge loss from the organisation due to individuals working in silos.

External: Council is committed to increasing the education and exposure around events by introducing a series of Event Training Days. A relevant audience will be identified and targeted, and these specialised workshops created by Council will engage numerous experts within their respective fields (both internal and external), and will provide valuable tools, resources and guidance for new and experienced event promoters.

Sessions will focus on for example: Commercially Sustainable Events, Planning Your Event, or Promoting Your Event.

Internal: Whilst there is a program identified to help build the capacity of stakeholders to run better events, there is also a need to ensure we are building capacity of Council staff, to ensure that best practice is achieved and is consistent across the organisation.

Strategic Actions		Timing
S6.1	Prepare an implementation plan for the One Stop Event Shop (OSES)	2016
S6.2	Create toolkits and frameworks, for distribution (internal and external) on event management best practice	2017
S6.3	Implement dedicated event training days	Biannual
S6.4	Identify Council Standard Operating Procedures for all event related activities	2017

7.0 Risk Management

Identify and plan for potential risks to both the event visitor/stakeholder and the event economy.

Discussions on risks to the visitor economy were identified in the *Coffs Coast Strategic Tourism Plan 2020* and have been reproduced and amended here for the events context.

A logical and strategic approach to risk and crisis management can reduce the impacts and losses associated with any adverse event and can provide a framework from which both businesses and destinations can apply risk management strategies for prevention, preparedness, response and recovery. Best practice destinations work with relevant agencies and stakeholders to prepare a risk management strategy for any unexpected crises or risk that may affect business viability, community and visitor wellbeing, and the environment.

This includes developing emergency management plans for infrastructure sites in town centres and key event visitor sites, incorporating crisis and risk management plans for events into relevant local government plans, encouraging event businesses to develop risk management strategies for their own operations, and developing and implementing tactical marketing campaigns to respond immediately to crisis situations. The aim is to build community resilience to maintain a normal level of service in the face of periodic or unpredictable external shocks or system failures.

Examples of environmental issues relevant to the Coffs Coast visitor economy are also very relevant for events, and include risks of drought, bushfire and flood. Variations in economic conditions may also impact visitation to the region, including fluctuating fuel prices and currency values that can cause changes in domestic and/or international travel. Terrorism, transport failures or pull-out of airline carriers, drop in accommodation stock availability or inability to keep up with growing event demand, key infrastructure issues (e.g. loss of Stadium playing surface), and loss of community support for events also present significant risks to event sustainability.

Strategic Actions		Timing
S7.1	Develop a five-year Coffs Harbour Event Economy Risk Management plan that identifies and plans for potential risks related to the Coffs Coast event economy to 2020	2017
S7.2	Develop robust risk management procedures and processes for all events run by council	2016/2017
S7.3	Support event operators to develop risk management plans for their own businesses (see capacity building)	2017

event marketing

8.0 Brand Positioning & Destination Marketing

Ensure Council and the Coffs Coast brands are used effectively to promote Coffs Harbour as an event friendly city and the premier host city for events in regional NSW.

The Coffs Coast Strategic Tourism Plan 2020 notes the following, which is also very relevant for events:

“ A brand is the set of expectations, memories, stories and relationships that, taken together, account for a consumer’s decision to choose one product or service over another. An effective brand is at the heart of a successful visitor destination. It should drive the marketing strategies at every consumer touch point and inform both current and future product and experience development. Tourism brands require periodic monitoring to ensure that they are aligned to core markets and contemporary consumer trends; provide a genuinely competitive edge based on the region’s unique qualities; deliver a strong and consistent message across all platforms, and engage those who must champion the brand promise as part of their regular business and community activities.

Put simply, the best tourism brands are built on a genuine sense of place and a focus on those qualities that make that place special and different. Many visitor destinations fail to reach their desired potential because their brand positioning is too generic, particularly in such a dynamic and competitive environment. The Coffs Coast for example, has superb beaches, parks, forests and reserves and a range of family activities but these attributes are not particular to the region, and many other destinations could make similar claims. The challenge is in clearly articulating the region’s real point of difference.”

A Coffs Coast brand review, including events, will be undertaken in 2016 in line with the *Coffs Coast Strategic Tourism Plan 2020* marketing and brand reviews.

In addition one of the fundamental goals for both the *Coffs Harbour Events Strategy 2020* and the *Coffs Coast Strategic Tourism Plan 2020*, is to define strategies that drive visitation to Coffs Harbour.

Whether it be creating or acquiring, growing and / or retaining events on the Coffs Coast, marketing and promotional support plays a very important role around this.

Council hold strong relationships with key stakeholders that allow Coffs Harbour to retain a number of major events. However to assist in positioning Coffs Harbour as a premier event destination, Council need to become proactive and strategic in this competitive events space, and once specific opportunities are identified, need to actively seek them out.

Whilst Coffs Harbour currently has some great success stories around the volume of people attending Coffs Harbour for certain events, Coffs Harbour can build on this success by introducing an integrated marketing program framed around key events.

In early 2016 a Business Development Coordinator (BDC) will join Council's City Prosperity Team, working across both the Stadium and Major Events and the Industry and Destination Development sections. Via this united approach, event acquisition will form part of the destination development strategies, and to assist the BDC, a number of promotional tools, resources and opportunities will be identified.

In addition to broad based marketing and promotion campaigns and tools being created to sell Coffs Harbour to event promoters, specific and targeted campaigns can be created and aligned to attract high level Signature Events and selected Major / Community Events.

Strategic Actions		Timing
S8.1	Following the Coffs Coast brand review, document and refresh event brand guidelines to ensure consistent use and application across all mediums, Council events and where Council is a partner/sponsor	2016 / 2017
S8.2	Identify tools, resources and collateral to successfully pitch for new events	2016 / 2017
S8.3	Identify event marketing funds to assist in active promotion of visitation to Coffs Harbour in line with strategies identified in the <i>Coffs Coast Strategic Tourism Plan 2020</i>	Ongoing
S8.4	Develop specific marketing programs around attracting new events (in high level Signature Events and selected Major / Community Events.	2017

9.0 Event Marketing

Identify marketing and promotional strategies and platforms that can be accessed by event promoters, including Council assets and third party partners.

Marketing and promotions are an important aspect of driving participation and interest in events. Council has an invested interest in ensuring all events on the Coffs Coast are run successfully, for the benefits back to the community.

To make marketing and promotional opportunities, tools and resources accessible for event promoters, some energy needs to be invested to identify exactly what resources exist, gather important statistics, and understand the value / cost around activating and engaging the various media and promotional activities.

Once all promotional opportunities are identified (paid and free / Council and third party), a marketing plan and toolkit for event promoters can be created and published.

In addition to developing a marketing plan and kit for event promoters, Council needs to invest some time into its current online assets to ensure they are event friendly, and more importantly, user friendly.

A coordinated approach will ensure that all event organisers, whether local or national, can access local media opportunities with ease.

It must also be noted that the Coffs Coast community play an important role in delivering the visitor experience. Every café, restaurant, petrol station or supermarket that an event visitor enters, shapes their perception and experience of Coffs Harbour. The broader community must recognise the positive benefits that events can bring to a region and embrace the support of events.

Strategic Actions		Timing
S9.1	Create a menu of advertising, promotional and media opportunities available to event promoters via Council platforms or third party providers	2017
S9.2	Create a promotional partner program, where event promoters receive benefits on advertising and promotional activities through the partner program	2017

S9.3	Create a marketing tool kit	2017
S9.4	Review and refresh Council websites relating to events	2016/2017
S9.5	Identify stronger partnerships and collaboration with industry partners (Destination NSW) for joint marketing and promotional campaigns	2017 / ongoing
S9.6	Encourage broader industry stakeholders (e.g. accommodation, tour operators) to support Coffs Coast events and festivals through their own marketing initiatives	2017 / ongoing
S9.7	Encourage 'whole of community' support for Coffs Coast events and festivals through visitor-friendly initiatives (e.g. appropriate opening hours and availability of amenities and services)	2017 / ongoing

10.0 Event Service

Develop efficient and cost effective tools and services that allow event promoters and event visitor's access to important information and services with an ease of use.

Coffs Harbour has already been identified as an Event Friendly City, in winning the globally-acclaimed International Festivals and Events Association (IFEA) World Festival and Event City Award in 2015. The *Coffs Harbour Events Strategy 2020* aims to cement this positioning in the market place, and Council understands that to maintain this, a CAN-DO attitude to event management across all of Council is required.

A frustration that many event promoters experience is the amount of red tape involved with event management, particularly when dealing with Local Government. Council's City Prosperity Group has assumed the position of being considered a business partner with event promoters, and aims to reduce frustrations in guidance and compliance.

In addition to the attitude and behaviour described above that has been embraced by Council, and the resources identified in Capacity Building on Page 27, some additional resources that will assist event promoters in accessing important information are online tools such as websites, calendar of events, APP's and contact lists for key event partners on the Coffs Coast.

Strategic Actions		Timing
S10.1	Ensure Council remain committed to a CAN DO attitude, and partner with event promoters to deliver best experience	Ongoing
S10.2	Create a functional calendar of events, that is suitable for all users (event owners, local business, community, visitors to Coffs Harbour) and is holistic (not just COUNCIL events)	2016 / ongoing
S10.3	Ensure website and app have most up to date event information to support the event calendar	2016 / 2017
S10.4	Create CRM of Event Partners and Suppliers on the Coffs Coast. The CRM can be utilised as a Business development / Event acquisition prospecting tool as well.	2016 / 2017

implementation and timing

The below table summarises the key strategic actions identified through the *Coffs Harbour Events Strategy 2020*, and the time frame anticipated for implantation.

1.0 Event Mix (Page 9)

Strategic Actions		Timing
S1.1	Adopt the Event Mix and use it consistently in evaluating Councils level of support	Immediate & Ongoing
S1.2	Continue to prioritise the support and attraction for high volume participant sport events	Ongoing
S1.3	Investigate future major event generation / attraction for the Coffs Coast	Ongoing
S1.4	Deliver new events in either the Signature Event and or Major / Regional events range	Ongoing
S1.5	Prioritise support for new events and event generation in the low season	Ongoing

2.0 Event Infrastructure (Page 15)

Strategic Actions		Timing
S2.1	Create a Coffs Coast Event Precinct map and guide (including Council assets and third party operators)	2017
S2.2	Incorporate the hierarchy of international/national/state/regional/local & seasonal/local v casual local bookings to prioritise bookings at Stadium and CCSLP, and amend booking forms and agreements to reflect this hierarchy	2016
S2.3	C.ex Coffs International Stadium to target highest level of sporting code possible utilising existing and future facilities i.e. broadcast lights	Ongoing
S2.4	Continue to seek funding for further infrastructure upgrades, for example: C.ex Coffs International Stadium - grandstand extensions CCSLP Masterplan - develop new fields, additional spectator facilities eg access and parking Jetty Foreshores Cultural event facilities	Ongoing

3.0 Event Assessment Tools (Page 21)

Strategic Actions		Timing
S3.1	Adopt event assessment criteria to evaluate all event submissions	Immediate & Ongoing
S3.2	Progressively implement a cost / benefit analysis of all events to optimise full assessment and development of the event portfolio	Ongoing

4.0 Governance & Leadership (Page 22)

Strategic Actions		Timing
S4.1	Continue to review ownership / management of events as required	ongoing
S4.1.1	Divest ownership / management the Coffs Harbour International Buskers and Comedy Festival	2016
S4.1.2	Retain ownership and divest management of LGIT Conference	2016
S4.2	Develop CRM tools to assist with the management of stakeholders relationships	2016 / 2017
S4.3	Continue to foster key strategic partnerships with relevant government agencies and event owners	Ongoing
S4.4	Review relevant committee structures within Council and external, and implement most appropriate stakeholder format to guide Council's role in events	2016 / 2017
S4.4.1	Create a new events focused working group (with a skill set and expertise in events, business and tourism, for the strategic purpose of the creation and /or attraction of new events, and/or the expansion of existing events in the region)	2016 / ongoing
S4.4.2	Initiate event industry stakeholder education and networking forum	2016 / ongoing
S4.4.3	Develop an internal event working group with other Council departments, to increase efficiencies and create more versatile event spaces	2016 / ongoing

5.0 Event Funding (Page 25)

Strategic Actions		Timing
S5.1	Implement clear reporting metrics on the return on investment of all event funding provided	annual
S5.2	Clearly promote all funding opportunities to event stakeholders, including accessible application forms and criteria	2016/2017
S5.3	Investigate other non-financial ways Council can support events	2016/2017
S5.4	Adopt a strategic approach to develop successful submissions to state and national government grant opportunities	2017 / Ongoing

6.0 Event Capacity Building (Page 27)

Strategic Actions		Timing
S6.1	Prepare an implementation plan for the One Stop Event Shop (OSES)	2016
S6.2	Create toolkits and frameworks, for distribution (internal and external) on event management best practice	2017
S6.3	Implement dedicated event training days	Biannual
S6.4	Identify Council Standard Operating Procedures for all event related activities	2017

7.0 Risk Management (Page 29)

Strategic Actions		Timing
S7.1	Develop a five-year Coffs Harbour Event Economy Risk Management plan that identifies and plans for potential risks related to the Coffs Coast event economy to 2020	2017
S7.2	Develop robust risk management procedures and processes for all events run by council	2016/2017
S7.3	Support event operators to develop risk management plans for their own businesses (see capacity building)	2017

8.0 Brand Positioning & Destination Marketing (Page 30)

Strategic Actions		Timing
S8.1	Following the Coffs Coast brand review, document and refresh event brand guidelines to ensure consistent use and application across all mediums, Council events and where Council is a partner/sponsor	2016 / 2017
S8.2	Identify tools, resources and collateral to successfully pitch for new events	2016 / 2017
S8.3	Identify event marketing funds to assist in active promotion of visitation to Coffs Harbour in line with strategies identified in the <i>Coffs Coast Strategic Tourism Plan 2020</i>	Ongoing
S8.4	Develop specific marketing programs around attracting new events (in high level Signature Events and selected Major / Community Events.	2017

9.0 Event Marketing (Page 32)

Strategic Actions		Timing
S9.1	Create a menu of advertising, promotional and media opportunities available to event promoters via Council platforms or third party providers	2017
S9.2	Create a promotional partner program, where event promoters receive benefits on advertising and promotional activities through the partner program	2017
S9.3	Create a marketing tool kit	2017
S9.4	Review and refresh Council websites relating to events	2016 / 2017
S9.5	Identify stronger partnerships and collaboration with industry partners (Destination NSW) for joint marketing and promotional campaigns	2017 / ongoing
S9.6	Encourage broader industry stakeholders (e.g. accommodation, tour operators) to support Coffs Coast events and festivals through their own marketing initiatives	2017 / ongoing
S9.7	Encourage 'whole of community' support for Coffs Coast events and festivals through visitor-friendly initiatives (e.g. appropriate opening hours and availability of amenities and services)	2017 / ongoing

10.0 Event Services (Page 34)

Strategic Actions		Timing
S10.1	Ensure Council remain committed to a CAN DO attitude, and partner with event promoters to deliver best experience	Ongoing
S10.2	Create a functional calendar of events, that is suitable for all users (event owners, local business, community, visitors to Coffs Harbour) and is holistic (not just COUNCIL events)	2016 / ongoing
S10.3	Ensure website and app have most up to date event information to support the event calendar	2016 / 2017
S10.4	Create CRM of Event Partners and Suppliers on the Coffs Coast. The CRM can be utilised as a Business development / Event acquisition prospecting tool as well.	2016 / 2017

Conclusion

The 2009 ES identified the following:

The current events in Coffs Harbour are similar to many Councils that are lacking an event strategy. The events are varied, temporary and diffuse in their affect on the people and businesses of the region. The solution to this problem is not a quick fix. This strategy does not give a quick fix. It builds on the variety and the excellent work the Council staff are already performing. It enables the staff to have an accountable system to discover and support events and festivals. By comparing the way Council works with their events to other regions in Australia, the report gives one core recommendation: to develop the Events staff and the system used to choose and support events in the region.

Currently Council's Event Staff performs many of these functions. But the information gathering, bidding for events, evaluating events, up-skilling the event organisers and directing the whole program is needed. Without an accountable system for decisions and risk, the Council is exposed to many risks and trails the best practice of Councils around Australia and New Zealand. The event industry has come a long way in ten years. It is not enough to use the same system. It has professionalised. Coffs Harbour City Council already has the expertise. This reports allows the Council to put it on a solid professional foundation with an accountable and improvable system to build the event program.

A successful events program is a valuable asset to a region. Like any asset owned by the Council, it must have procurement and maintenance processes. The process must be accountable and transparent. This report provides the processes.

The above statement is still true today, and the *Coffs Harbour Events Strategy 2020* provides Council and the Stadium & Major Events team the strategic direction to drive economic and community benefits through a well-considered and coordinated approach to help maintain, attract and deliver a vibrant and diverse annual events calendar.

Appendix 1 – Calendar Of Events

EVENT	2016 DATES	THEME	SIZE	YEARS 2016	CHCC INVOLVEMENT
JANUARY					
Screenwave	27 Dec - 28 Jan	arts/cultural	Medium	1	Sponsor
Pittwater to Coffs	2-5 Jan	sport	Major	35	Nil
Vintage Train Rides		community	Medium	2	Nil
FEBRUARY					
Cinema Under the Stars	13-Feb		Medium	2	Nil
Sydney Swans Training Camp	2 - 5 Feb	sport	Small	4	Sponsored
Oztag NSW Junior State Cup	12-14 Feb	sport	large	2	
Sheffield Shield NSW Phillip Hughes Tribute Match	25-28 Feb	sport	Major	1	Sponsor
MARCH					
Ella 7s Indigenous Rugby Union Tournament	4-5 March	sport	medium	9	
AFL Swans Vs Lions	2015	sport	Major	2 (2011 & 2015)	
BCU Coffs Triathlon	5-6 Mar	sport	Major	5	Sponsor / Regulator
National Touch League	9-12 Mar	sport	large	3	
Multicultural Festival		arts/cultural		6	Coordinator / Regulator
APRIL					
Coffs Ocean Swims	3-Apr		Medium	10+	Regulator
Easter Fishing Classic	Multi-Day	sport	Medium		
Billabong Oz Grom Cup	Multi-Day	sport	Medium	3	Sponsor / Regulator
Archibald Prize Regional Tour	Multi-Day	arts/cultural	Small		Coordinator
FIT Touch World Cup		sport			

MAY					
Japanese Childrens Festival	1-May	arts/cultural	Medium		Sponsor
Bald Archy Exhibition	Multi-Day	arts/cultural	Small		Coordinator
Coffs Harbour Show	Mid-May	arts/cultural	Major	100	Nil (Previously Sponsor)
Emerald Beach Fair	Last Sunday	arts/cultural	Medium	14	Sponsor / Regulator
JUNE					
Dave Irvine Memorial Snapper Classic		sport	Small		Nil
Nth NSW Football Boys State Championships		sport			
Orara Valley Fair	Queens Birthday	arts/cultural	Medium		Nil
CoffsCoast 4WD, C'van, Camping&Boat Show		sport	Medium		Nil
Coffs Coast Charity Walk		sport	Small		Nil
JULY					
Sawtell Chilli Festival	First Saturday	arts/cultural	Major	13	Sponsor / Regulator
FFA National Youth Champ - Girls		sport			
Naidoc Week	First Week	arts/cultural	Medium		Sponsor / Coordinator
Coffs Festival of Cycling	Multi-Day	sport	Major	2	Sponsor
Australian Surf Festival	Multi-Day	sport	Major	3	Sponsor / Regulator
Rotary Cartoon Awards		arts/cultural	Small		Sponsor
AUGUST					
Coffs Coast Cycle Challenge		sport	Major	8	Sponsor / Regulator
Gold Cup Race Day	1st Thursday	sport	Signature	50+	Regulator
Short Sharp Film Festival	Multi-Day	arts	Small	5	
Fuelarama - Off Shore Superboats		sport	Major	4	Sponsor / Regulator
Vintage Train Rides, ships, cars		arts	Major	2	Sponsor / Regulator
SEPTEMBER					
Coffs Harbour Running Festival	4-Sep	sport	Medium	5	Sponsor / Regulator
International Buskers Festival	1st Wk School Hols	arts	Signature	13	Sponsor / Regulator

Nth NSW Football Girls State Championships		sport			
Woolgoolga Curryfest	Late September	food	Major	12	Sponsor / Regulator
Saltwater Freshwater	TBC	arts/cultural	Signature	5	Sponsor / Regulator
Opera by the Ocean	Cancelled in 2015	arts	Major	2	Coordinator
OCTOBER					
Adventurethon	Early October	sport	Medium	3	Sponsor / Regulator
Wahu Surfer Groms Comp		sport	Medium		Regulator
National Jnr Oztag	14 - 16 Oct	sport	Major	3	
NOVEMBER					
Living Coast Festival	Month Long	arts	Major	2	Coordinator
Australian Senior Oztag Championships	4-6 Nov	sport	Major	10	
World Rally	18-20 Nov	sport	Signature	4	Sponsor / Regulator
DECEMBER					
Coffs Jetty Carnival	December-January	Community	Major	16	Regulator
Christmas Carols	Late December	Community	Major	20+	Sponsor / Regulator
EMSLA Exhibition	Through December	arts	Small		Coordinator
New Years Eve Fireworks	Dec-31	Community	Major	16	Sponsor / Regulator
MARKETS					
Coffs Coast Growers Markets	Every Thursday	Markets	Markets		Coordinator
Harbourside Markets	Every Sunday	Markets	Markets		Regulator
Jetty Markets	Every Sunday	Markets	Markets		Nil
Uptown Markets	Every Sunday	Markets	Markets		Regulator
Bollywood Markets	1st & 4th Saturday	Markets	Markets		Regulator
Woolgoolga Beach Markets	2nd Saturday	Markets	Markets		Regulator
Made with Love Markets	3 Times a Year	Markets	Markets		Nil
Coffs Twilight Markets	DL Saving Fridays	Markets	Markets		Regulator
Sawtell Family Markets	4th Saturday Month	Markets	Markets		Nil

Appendix 2 – Events & Festivals

extract from *Coffs Coast Strategic Tourism Plan 2020*

destination marketing

7.0 Events and Festivals

Position the Coffs Coast as the leading regional destination for sports tourism, innovative events and festivals that support the Coffs Coast brand to 2020

Events and festivals are recognised as a major catalyst for regional visitation. They provide numerous opportunities and benefits for individual businesses, communities and the destination region, including increased visitation and expenditure, reduced seasonality, repeat visitation and stronger regional awareness. They can also provide the stimulus for additional infrastructure development and build community pride⁹. In addition, sports tourism is internationally recognised as a substantial and highly desirable niche market segment for regional areas given that there are a number of opportunities for visitors to participate in tourism activities not connected with sport¹⁰.

Coffs Harbour is renowned for its events, which play a very significant role in attracting visitors to the Coffs Coast and boosting the local and regional economy particularly in traditionally low visitation periods. In October 2015, the city won a globally acclaimed International Festivals and Events Association (IFEA) World Festival and Event City Award, gaining recognition alongside major cities around the world. The FIA World Rally Championship (run in conjunction with the Bellingen and Nambucca Councils) attracts the greatest number of spectators (50,000+) and also provides the Coffs Coast with valuable international media coverage. Coffs Harbour is also host to a range of high profile annual sporting contests including the National Touch League, the FFA Boys National Championships, the FFA Girls Championships, the National Senior Oztag Championships and the Australian Surf Festival (to 2017), Adventurethon and the Coffs Coast Festival of Cycling. Destination NSW (DNSW) supports several Coffs Harbour events, including the Coffs Harbour Running Festival, through its Regional Flagship Events Program. As such, sports tourism is a very attractive market segment for Coffs Harbour, however other regional destinations are keen to take their share.

CHCC's Stadium and Major Events team play a significant leadership role in bidding for sports tourism events and the management of key event infrastructure and facilities. In order for Coffs Harbour to retain its competitive position and build on its existing sports tourism events portfolio, it will be important that Council adopts a strategic approach to identify opportunities to: attract and bid for key sports tourism events, public and private investment for new regional sporting infrastructure and facilities, and increase visitor dispersal across the Coffs Coast.

In addition to sports tourism events, the Coffs Harbour LGA delivers a diversity of cultural festivals that are attractive to residents and visitors. These include the highly successful Coffs Harbour International Buskers and Comedy Festival (supported by CHCC), the CoastOut Festival, Multicultural Harmony Day and the Saltwater Freshwater Festival. Coffs Harbour also attracts quality theatrical performances, art exhibitions, concerts, cinema and dance, which can add value to the visitor experience. Community based events like Woolgoolga's Curryfest, the Chilli Festival (Sawtell) and until recently, Toast Urunga, play an important role in showcasing local villages and supporting the Coffs Coast brand. To ensure their ongoing viability, local events' organisers need additional support and advice to navigate the increasing complexities of events management, particularly given the reliance on volunteers and limited resources. Issues include negotiating compliance issues; funding applications; effective allocation of human and financial resources; building industry, business and community support for events and festivals; conducting consumer research, maximising the visitor economy and measuring return on investment (ROI). Coffs Harbour also attracts business events, mostly through its resort-style properties, however it remains a small percentage of the potential visitor market, which is currently best pursued by those industry operators who directly benefit from this sector.

7.0 Events and Festivals cont.

The creative communities in and around Bellingen are also reflected through a range of cultural festivals and local events. The Bello Winter Music Festival, the Bellingen Jazz Festival ('resting' in 2015), the Dorrigo Folk and Bluegrass Festival, and the Bellingen Readers and Writers Festival (held in various venues along the Waterfall Way), attract visitors from well beyond the Shire's boundaries and the broader Coffs Coast region. Camp Creative, a summer school featuring courses including music, dance, voice and the visual arts has been running for 30 years, bringing families and individuals to Bellingen for five days in January. The highly innovative Steam Punk Festival in Dorrigo which references the huge collection of historic steam engines nearby, is typical of the kind of event which can become a significant draw card for a small township over time. The Shire also hosts some community sporting events including the Urunga Dragon Boat Regatta and the Coffs Coast/Mylestom Dragon Boat Regatta, and regular produce/community markets. Both Bellingen and Urunga residents would like more sports tourism, and there is a proposal for a basketball/multi-purpose stadium in Urunga. To support local event organisers, Bellingen Shire Council has recently introduced an Events Hub in the Waterfall Way Visitor Information Centre to provide practical support for organisations and volunteers. Apart from offering a centralised, dedicated meeting space, the Hub also provides computer and printing facilities, file storage, publicity and event ticket sales through the Visitor Information Centre.

Best Practice Example: The Port Fairy Folk Festival, Victoria

The Port Fairy Folk Festival is a popular annual four-day music festival based in the historic fishing village of Port Fairy in Victoria. From its humble beginnings in 1977, the Festival will celebrate its 40th anniversary in 2016 with an impressive line-up of national and international performers. The Festival receives no Government funding and is entirely reliant on the enormous support from the small Port Fairy community; schools, service clubs, sporting clubs and other community organisations and volunteers to ensure that every aspect of the Festival runs smoothly – and all benefit from it financially. Funds have built a number of community assets including a swimming pool. Local businesses also embrace the opportunity with bumper results!

This collaborative approach to event management and knowledge-sharing would be beneficial across both shires. Furthermore, for Coffs Coast to effectively leverage greater benefits from its events and festivals, all tourism stakeholders should work cooperatively to highlight the range of attractions and experiences in and around the host community, and the region. This should be underpinned by an annual events marketing plan.

The situational analysis and the stakeholder engagement process undertaken to develop this Plan further identified:

- There is no single source of information for the region's events and festivals which detracts from marketing efforts and confuses both organisers and consumers
- The need for local businesses to make a stronger effort in providing events' visitors with a total destination experience – (e.g. through visitor-friendly opening hours and facilities)
- The potential for neighbouring towns like Urunga to receive a 'spill-over' benefit from larger, Coffs Harbour based events
- Recurring costs for events' organisers, particularly in relation to supporting infrastructure needed to deliver events and festivals (e.g. power, sound, lighting and electronic billboards)
- Events and festivals require ways to measure their effectiveness, and secure funding and other external support
- While DNSW provides events funding to the region, CHCC is not permitted to use the Coffs Coast brand for these events
- Overpriced accommodation during events is creating negativity amongst visitors
- The potential to refresh and innovate existing events so they continue to deliver memorable experiences.

7.0 Events and Festivals cont.

strategy 7.1 Develop a strategic and coordinated approach to position the Coffs Coast as the leading regional destination for sport tourism to 2020

Strategic Actions	Leadership	Support	Timing
s7.1.1 Develop a Coffs Coast Sports Tourism Strategy that identifies opportunities to attract and bid for key sports tourism events, public and private sector investment for new regional sporting infrastructure and facilities, and increased visitor dispersal across the Coffs Coast to 2020	CHCC	BSC, DNSW, INSW, RDA	2016/2017
s7.1.2 Investigate opportunities to fund and develop sports tourism infrastructure and facilities in Bellingen Shire	BSC	DNSW, INSW, RDA	2016 to 2020

strategy 7.2 Establish a coordinated approach to deliver innovative and viable events and festivals across the Coffs Coast

Strategic Actions	Leadership	Support	Timing
s7.2.1 Develop an annual Coffs Coast Events and Festivals Marketing Plan that identifies strategies to promote sports tourism, events and festivals across the Coffs Coast	CHCC	BSC, NCDN, DNSW	2016 to 2020
s7.2.2 Establish a single, authoritative and comprehensive annual events and festivals calendar for the Coffs Coast region, which addresses the needs of both organisers and consumers	CHCC	BSC, CoCs	2016 to 2020
s7.2.3 Develop and promote a 'How to plan and deliver successful community events' guide for the Coffs Coast, which includes measuring economic, social and environmental impacts and other practical solutions and advice, to assist community-based events' organisers	CHCC, BSC	CoCs, DNSW	2016
s7.2.4 Establish a regular mentoring program to provide ongoing support and advice for community-based organisers in the Coffs Harbour LGA	CHCC	CoCs	2016
s7.2.5 Support event organisers to create new, innovative and brand-aligned events and festivals, as well as opportunities to refresh and enhance successful, existing events and festivals	CHCC, BSC	CoCs, DNSW	2016 to 2020
s7.2.6 Introduce a 'one stop shop' to assist organisers with regulatory requirements for events and festivals within the Coffs Harbour LGA	CHCC		2016
s7.2.7 Continue to deliver the events hub to support local event organisers in Bellingen LGA	BSC		2016 to 2020

7.0 Events and Festivals cont.

strategy 7.3 Encourage event and festival visitors to stay longer, spend more and enjoy the diversity of experiences across the Coffs Coast region

Strategic Actions		Leadership	Support	Timing
s7.3.1	Encourage broader industry stakeholders (e.g. accommodation, tour operators) to support Coffs Coast events and festivals through their own marketing initiatives	CHCC, BSC	CCTC, CoCs	2016 to 2020
s7.3.2	Encourage 'whole of community' support for Coffs Coast events and festivals through visitor-friendly initiatives (e.g. appropriate opening hours and availability of amenities and services)	CHCC, BSC	CCTC, CoCs	2016 to 2020
s7.3.3	Investigate spreading the benefit from larger Coffs Harbour events to surrounding towns, to encourage dispersal and spend (e.g. use of some sporting facilities at Urunga)	CHCC	BSC, CCTC, CoCs	2016 to 2020

Notes
