



**KEMPSEY**  
Shire Council

## **DIRECTOR CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SERVICES SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT**

11<sup>th</sup> December 2007

|                  |                                  |
|------------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>DCCS19</b>    | <b>KEMPSEY CROCFESTIVAL 2007</b> |
| <b>FILE: 689</b> | <b>KEO {Folio No. *}</b>         |

### **SUMMARY:**

Reporting on the success of CrocFest 2007

◆◆◆◆◆

### **BACKGROUND**

As with prior years the broad objectives of the festival is to foster and encourage Education, Health, Arts, Employment and to engage the community in strengthening relationships in a spirit of reconciliation. The specific aims include increasing general education, social skills, to show young people that a healthy lifestyle requires positive choices and personal decision, and to increase the awareness of employment opportunities.

The festival introduces a 'holistic' approach in addressing regional-specific youth concerns. Health, sport, arts, cultural, goal-setting, education, careers workshops and festival performances promote youth identity to the wider community.

The CrocFest organisers have been contacted to provide detailed information on festival expenditure and teacher survey results. To date this information has not been received by Council.

### **CrocFest 2007**

During CrocFest 2007 the Kempsey Shire hosted to up to 6,500 students and 600 support staff and facilitators. The festival was held over two days and nights (19<sup>th</sup> / 20<sup>th</sup> September) with over 12,000 community members attending live performances.

There was a high level of publicity and promotion this year raising the profile of the Kempsey Community, Kempsey Shire Council and the many festival partners at a regional and national level.

Over 120 workshops engaging young people in Department of Education curriculum approved activities where held. The workshop objectives were to educate, empower, enrich and celebrate our youth.

### **LOCAL BENEFITS**

Local businesses engaged by Croc Festival organisers include accommodation, equipment hire, production services, transport, travel venue hire, and artists. Although statistics have not been finalized the obvious economic benefit to the shire has been significant. Some retail outlets have recorded increased sales of 70% and accommodation services have reported 100% occupancy over the period of the festival.

Individual businesses have been approached to provide details of the economic benefit to the business community; however details have not been forthcoming.

An estimate of the financial benefit to the community can be determined using the NSW Tourism regional domestic overnight visitor figures. NSW Tourism estimates that the average overnight expenditure on the Mid North Coast is \$132 per night in the region. (*Source: National Visitor Survey YE 07, Tourism Research Australia*). It can be assumed that of the 6,500 students and 600 support personnel participating in the festival that conservatively 1,500 people required overnight accommodation during the event. Based on the NSW Tourism figures the economic benefit of hosting the festival would be approximately \$600,000. This figure excludes financial benefits gained directly by the catering organizations and CrocFest locally employed resources.

This year over \$30,000 was spent by the Croc Festival organisation to employ local and state performing visual artists, Indigenous artists and teachers for the festival activities sessions during the day. This is an increase on the 2006 expenditure of \$24,000.

The success of the festival is an example of what the collaborative efforts of the government inter-agencies, non government organisations and private sector participants can achieve in our Shire. It is an illustration of what can be accomplished working together on significant community projects. This event is important in fostering community pride and capacity building.

The Commonwealth's commitment to funding is conditional on State and Local Governments contributing to the cost of staging the festivals. Funding is sought from the NSW Government and the Shire of Kempsey to become involved in the event in 2008 to continue to provide positive community outcomes.

### **REPORT IMPLICATIONS:**

- ***Environmental***

***No substantial environmental implications result from this report.***

- ***Social***

***The festival supports community and youth development. Research indicates that community collaboration in youth initiatives promotes youth self esteem, building youth resilience and considering youth as part of a solution and not just the problem.***

***During the time of the festival juvenile crime dropped, school attendance increased and those people involved in the project proved themselves to be a cohesive community.***

*The festival successfully encouraged community participation through the nightly entertainment performances providing the broader community with access to entertainment not readily available in the Shire.*

*During the lead up to and throughout the festival Kempsey received positive press and accolades for the community's ability to host such an event, this also promoted the Macleay Valley as a destination.*

- *Economic (Financial)*

*The direct economic benefits to the broader Kempsey community exceeded \$600,000. Council contributed \$20,000 as a direct financial payment with an additional \$5,000 for in kind works. Other community organisations contributed to the event, notably, Kempsey Advisory Training Enterprise (\$5,000), NSW Premiers Department (\$5,000) Kempsey Lands Council (\$2,500) MNC Area Consultative Committee (\$2,000) and Dijay (\$1,000).*

*Council investment is required to achieve economic stimulus from significant events. The benefit to the Macleay Valley community in hosting events cannot be measured in dollars alone, community spirit, pride, participation and promotion is the development of our social capital.*

- *Policy or Statutory*

*There are no policy or statutory implications arising from this report.*

- *Director's Review*

*The success of the 2007 Croc-fest is can be attributed to the participation of the community and Council partners. There is no other significant event in the Macleay Valley that derives the economic and social benefits on such a scale as CrocFest. It is Council's role in support of, and providing for the community, to assist in attracting and maintaining these events.*

*Due to the scale and nature of the social and economic benefits of the festival, CrocFest is fiercely competed for by other local government areas.*

*Council should leverage off the success of the last two festivals held in Kempsey and make a direct approach to CrocFest to host the 2008 event.*

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

1. That Council notes and recognises the social and economic benefits for our community of CrocFest.
2. That Council gives consideration in the 2008/09 Budget to the allocation of \$40,000 towards the 2008 festival.

3. That Council approach CrocFest organisers directly to make an application to host the 2008 event.

.....

**G B Snape**

**DIRECTOR CORPORATE & COMMUNITY SERVICES**