

Item No: CC0914 Item 5
Subject: LIVE MUSIC MARRICKVILLE
File Ref: 14/4777/78477.14

Prepared By: Naomi Bower - Arts and Cultural Development Officer
Authorised By: Simone Schwarz - Director, Community Services

SUMMARY

The report recommends actions to encourage live music in the Marrickville LGA, in addition to actions taken by the City of Sydney on Marrickville's behalf.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the report be received and noted.

Our Place, Our Vision – Marrickville Community Strategic Plan 2023	
2.1	Marrickville is a creative community participating in arts and cultural activities at all stages of life.
2.2	Marrickville is a leading independent arts centre that supports the creative industries.

BACKGROUND

Marrickville Council, along with Leichhardt Council and the City of Sydney, has made a commitment to support existing and new Live Music venues across its local government areas to ensure the future growth of live music venues and creative industries in the area. The City of Sydney's *Live Music Matters* report was received and noted by Council (C0214 Item 13), which included recommendations for the City of Sydney to act on Council's behalf when lobbying for legislative change.

Live Music and the development of small bars and ancillary businesses are seen to have significant potential in creating economic renewal, aesthetic and amenity improvements and in contributing to the cultural fabric and identity of areas.

Leichhardt Council has also initiated a Live Music Reference Group with the aim of developing Live Music on Parramatta Road. Representatives from Marrickville Council, the City of Sydney and the Live Music Task Force attend the Reference Group meetings. The *Leichhardt and Marrickville Live Music Reference Group Report*, which details recommendations for the Parramatta Road area, is due for release in August / September. Once this report is available, it will be presented to the relevant Council meeting.

The Reference Group has also expressed an interest in the potential of the Sydenham precinct as a Live Music hub. Sydenham already has Live Music venues and factors that make the area conducive to Live Music, including lower residential impacts and warehouse-style buildings.

\$50,000 has been allocated in the 2014-15 budget to support the development of Live Music.

DISCUSSION

Based upon the City of Sydney's Live Music Matters report and locally specific research and consultation, it is suggested that Council adopt a range of actions to foster Live Music in the local government area. These measures are in addition to the resource sharing and lobbying activities undertaken by the City on Council's behalf.

Marrickville's Live Music scene is well recognised in the broader Sydney metropolitan area and has been gaining increasing interest and patronage in recent years. A number of small bars housing Live Music have opened, such as Lazy Bones and Gasoline Pony in Marrickville, joining more established venues such as Camelot Lounge in Sydenham. As well as the opportunities afforded by Marrickville's vibrant community, warehouse spaces and more affordable rent than the inner city, there are a number of barriers to creating successful live music venues. Key issues were identified in the City of Sydney's Live Music Matters report, Marrickville's Live Music Forum and Marrickville's Live Music venue operator interviews (2013-2014). These include: noise related issues; costs involved with setting up venues; engaging young people in venues; and, building code compliance including access issues. Noise complaints were seen as particularly burdensome for venues as complaints that can result in the venue having to produce costly noise reports may be the result of a single complaint or incident.

Internally, Council officers from Culture and Recreation and Planning have met to discuss the implications of recommendations from the Live Music Matters report and the Live Music Reference Group. Officers have clarified the measures seen to be appropriate for the local area and have formulated some additional measures seen to be of most benefit to the local community. A key aspect of these measures is designating the most appropriate areas for Live Music activities so that noise complaints and impacts on both residents and Live Music venues are minimised. Thus strategies around developing parts of the Sydenham precinct (which includes parts of east Marrickville) and a targeted area of Parramatta Road (to be designated by the Live Music Reference Group) are a key component of recommendations.

It should be noted that continued discussions within the Live Music Reference Group and internal research and consultation may result in changes to recommendations. Any significant changes will be submitted to Council for approval. The recommendations are as follows:

Land use (a detailed proposal titled 'Sydenham Station Industry and Arts Hub Precinct' will be included in the September Council meeting)

- In principle support for zoning changes for a limited part of the Sydenham precinct to encourage more Live Music and creative venues.
- Review zoning on a targeted area of Parramatta Road to assess implications on Live Music and creative venues.

Future Cities Program

On 20 May 2014 Council endorsed a delegation of three to participate in the Future Cities Program run by the United States Studies Centre at the University of Sydney. Council's study project examines the industrial lands around Sydenham Station, looking at ways to utilise these lands for a broader section of the community, to grow employment and it also considers potential to accommodate live music and the arts.

The Mayor, Council staff and a community representative participated in the first part of this work, the Mayors forum. In this workshop session over 2 days in June the project was examined in detail, ideas generated and the vision further refined.

The next part of the program is the study tour which takes place in September 2014. As the Mayor is no longer able to travel, the Deputy Mayor will attend in her place. Other participating Councils are including additional staff members to deliver broader and more lasting benefits from the program. To reflect this and given the study projects focus on Live Music and creative industries, an additional staff member Caroline McLeod will join the delegation. Caroline has participated in the Live Music study since the outset and has an in-depth knowledge of the creative industries. She has also worked in economic development. The community representative Jan Campbell, who had previously committed to self-fund ongoing involvement, has since decided to withdraw from the study tour, with approval of the Program organisers. Therefore ongoing participation is consistent with Council's earlier endorsement of three delegates.

Support in mediation of noise issues

- Introduction of a grants program that could include funds to generate noise reports and sound proof venues etc.
- The creation of Live Music precincts in Parramatta Road and Sydenham (as detailed above) would assist in diverting live music activities away from more residential areas.

Support for Live Music venue operators

- Introduction of regular Live Music forums (annual).
- Develop and implement an annual venue satisfaction survey to build a better understanding of the experiences of venue operators, explore opportunities for improved service to this sector and track trends over time.
- Seek funds (a small amount) to contribute to a Music and Performance Co-ordinator salary (based at the City of Sydney) so that inner west venues can gain advice on regulations and legislation around setting up a Live Music venue.
- Explore internal resources to investigate suitable Marrickville community venues and options for making community venues more accessible to Live Music hirers.
- Introduction of the music loading zones for venue operators / musicians to load and unload instruments and music related equipment.

Support in setting up a venue

- Adaptation of the City of Sydney's *How to Guides* for Marrickville venues.
- Increased information sharing between Culture and Recreation and Planning staff at Council to assist those trying to set up a venue. This could incorporate a Planning representative who is specifically informed to work with creative venues
- Investigate a pre-lodgement process to support the creation of non-traditional and temporary Live Music and performance venues.

Rehearsal Spaces

- Explore internal resources for an audit of Marrickville's community facilities and other properties to determine their suitability as rehearsal spaces

Access

- Council to provide relevant information about the accessibility of Marrickville venues to the City of Sydney and Accessible Arts

Audience development

- Engage young people by exploring the introduction of a series of all age's gigs in established venues. This would be carried out in consultation with Council's Out of Hours initiative for children and young people, which is delivered through Council's Library and History Services and Community Development Service areas.
- Consider minor proposed public domain developments to attract audiences to Live Music precincts, such as improved lighting on shopfronts, as proposed by the Live Music Reference Group. Any changes would need to occur in close cooperation with the Public Domain Strategy.
- Consider delivering a Live Music trail in the Sydenham precinct aimed at drawing attention to Live Music venues to coincide with the Sydney Fringe Festival, dependent on internal staff resources.
- Consult with local Live Music operators to assist in selecting Live Music performers for Council events. This will build relations with Live Music operators, give Council access to up and coming local acts and develop audiences for local emerging artists.

Live music grants

- Explore introducing grants and/or or adapting current Arts and Cultural and/or Independent Artist Grants to support local Live Music. Funded projects could include:
 - Noise mediation and sound proofing, as discussed above
 - Subsidy of all ages gigs
 - Audience development
- Council's Independent Artist Grants have already identified music as the priority area for the 2014 round of grants. These projects will be delivered from September 2014 in accordance with Council's Independent Artist Grants guidelines.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There is currently \$50K allocated for Live Music in the 2014/2015 budget.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The proposed initiatives have incorporated the following consultation:

- *Live Music Matters* Report (2013)
- Marrickville Live Music Forum (2013);
- Marrickville's Live Music venue interviews (one on one) (2014);
- Live Music Reference Group meetings (2014)
- Internal Council staff meetings (2014)

CONCLUSION

It is proposed Council adopt a number of Live Music measures to support Marrickville's Live Music venues. These locally specific measures seek to support and enhance the potential of the area's creative and cultural life and mitigate the negative impacts of Live Music venues. The measures also seek to ensure the sustainability of venues through a range of support measures, grants and inclusion considerations such as access and engaging young people. Strong co-operation with neighbouring Councils seeks to ensure a consistent approach and mutual support across inner city Councils.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil.