

Community and Culture  
Advisory Committee

# Annual Report

2024



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City of  
Newcastle





# Foreword from the Chair

Bringing the community into the organisation via our committees has been a wonderful experience and I'm proud to have spent two terms as the Chair of the Community and Culture Advisory Committee.

The Community and Culture Advisory Committee has evolved into a committee of both members and regular guests whose value has been immense in watching conversations, opportunities and problem-solving happen across the room during meetings, bringing together multicultural communities with others who can offer the exchange of ideas among our artists and creatives.

Since first being elected in 2017, I have worked to improve collaboration and relationships between the organisation and the community and other organisations. I've seen fractured relationships regain trust and co-operation, I've seen the benefits that healthy collaboration brings in the delivery of services and facilities. I've enabled people to share ideas, talk to someone, to feel heard, and to feel represented. And I have also assisted in fixing some challenges to improve the stereotypes of what council is, and what it does as we are so much more than roads, rates and rubbish!

We are so privileged to live and work in the City of Newcastle and the rest of the country, and the world, is starting to figure it out. Live Music has been celebrated by the protection of the industry sector balancing live music and other entertainment, and the rights of residents which has now been strongly backed up by the state government and is very pleasing. The After Dark Economy Strategy has enabled the city to strive making our lives worthwhile and creating jobs whilst the Cultural Precinct Masterplan has added to planning and enabling the city's stakeholders to create opportunities.

Support of live music, major events and creative industries in our city has also been delivered through West Best Bloc Fest, The Big Picture Fest, The Little Festival, Local theatre, Upstage at the Civic, The International Junior Theatre Festival, the wonderful projects run by Curious Legends and Fingers Crossed Creative just to name a few and the investment into the Newcastle Art Gallery expansion showcasing one of the largest, most valuable art collections in Australia and creating a home for more than 7,000 works of art valued at \$126 million.

Our community is everything - young ones, old ones, diverse ones, challenging ones and it is a privilege to have people reach out to you in your role as a Councillor and Committee Chair to ask for advice and assistance.


Our future is incredibly bright should we choose it to be and it is this future that is here for us to shape for our kids, in education and research, in renewables and health, in arts and culture, in tourism and hospitality and finally in the creation of jobs.

Opportunities that this city did not see for decades are now right in front of us. It has been the opportunity of a lifetime to serve the community as Chair of the Community and Culture Advisory Committee over the past seven years. Its an experience that I will ever be so grateful for and will never forget.


**Cr Carol Duncan**  
Chair




# Membership




Lord Mayor  
Cr Nuatali Nelmes



Cr Carol Duncan  
Chair



Cr Margaret Wood  
Deputy Chair



Cr Jenny Barrie

- Dr Ann Hardy, University of Newcastle – Stakeholder Member
- Dr Shane Bransdon – Community Member
- Anna Hombsch – Community Member
- Jasmine Fletcher – Community Member



Toy Run

# Objective of the committee

To provide advice and guidance on the development of strategies, and identification of challenges and opportunities, in relation to cultural planning, arts and cultural opportunities, community pride and local identity, and community involvement which encourages a sense of belonging within the LGA.

### Summary of key items of business considered

DATE OF MEETING	BUSINESS ITEM
6 February	2023 Annual Report Benefits and importance of festivals in the Newcastle Foreshore Precinct – Groovin’ the Moo Place-based philanthropy Museum Archive Libraries & Learning Briefing
7 May	Catapult Choreographic Hub Briefing Cultural Infrastructure University of Newcastle (UoN) Engagement Community & Cultural Investment Projects New Annual Cultural Festival Destination Management Plan progress update Special Business Rates
2 July	Reduction of meeting cycle 2024 New Annual Cultural Festival Upstage – Civic Playhouse Grants and Sponsorships 2024/25 Program Arts Precincts End of Committee appreciation and thank you



# Major events

City of Newcastle (CN)'s commitment to major events is supported by the unanimously adopted Newcastle Destination Management Plan (DMP) 2021–2025, which was also endorsed by key stakeholders including Business Hunter, Newcastle Airport, the University of Newcastle, Tourism Accommodation Australia, Destination Sydney Surrounds North and the Newcastle Tourism Industry Group.

'Events, Festivals and Conferencing' is one of the seven key themes in the DMP. That is, building awareness of Newcastle and showcasing its destination strengths through attracting and developing signature events.

In 2024 26 events, attracting approximately 86,000 local attendees, 53,000 day visitors, and 73,000 bed nights were delivered through CN's Strategic Event Partnership and Event Sponsorship programs, resulting in a total direct economic impact within the Newcastle local government area of more than \$18 million.

CN's Strategic Event Partnership Program is the funding mechanism used to attract, retain and deliver events that provide significant economic dispersal through visitation, beyond typical local event sponsorship. CN also established a Major Events Partnership with Venues NSW in 2022 through this program providing the catalyst for multiple new touring events held in the city.

The Venues NSW Partnership to date has resulted in 43 event days, with over 550,000 attendees of which 29% were from outside the Hunter region and delivered an overall estimated economic benefit of \$65 million.

Major events provide one of Newcastle's strongest and most cost-effective ways to boost destination awareness. CN works closely with all major events hosted in the city to ensure destination messaging and visual content is maximised through broadcast opportunities as well as leveraged through social media channels. This can be demonstrated by the Paul McCartney concert with destination messaging and imagery amplified through Paul McCartney's Facebook and Instagram channels with a combined 13.1 million followers, with "Newcastle Australia" now listed on the Beatles and Paul McCartney Tourism Map.

CN is currently undertaking a review of its Community Strategic Plan, Newcastle 2040, which includes 'Vibrant Events' under its 'Creative Newcastle' pillar. In the September 2024 Community Consultation Report for the Newcastle 2040 review, 21% of respondents listed 'Events' as an action that would make Newcastle more creative, with the summary feedback being a desire for 'more events and festivals, and attracting larger/ significant state and national events'.

CN undertakes an annual Community Satisfaction Survey. The 2024 Survey had 53% of respondents stating they were satisfied or very satisfied with entertainment and events, a decrease from 59% in 2023. For promotion of Newcastle (tourism), 46% stated they were satisfied or very satisfied, a decrease from 60% in 2023.

The Newcastle Major Events Evaluation Report 2021 by EY Sweeney stated 77% of businesses and 67% of residents believed the benefits of major events to Newcastle outweighed the negative impacts. The same report stated 76% of residents supported CN investing in the attraction and development of major events in Newcastle, and 84% believed major events were a benefit to Newcastle and the community.





# Summary of key achievements



Sponsored Events for the 2024 calendar year are listed below:

EVENT	MONTH
2024 Australian Country Cricket Championships	Jan
Hunter Hurricanes	Jan
Ngarrama	Jan
2024 Diving NSW Country Championships	Jan
Beach Rugby	Jan
Clipper Round the World	Jan
Deaf Games	Jan
P!NK	Feb
CN Fitness Festival	Feb/April
Hockey NSW	March
Sailfest	March
Hunter Schools Sports Association	March
Surfest	March
NRLW State of Origin	June
Newcastle Comedy Festival	Jun/ Jul
Girls Day Out	Sep
National Parkour Gathering	Oct
Newkulele Festival	Oct
Junior Theatre Festival	Oct
RSL Congress	Oct
Hockey NSW - Suite of Events	Oct/ June
Summer of Cricket	Oct/March
National Veterans Cricket Championships	Nov
Toy Run	December
King of Concrete	December
Portside Festival	December

Combined, the above events attracted approximately 85,900 locals, 52,600 day visitors from outside of Newcastle, and 73,600 bed nights.

Conservatively, the total economic injection into Newcastle businesses resulting from the above events is estimated at \$18,776,676.



# Event Highlights

## P!NK

One of the outcomes of CN's strategic partnership with Venues NSW is Newcastle's ability to host international music artists in a venue with capacity that provides a sound business case for major touring companies such as Frontier Touring and Live Nation. Due to CN's partnership with Venues NSW, P!NK's 'Summer Carnival' Tour included a concert at McDonald Jones Stadium in February 2024 to an audience of more than 34,000 including local, intrastate, interstate and international visitors. The estimated economic impact of the P!NK concert is over \$4 million.



P!NK, McDonald Jones Stadium

## NEW ANNUAL

Outside of CN's Events Sponsorship and Strategic Event Partnership Programs, CN is also committed to supporting Newcastle's creative arts and cultural sector and does this through CN's Flagship Arts and Cultural Festival New Annual, a ten-day festival of art, culture and creativity. The fourth edition of the New Annual Festival in 2024 transformed Newcastle's cultural landscape through an ambitious artistic program that balanced intimate storytelling with large-scale community celebrations. The curatorial approach for the 2024 Festival centred on three key principles: artistic innovation, community engagement, and cultural exchange. By presenting leading national artists with local creators, we fostered new creative partnerships that have influenced artistic practice beyond Newcastle. New Annual 2024 included a combination of twenty-eight events, exhibitions and workshops.



New Annual 2024





2024 Matters resolved by Council

CCL 27/02/2024 Newcastle Art Gallery Partnership Agreement
CCL 27/02/2024 Newcastle Maritime Museum Society Collection Storage Facility Lease
NOM 27/02/2024 Celebrating 150 years of Local Government in Wallsend
NOM 27/02/2024 Bring the Rugby World Cupto Newcastle
NOM 23/04/2024 NCC Support the 25th anniversary of the state finals of the Science and Engineering Challenge held at the University of Newcastle in 2015
LMM 23/04/2024 Acknowledging and Celebrating Idahobit Day
LMM 28/05/2024 CN Grants & Sponsorship Program
CCL 25/06/2024 Special Business Rate Audit Outcome
NOM 23/07/2024 Support for our Creative Workers
LMM 23/07/2024 Newcastle Premier League T20 Cricket Competition
CCL 23/07/2024 Supplementary Report – Special Business Rate Audit Outcome
LMM 27/08/2024 Bringing the World Surf League to Newcastle
NOM 27/08/2024 Recognition of Paralympians and inclusive sport in Newcastle
LMM 26/11/2024 NRLW Magic Round
LMM 26/11/2024 Newcastle's Bid to Host 2026 Rugby League World Cup Matches
NOM 10/12/2024 Youth Mock Council

Summary of performance and governance

Date of Meeting	Quorum achieved	Members in attendance	Agenda circulated to members and published on CN's website	Declaration of conflicts of interest listed as agenda item	Minutes circulated to members, adopted by the committee and published on CN's website
6 February	Quorate	Cr Carol Duncan – Councillor Member (Chair) Cr Margaret Wood – Councillor Member (Deputy Chair) Cr Jenny Barrie – Councillor Member Dr Ann Hardy – Stakeholder Member Anna Hombsch – Community Member	Yes	Yes	Yes
7 May	Quorate	Cr Carol Duncan – Councillor Member (Chair) Cr Jenny Barrie – Councillor Member Dr Shane Bransdon – Community Member Anna Hombsch – Community Member	Yes	Yes	Yes
2 July	Quorate	Cr Carol Duncan – Councillor Member (Chair) Cr Margaret Wood – Councillor Member (Deputy Chair) Cr Jenny Barrie – Councillor Member Dr Shane Bransdon – Community Member	Yes	Yes	Yes



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