

**Management report to Council**

Agenda 6.7

**Fee Waiver Request for events occurring in Docklands in 2020**

Council

**Presenters:****25 February 2020**

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**Purpose and background**

1. The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval to waive permit fees for public events occurring in Docklands for the remainder of the 2020 calendar year, to help drive increased visitation to the area.
2. On 28 August 2019, Central Pier in Docklands was closed unexpectedly by Development Victoria after an inspection identified that the structure had deteriorated and it was no longer safe to occupy. After extensive investigations, Development Victoria announced on 3 January 2020 that Central Pier would remain closed indefinitely as it was unable to guarantee the pier could be made safe for public access in the future.
3. The closure of Central Pier has contributed to a significant downturn in visitation to Docklands as the Pier housed a number of restaurants and function spaces that were forced to close during peak season and now remain closed indefinitely. Events planned for those spaces have had to relocate out of Docklands, and this has had a flow-on effect to local accommodation providers and other traders.
4. Docklands Chamber of Commerce estimates the closure of Central Pier will result in a loss of between 1–1.5million visitors to Docklands annually<sup>1</sup>. As a result, the Docklands Chamber of Commerce has sought urgent support from City of Melbourne (CoM) to help attract events and visitation back to Docklands.

**Key issues**

5. CoM manages a number of public places in Docklands suitable for hosting public events and a number of events are already provisionally booked to occur in these locations in 2020 (see Attachment 2). To help address the current downturn in visitation to Docklands, management is proposing the following incentives to help drive new event business to the area:
  - 5.1. Temporarily waive fees associated with Special Event permits for all public events occurring in public open space in Docklands for the remainder of 2020. Council already waives event permit fees for community or not-for-profit event organisers. Management is proposing to temporarily extend the fee waiver for the benefit of all public events;
  - 5.2. Temporarily waive fees associated with Place of Public Entertainment (POPE) Permits for all public events for the remainder of 2020. All POPE permit fees (see Attachment 3) are currently chargeable, and management is proposing to temporarily waive POPE permit fees for all public events (occurring in a public place in Docklands managed by Council). For the avoidance of doubt, event organisers would not be exempt from the POPE process but the resulting POPE permit fees would be waived;
  - 5.3. Increased promotional support via CoM marketing channels for all public events occurring in Docklands for the remainder of 2020, to help drive increased visitation to these events.
6. In return for these fee waivers, management will investigate what additional programming and/or marketing each event organiser could implement in order to attract greater attendee numbers.
7. For events occurring in 2021 and beyond, the Event Partnership Program's weighted assessment criteria already preferences events occurring in Docklands, recommending a higher level of investment if the event meets the remainder of the program's objectives. This will continue when the round next opens in May 2020 for events occurring in 2021.
8. Special Event permits are required under the *Activities Local Law 2019* for events occurring in a public place prescribed by Council and, in addition, the *Building Act 1993* requires that a person must not organise, carry out or cause public entertainment to be carried out unless an Occupancy Permit for a Place of Public Entertainment (POPE) has been obtained from the Municipal Building Surveyor (MBS). CoM charges a fee for both permits, and Council approval is required prior to either of these fees being waived.

<sup>1</sup> Source: Docklands Chamber of Commerce <https://www.eventbrite.com.au/e/docklands-permanent-harbour-activation-stakeholder-sessions-tickets-91959636749>

**Recommendation from management**

9. That Council approves:
  - 9.1. The full waiver of Special Event permit fees for all public events (occurring in a public place in Docklands managed by Council) held between 1 March 2020 and 31 December 2020.
  - 9.2. The full waiver of Place of Public Entertainment (POPE) fees for all public events (occurring in a public place in Docklands managed by Council) held between 1 March 2020 and 31 December 2020.

**Attachments:**

1. Supporting attachment ~~Qa ^ A4 - A D~~
2. list of events booked in Docklands for 2020 and from 2019 (Page 4 of 5)
3. POPE permit fees (Page 5 of 5)

**Supporting Attachment**

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**Legal**

1. The report accurately identifies the relevant legal issues.

**Finance**

2. Council already waives event permit fees for community or not-for-profit event organisers; however, waiving Special Event permit fees for commercial event organisers will result in lost revenue for Council:
  - 2.1 Existing event bookings: There are 13 events provisionally booked to occur in Docklands for the remainder of 2020, three of which will be delivered by commercial organisations and would normally be required to pay event permit fees. The projected lost revenue as a result of waiving event permit fees for those three events in 2020 would be approximately \$8,634 excluding GST in total.
  - 2.2 New event bookings: Without knowing how many new events might choose a Docklands location it's difficult to realistically project the full potential lost revenue. For context, in calendar year 2019 a total of 15 public events occurred in Docklands (see Attachment 3) of which three commercial events paid a total combined amount of \$4,946 excluding GST in event permit fees.
3. Waiving fees for POPE's will result in lost revenue for Council. Projected lost revenue for existing event bookings will start at approximately \$51,600 excluding GST, however depending on the number of structures and weekend inspections, the lost revenue could be as much as \$71,175. Without knowing how many additional events might choose a Docklands location it's difficult to realistically project the full potential lost revenue.

**Conflict of interest**

4. No member of Council staff, or other person engaged under a contract, involved in advising on or preparing this report has declared a direct or indirect interest in relation to the matter of the report.

**Health and Safety**

5. A permit for a Special Event is required to manage and facilitate responsible trading and entertainment on streets and public places to increase the safety, attractiveness and comfort of these places. The waiving of fees in the circumstances notes will not exempt an event organiser from needing to gain a Special Event permit where necessary.
6. A Permit for a POPE is required to ensure that events can occur without risk to public safety. The waiving or reducing of fees in the circumstances noted above will not exempt an event organiser from needing to gain a POPE permit where one is required.

**Stakeholder consultation**

7. Docklands Chamber of Commerce is supportive of these initiatives. No further stakeholder consultation has been undertaken.

**Relation to Council policy**

8. Not applicable.

**Environmental sustainability**

9. In developing this proposal, no environmental sustainability issues or opportunities have been considered as they are not relevant to this scenario.

**Public events currently booked for Docklands in 2020**

Event Name	Event Date	Venue
CBD Gaine	Sunday, 1 March 2020	Docklands Park
JUMP Safety event	Wednesday, 4 March 2020	Harbour Esplanade South
Lankan Fest 2020	Sat 21 - Sun 22 March 2020	Harbour Esplanade North and South
Pranzo con la famiglia (part of MFWF)	Sunday, 22 March 2020	Buluk Park and Tom Thumb Lane
Run for the Kids 2020	Sunday, 29 March 2020	Harbour Esplanade North and South, NAB Forecourt, Newquay Promenade East and West, Victoria Harbour Promenade, Docklands Park, Ron Barassi Snr Car Park, plus additional spaces across the city
Under the Stars (Indonesian Film Festival)	Sunday, 19 April 2020	Buluk Park
Vertical Village Waste Market (Village Street)	Sunday, 17 May 2020	Village Street, Docklands
National Reconciliation Week in Docklands 2020	Monday, 1 June 2020	Docklands Park
Firelight Festival 2020	26-28 June 2020	Harbour Esplanade North and South, Newquay Promenade East and West, Victoria Harbour Promenade
Ride2Work Day Community Breakfast 2020	Wednesday, 21 October 2020	Docklands Park, Neill Street Reserve
<i>Event Name withheld, not yet announced</i>	6-8 November 2020	Newquay Promenade East and West
Diwali Film Show	Tuesday, 3 November 2020	Point Park
NYE 2020	Thursday, 31 December 2020	Collins Landing Harbour Esplanade North and South, NAB Forecourt, Newquay Promenade East and West, North Wharf Road, Victoria Harbour Promenade, Yarra's Edge (River Esplanade), plus additional spaces across the city

**Public events held in Docklands in 2019**

Event Name	Event Date	
Australia Day 2019	January	
Movies Under the Stars	February	
Park Cinema	February - March	
Dragon Boat Regatta	February	
Neighbour Day	March	
Run for the Kids 2019	April	
National Reconciliation Week in Docklands 2020	May	
Firelight Festival 2019	June - July	
Future Living Systems	July	
The Bloody Long Walk 2019	August	
Melbourne City Race	October	
Ride2Work Day Community Breakfast 2019	October	
Diwali Film Show at Docklands	October	
Walking Stars	December	
NYE 2019	December	

POPE Occupancy Permit Fees

**Occupancy Permit for Places of Public Entertainment**

Application type	Application Fee	Late Fee
500m <sup>2</sup> to 5,000 m <sup>2</sup>	\$1,500 <sup>3,7</sup>	\$750 <sup>10</sup>
5,001m <sup>2</sup> to 15,000m <sup>2</sup>	\$2,500 <sup>4,7</sup>	\$1,250 <sup>11</sup>
15,001 m <sup>2</sup> to 25,000 m <sup>2</sup>	\$4,000 <sup>5,7</sup>	\$2,000 <sup>12</sup>
25001m <sup>2</sup> *	\$6,025 <sup>6,7</sup>	\$3,015 <sup>13</sup>
Additional structures over limit <sup>8</sup>	\$145.00	N/A
Additional Inspections <sup>9</sup>	\$145.00 (per hour)	N/A
Variation to Occupancy Permit	Due to a variation of work load that can result from these requests, it is necessary to assess variations on an individual basis.	N/A

Notes

3. Maximum of 5 structures and includes 2 hours of inspection
4. Maximum of 20 structures and includes 6 hours of inspection
5. Maximum of 30 structures and includes 8 hours of inspection
6. Maximum of 50 structures and includes 12 hours of inspection
7. Additional structures above what is listed will require further fees to be determined by the Municipal Building Surveyor.
8. Charged per extra structure over limit specified above.
9. When requested, after hours or weekend inspections will be charged an overtime rate of \$290.00 an hour. Please confirm prior to booking.
10. Lodged within 2 weeks of event start date
11. Lodged within 4 weeks of event start date
12. Lodged within 6 weeks of event start date
13. Lodged within 8 weeks of event start date