

## 2022-2026 BURRINJA CULTURAL CENTRE PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

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Report Author: Manager Creative & Connected Communities  
Responsible Officer: Director Communities  
Ward(s) affected: Streeton;

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*The author(s) of this report and the Responsible Officer consider that the report complies with the overarching governance principles and supporting principles set out in the Local Government Act 2020.*

### CONFIDENTIALITY

This item is to be considered at a Council meeting that is open to the public.

### SUMMARY

For nearly twenty years, Council has supported Burrinja Cultural Centre (Burrinja) as a key strategic partner via funding and representation on the independent Board.

The most recent agreement between Burrinja and Council expired on 30 June 2022 and there have been delays in finalising a new agreement. The Burrinja Board have been briefed and kept updated on the delay and work towards a new agreement.

This report presents the draft 2022-2026 agreement with a proposal to increase the term from 3 to 4 years with two further 1 year options to extend the agreement and includes updated key performance indicators (KPI's) which better align with key Council strategies. (See attachment 1 – Draft 2022-2026 Burrinja Partnership Agreement).

### RECOMMENDATION

***That Council endorse the 2022-2026 Burrinja Cultural Centre Partnership Agreement which includes:***

- (a) A 4 year term with two further 1 year options to extend;***
- (b) Annual funding of \$592,885 for the term of the agreement; and***
- (c) Updated KPI's which better align with Burrinja Cultural Centre and Council Strategies.***

## **RELATED COUNCIL DECISIONS**

In 2016 Council endorsed a multi-year partnership program that is open and competitive. In doing so Council identified that in the case of Burrinja there are specific service-related outcomes that are different from other partners. Council agreed that the partnership should not be open to competition.

## **DISCUSSION**

### ***Purpose and Background***

Burrinja Cultural Centre (Burrinja) is the operational name for the Dandenong Ranges Community Cultural Centre Inc. Burrinja occupies the previous Shire of Sherbrook council offices through a lease agreement with Council. Council undertook a redevelopment of the facility in 2012 establishing a 400 seat performing arts centre and then in 2021 upgraded the galleries, studios and café. The cultural centre is a not-for-profit arts organisation and registered charity, incorporated in 1999. Burrinja is governed by an independent Board, which includes Yarra Ranges Council representation.

Burrinja is an important cultural institution, which provides valuable services and support to our community. This has been particularly important in recent times when local creatives have been hard hit and the broader community is in need of places to support creative expression, joy and connection.

Council funds Burrinja via a multi-year Partnership Agreement which has historically been for a period of 3 years.

In recent years despite the challenges of the pandemic and its impact on creative industries, Burrinja has been able to progress through a period of growth and change.

### **Partnership Outcomes**

The Partnering Agreement with Council, formed in 2012, initiated a mutually beneficial alliance between Burrinja and Council to ensure effective planning, development and delivery of arts and cultural services for the region in keeping with the aims and objectives of Burrinja and relevant Council policies including Council's Creative Communities Strategy.

Burrinja delivers programming, artist workspaces and collection management services as well as the full operation of the facility via a lease agreement with Council.

In the 2021-22 financial year, Burrinja welcomed over 30,000 audience members and supported almost 800 artists with over 600 unique artworks shown in the gallery.

Programming highlights included a creative response to the June 2021 storm event with curated exhibitions, community engagement and artist commissions, open studios, free workshops and outdoor music festivals.

Burrinja have contributed to the local community via auspicing services and giving in-kind project management support to community projects. They continue to support community events and have partnerships with key community groups and facilities.

Through leveraging Council's partnership, Burrinja have been successful in securing multi-year funding of \$100,000 annually from Creative Victoria which will increase their impact in driving community outcomes. They have also secured funding to add crucial humidity control capability to gallery spaces, further improving this state of art facility.

(See Attachment 2 for the Burrinja Cultural Centre 2021-2022 Annual Report).

### **2018-2021 Partnership Agreement**

The previous agreement between Council and Burrinja was approved by officers under delegation.

The 2018-2021 agreement was extended for 12 months under the CEO's delegation and ended on 30 June 2022.

In accordance with the contract terms a review of the contract period was conducted to ensure continued alignment with objectives. The previous four year contract period delivered many challenges to the Burrinja team with a change in leadership, Covid impacts, and a community heavily impacted by the storm event. Throughout this period Burrinja continued to deliver uninterrupted service to the community which included online and digital engagement, provision of a work hub during ongoing power outages and deep engagement in cultural recovery activities. The review conducted by Council officers found that the service that is provided by Burrinja continues to be required to meet the cultural needs of the local community with the key finding being to update KPI's to have a stronger alignment with Councils Creative Communities Strategy and the Burrinja Strategic and Creative Plan 2021-2025.

### **2022-2026 Partnership Agreement**

In the context of the agreement ending on 30 June 2022, Council officers have been in regular contact with Burrinja management regarding their funding needs and Burrinja indicated their financial position is stable and instead of extending the previous agreement for a further 12 months, their preference is to enter into a new agreement incorporating improvements recommended from the previous agreement.

The recommended improvements are:

- Clearer and measurable KPIs which better align with Burrinja Cultural Centre's Business Plan and Strategic Plan as well as with key Council strategies; and
- Aligning the Partnership Agreement with the 4 year Lease Agreement to streamline processes and provide a level of certainty with all touch points between Burrinja and Council.

In 2020 Burrinja appointed a new Creative Director who undertook a process to develop a new strategic plan. This work involved considerable community engagement and consultation with Council officers to develop a plan that is underpinned by both a Creative Plan and Business Plan.

The Burrinja Strategic and Creative Plan 2021-2025 is embedded in the Partnership Agreement (See Attachment 1 – Draft 2022-2026 Burrinja Partnership Agreement Schedule 2 pg 18) and outlines four key focus areas:

- Enabling, facilitating, and developing creative practice;
- Strengthening communities through art;
- Championing multiple voices and cultural values; and
- Developing leadership and sustainability

The four key focus areas form the basis of the updated KPI's that have been established with four clear measurable actions relating to each focus area. (See Attachment 1 – Draft 2022-2026 Burrinja Partnership Agreement – Schedule 10).

### ***Options considered***

Rollover the previous agreement with existing KPI's. This was deemed not suitable as the KPI's did not adequately align with key Council strategies and the changing situation within the creative sector.

Extend the previous agreement by 12 months to allow time to develop updated KPI's. With the objective to align all agreements between Burrinja and Council, this would delay the renewal of the new lease agreement. Burrinja also indicated their preference to develop a new agreement in line with their Strategic and Creative Plan 2021-2025.

### ***Recommended option and justification***

Finalise a new agreement backdated to 1 July 2022 for a period of 4 years which aligns with the Lease Agreement and reflects KPI's which contribute to the Burrinja Strategic and Creative Plan 2021-2025.

## **FINANCIAL ANALYSIS**

The total funding allocated to Burrinja from the 2018-2021 agreement including the 12 month extension was \$2,268,678 over the term of the agreement and extension. This included an annual increase by CPI.

The 2022-2026 agreement provides annual funding of \$592,885 for the term of the agreement. This amounts to \$2,371,540 over the 4 year term not including two further 1 year options to extend.

## **APPLICABLE PLANS AND POLICIES**

This report contributes to the following strategic objective(s) in the Council Plan:

“Connected and Healthy Communities”

*Communities are safe, resilient, healthy, inclusive and socially well connected. Quality services are accessible to everyone.*

“Quality Infrastructure and Liveable Places”

Quality facilities and infrastructure meets current and future needs. Places are well planned and are hubs of activity that foster wellbeing, creativity and innovation.

And aligns with the following strategies, plans and policies:

- Health and Wellbeing Strategy;
- Creative Communities Strategy;
- Equity Access and Inclusion Strategy;
- Child and Youth Strategy;
- Healthy and Active Ageing Plan; and
- Reconciliation Framework for Action and Reconciliation Policy.

## **RELEVANT LAW**

The agreement includes a statement about commitment to Council’s Gender Equity vision and meeting requirements of the Gender Equality Act 2020.

## **SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

### ***Economic Implications***

Burrinja provides Yarra Ranges with a valuable attraction which can draw economic benefit to the region due to their programming offering and initiatives delivered. Burrinja also contributes to the Creative Industry by offering a high quality working space for local creatives.

### ***Social Implications***

Burrinja is an important cultural institution, which provides valuable services and support to our community particularly at a time when local creatives have been hard hit and the broader community is in need of places to support creative expression, joy and connection.

### ***Environmental Implications***

There are no environmental implications

### **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

There is no requirement for community engagement

### **COLLABORATION, INNOVATION AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT**

Burrinja management and internal Council departments have been consulted in developing this agreement.

### **RISK ASSESSMENT**

Risk	Mitigation
Impact on community of not supporting Burrinja with funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• New agreement with improved KPI's is finalised</li><li>• Ongoing evaluation of Burrinja programming outcomes</li><li>• Designated contract manager from Council</li></ul>
Not receiving best value for funding provided	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Robust monitoring process including regular meetings with Burrinja management</li><li>• Improved KPI's to better align to Council strategies and Burrinja's strategic plan</li><li>• Monitoring and completion of reporting as required</li><li>• Councillor representation on the Burrinja Board</li><li>• Designated contract manager from Council</li></ul>

### **CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

No officers and/or delegates acting on behalf of the Council through the Instrument of Delegation and involved in the preparation and/or authorisation of this report have any general or material conflict of interest as defined within the *Local Government Act 2020*.

## **ATTACHMENTS TO THE REPORT**

1. Attachment 1 – Draft 2022-2026 Burrinja Partnership Agreement (Published Separately)
2. Attachment 2 – Burrinja Cultural Centre 2021-2022 Annual Report (Published Separately)