

**Subject: LMM 23/02/2021 - Inaugural New Annual Cultural Festival success**

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**MOTION**

**That City of Newcastle:**

1. Notes that our inaugural 10-day cultural festival New Annual was held across the City between 12-21 February 2021, attracting over 30,000 people, cementing Newcastle's status as a hub of creativity and culture;
2. Acknowledges that more than 500 artists and 250 staff, crew and volunteers were involved in the delivery of New Annual, ensuring the festival delivered a strong economic boost to the local arts sector and that the festival was proud to collaborate with several existing events and festivals, including Newcastle Writer's Festival, This is Not Art (TiNA) festival, Big Picture Fest, The Olive Tree Market, and Micro Theatre festival.
3. Notes that more than 28 ticketed COVID Safe sessions and hands-on workshops were sold out or at capacity during New Annual;
4. Acknowledge that New Annual drew visitors from the surrounding regions, around the state and further afield including Queensland and Victoria.
5. Notes initial data that indicate New Annual coincided with improved vacancy rates among local accommodation providers, with initial figures from the Australian Accommodation Monitor Reports showing a 13 per cent rise in bookings and 37 per cent jump in accommodation revenues during the first Friday and Saturday night of New Annual when compared to the corresponding period last year (prior to the introduction of COVID-19 restrictions).
6. Congratulates our amazing local artists for embracing New Annual, and helping the City to create a truly world-class arts and cultural festival for Novocastrians and our visitors
7. Thanks our incredible City of Newcastle staff, particularly our Major Events and Corporate Affairs team, led by Kathleen Hyland and New Annual Project Manager Kate Britton, for their work to deliver such a successful festival
8. Notes that New Annual will return from 24 September to 3 October 2021, with early October to become the festival's ongoing annual date in the events calendar.

**BACKGROUND:**

City of Newcastle is the creative arts capital of New South Wales with a higher per 10,000 population number of arts and recreation businesses than anywhere else in the state.

We have long recognised the need for a coordinated approach to delivering a collaborative, inclusive city-wide arts and cultural festival, to bring together our diverse and successful artists and creatives.

With New Annual, we are pleased to have achieved a cohesive and coordinated approach to showcasing our amazing local artists and cultural offerings.

The vision of New Annual is to put Newcastle on the radar nationally and internationally, as a creative city where exciting, ambitious and accessible contemporary art and culture grow and thrive.

The mission for the festival is to foster a prosperous, diverse and resilient economy and build capacity in the arts and cultural sector by delivering a contemporary cultural event that showcases Newcastle as a creative hub.

It is also vehicle to share the City's stories with growing audiences through the values of diversity, collaboration, participation, connection and authenticity.

**RELATED PREVIOUS DECISIONS:**

- **LMM 25/09/2018 - Arts & Cultural Festivals in Newcastle**