

# AGENDA

---

## GEELONG MAJOR EVENTS COMMITTEE - ORDINARY MEETING

**Monday 8 September 2025**  
**6:15 pm**

Wurriki Nyal  
137-149 Mercer Street, Geelong 3220

### MEMBERS:

Cr A Katos (Deakin Ward) – Chair  
Cr A Aitken (Corio Ward)  
Cr E Kontelj (Hamlyn Heights Ward)  
Cr T Sullivan (Leopold Ward)  
T Carter (Tourism Greater Geelong and The Bellarine)  
R Birrell (External GME Committee Member)  
S Gove (External GME Committee Member)  
K Boorman (External GME Committee Member)  
Deirdre McGuane (External GME Committee Member)  
Marcus Gale (External GME Committee Member)  
Peter Hertan (External GME Committee Member)  
T Bradley (City of Greater Geelong)\*

\*As proxy for CEO A Wastie

## **1. PROCEDURAL MATTERS**

### 1.1. Acknowledgement of Country

Council acknowledges the Wadawurrung People as the Traditional Owners of the Land, Waterways and Skies. We pay our respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging. We acknowledge all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are part of our Greater Geelong community today.

### 1.2. Apologies

### 1.3. Declarations of Conflicts of Interest

### 1.4. Confirmation of Minutes of July 2025 Ordinary Meeting

### 1.5. Correspondence for noting

### 1.6. Question Time

## **2. REPORTS**

### **Event Evaluations:**

#### 2.1 2025 AusCycling Cyclo-Cross National Series, Round 1 & 2

*(Confidential attachments)*

#### 2.2 2025 National Celtic Folk Festival

*(Confidential attachments)*

### **Annual Report:**

#### 2.3 Geelong Major Events Committee Annual Report 2024-2025

## **4. COMMITTEE DISCUSSION**

## **5. NEXT MEETING**

The next GME meeting will be held on Monday 10 November 2025

---

**MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING  
OF GEELONG MAJOR EVENTS COMMITTEE  
MONDAY 21 JULY 2025 COMMENCING AT 5.30PM**

**Held at Wurriki Nyal – 137-149 Mercer Street, Geelong (Hybrid Meeting)**

**PRESENT:** Cr Anthony Aitken (Chair), Cr Andrew Katos, Cr Trent Sullivan, Cr E Kontelj, Tennille Bradley (CEO Proxy), Tracy Carter (Executive Director Tourism Greater Geelong & The Bellarine, Robyn Birrell, Brenden Caligari, Kent Boorman

**Also present:** Hannah Sidebottom (GME Executive Officer), Brendan Sanders (Manager, Economic & Cultural Development), Sue Arnold (A/Events Coordinator), Teresa Seg (Minutes)

**OPENING:** The Chairperson welcomed the Committee and declared the meeting open at 5.31pm.

**1. PROCEDURAL MATTERS:**

**1.2 APOLOGIES:** Shannan Gove, Julie Maxwell

**1.3 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS:** Cr Eddy Kontelj, Kent Boorman

**1.4 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF MAY 2025 ORDINARY MEETING**

**A Katos moved, E Kontelj seconded –**

**That the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 19 May 2025 be accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting and be confirmed and signed.**

**Carried**

**1.5 CORRESPONDENCE FOR NOTING:** Nil.

**1.6 QUESTION TIME:** Nil.

**2. COMMITTEE DISCUSSION**

**3. CONFIDENTIAL REPORTS**

**Event Evaluations:**

**3.1 2025 Head of the Schoolgirls Regatta – Post Event Evaluation**

**R Birrell moved, A Katos seconded -**

**That Geelong Major Events consider this matter in the confidential section of the meeting.**

**Carried**

**3.2 2025 IRONMAN 70.3 Geelong Pro Series- – Post Event Evaluation**

**E Kontelj moved, T Carter seconded -  
That Geelong Major Events consider this matter in the confidential section of the  
meeting.**

**Carried**

**3.3 2025 3x3 Hustle Junior National Championships – Post Event Evaluation**

**B Caligari moved, R Birrell seconded -  
That Geelong Major Events consider this matter in the confidential section of the  
meeting.**

**Carried**

**Sponsorship Requests:**

**3.4 2025 Melbourne Renegades**

**A Katos moved, E Kontelj seconded -  
That Geelong Major Events consider this matter in the confidential section of the  
meeting.**

**Carried**

**3.5 2026 Vic Open Golf Championships**

**T Sullivan moved, E Kontelj seconded -  
That Geelong Major Events consider this matter in the confidential section of the  
meeting.**

**Carried**

**3.6 2026 Melbourne Fashion Festival**

**A Katos moved, T Carter seconded -  
That Geelong Major Events consider this matter in the confidential section of the  
meeting.**

**Carried**

**3.7 2026 – 2028 Head of the Schoolgirls Regatta**

**R Birrell moved, E Kontelj seconded -  
That Geelong Major Events consider this matter in the confidential section of the  
meeting.**

**Carried**

**3.8 2026 & 2027 Pro Series (IRONMAN 70.3 Geelong)**

**B Caligari moved, T Carter seconded -**

**That Geelong Major Events consider this matter in the confidential section of the meeting.**

**Carried**

**3.9 2026 – 2028 Geelong Running Festival**

**A Katos moved, B Caligari seconded -**

**That Geelong Major Events consider this matter in the confidential section of the meeting.**

**Carried**

**4. NEXT MEETING**

The next GME meeting will be held on Monday 8 September 2025

**CLOSE OF MEETING**

The meeting was closed at 5.37pm on Monday 21 July 2025.

## 2. REPORTS

### 2.1 2025 AusCycling Cyclo-Cross National Series, Round 1 & 2 – Event Evaluation

**Confidential:**

Confidential information is contained in Attachment 1 as circulated in the confidential section of the report attachments. The information in the Attachment is confidential information for the purposes of 66(2)(a) and the definition of “confidential information” in section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 2020 because it is council business information, being information that would prejudice the Council’s position in commercial negotiations if prematurely released (section 3(1)(a)). This section is applicable as the report includes sensitive budgetary information provided by the event organisers, the disclosure of which could adversely impact their operations. Furthermore, it contains commercially sensitive details regarding sponsorship amounts, which may compromise the committee’s ability to negotiate effectively in the future.

**Purpose:** to provide an evaluation of the 2025 UCI Gran Fondo World Championships Lead in Event in line with the sponsorship agreement with AusCycling.

**Background:** Geelong Major Events supported the 2025 AusCycling Cyclo-Cross National Series, Rounds 1 and 2, as a lead-in event and a contractual requirement of the 2025 UCI Gran Fondo World Championships.

The double-header weekend attracted Australia’s top CX riders, with a fully installed course overlaid on the Belmont Criterium Track. While event metrics were lower than those typically associated with GME-supported events, the series delivered positive legacy outcomes for the region and showcased the City’s Belmont Criterium Track as a venue capable of hosting national-level competition.

Summary of key event metrics	
Total Visitor Nights	724
Estimated Job Creation	1.3
Total Economic Impact	<b>\$169,810.99</b>
Total Attendance	<b>452</b>

#### Recommendation

**That the Geelong Major Events Committee:**

- 1. Endorse the 2025 AusCycling Cyclo-Cross National Series, Round 1 & 2 Event Evaluation and note the officer’s comments.**

#### Attachments:

1. 2025 AusCycling Cyclo-Cross National Series, Round 1 & 2 Event Evaluation

## 2.2 2025 National Celtic Folk Festival – Event Evaluation (Confidential)

### Confidential:

Confidential information is contained in Attachment 1 and Attachment 2 as circulated in the confidential section of the report attachments. The information in the Attachment is confidential information for the purposes of 66(2)(a) and the definition of “confidential information” in section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 2020 because it is council business information, being information that would prejudice the Council’s position in commercial negotiations if prematurely released (section 3(1)(a)). This section is applicable as the report includes sensitive budgetary information provided by the event organisers, the disclosure of which could adversely impact their operations. Furthermore, it contains commercially sensitive details regarding sponsorship amounts, which may compromise the committee’s ability to negotiate effectively in the future.

**Purpose:** to provide an evaluation of the 2025 National Celtic Folk Festival in line with the sponsorship agreement with National Celtic Folk Festival Inc.

**Background:** Held over the June long weekend in Portarlington, the National Celtic Folk Festival is one of Australia’s premier celebrations of Celtic music, culture, and community. Across four days, the town comes alive with more than 65 acts and 1,600 performers from Australia and overseas. Events are spread across 14 venues and the foreshore, offering music, dance, theatre, storytelling, literature, and visual arts from morning to night.

The program blends ticketed concerts with a wide range of free community activities, including street performances, workshops, dance events, markets, and local food and beverage experiences. Community involvement is central, with schools, local groups, and regional artists helping shape the program.

Despite extreme weather conditions in 2025, the festival attracted increased visitation, reinforcing its resilience and its importance to the region’s cultural and economic life. It also continues to lead the way in sustainability, operating with a no single-use plastic policy. All bars use reusable cups that are washed on site, and this year the festival partnered with a local charity on a container deposit scheme, raising funds for the Brotherhood of St Laurence.

Average occupancy in Portarlington in June is typically around 25%. This jumped to 76% on Friday 6 June, 81% on Saturday 7 June, and 78% on Sunday 8 June. While an uplift over a public holiday is expected, these results indicate the event drove significant visitation and overnight stays for the region. Geelong also recorded a sharp increase in occupancy, peaking at 82% on Saturday 7 June.

The Have Your Say survey promoted on Events Geelong social pages received 9 responses, with 100% agreeing that the event positively impacts the local community economically, socially, and culturally. Among respondents 100% were satisfied with the event’s sustainability efforts, and 89% strongly agreed that the event contributes to Geelong’s reputation as a premier event destination.

<b>Summary of key event metrics</b>	
Total Visitor Nights	12,287
Estimated Job Creation	27.5
Total Economic Impact	<b>\$3,445,266.00</b>
Total Attendance	<b>16,212</b>

### Recommendation

**That the Geelong Major Events Committee:**

- 2. Endorse the 2025 National Celtic Folk Festival Event Evaluation and note the officer’s comments.**
- 3. Confirm payment of the additional sum, as per Clause 4.2.1 of the sponsorship agreement, for the 2026 event, on the basis that the 2025 event achieved the required 3% increase in total revenue.**

### Attachments:

1. 2025 National Celtic Folk Festival Event Evaluation
2. 2025 National Celtic Folk Festival Independent Evaluation

## 2.3 Geelong Major Events Committee Annual Report 2024-2025

**Source:** Placemaking  
**Executive Director:** Tennille Bradley

### Purpose

1. To provide an overview of the Geelong Major Events Committee (GME) activities and financial position for the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025.
2. To note the Geelong Major Events 2024-2025 Annual Report

### Background

3. GME was established as a Council Advisory Committee in 1998 and formalised under section 86 of the Local Government Act 1989 (Act) in October 1999. That 1989 Act is now replaced by the Local Government Act 2020, section 63 Delegated Committees.
4. The continued success of GME in attracting and supporting major events depends on ongoing funding from the Council. GME is committed to securing and sponsoring events that align with the objectives outlined in the Geelong Major Events Strategy 2024-2029.

### Key Matters

5. The 2024-2025 financial year was the first year implementing the Geelong Major Events Strategy 2024–2029, which outlines a clear vision to establish Geelong as Australia’s leading regional destination for events, where major events drive outstanding outcomes and enhance the region’s national profile
6. Between July 1, 2024, and June 30, 2025, the Geelong region successfully hosted 12 major events supported by GME.
7. The 12 major events stimulated economic activity and provided social benefits to our community. An estimated \$93.5 million of event expenditure was generated in our region, which supported the equivalent of an estimated 747 full-time jobs and represents a return on investment of 55:1.
8. During the period, GME considered 15 applications for funding.
9. Of the 499,004 event attendees, 171,652 (34%) were residents from the Geelong region. In contrast, 327,352 (66%) were visitors from outside the area, highlighting the strong draw of major events in attracting tourism and contributing to the local economy.

10. The GME Strategy outlines four key targets it is seeking to achieve by 2029, with progress tracked against the targets annually:

<b>2029 Target</b>	<b>2024-2025 Progress</b>
<p><b>Economic Impact</b> Annual increase of 10% in total economic impact over the next five years to \$131 million by 2029</p>	<p><b>On track</b> The \$91 million in economic return represents a year-on-year increase of 76%, driven in large part by the exceptional performance of the bi-annual Avalon Australian International Airshow.</p>
<p><b>Brand Marketing Impact</b> The Major Events portfolio has 20% Anchor Events</p>	<p><b>On track</b> When considering the Avalon Airshow and Cadel Evans Great Ocean Road Race as anchor events, the portfolio consists of 33% anchor events, representing 4 out of the 12 total events</p>
<p><b>Community Impact</b> Increase in local participation and attendance at major events by 30% by 2029.</p>	<p><b>On track</b> Local residents accounted for 33% of the total attendance at major events in 2024-2025.</p>
<p><b>Sustainability Impact</b> Reduce the major events carbon footprint by 50% by 2029.</p>	<p><b>Work to do</b> Current assessments show that 66% of attendees are satisfied with sustainability efforts at major events. To meet the sustainability targets, further initiatives and improvements are required. Looking ahead, greater focus will also be placed on social procurement and ensuring that events prioritise local businesses and suppliers.</p>

**Recommendation**

**That the Geelong Major Events Committee:**

1. **Notes the Geelong Major Events Annual Report for the 2024-2025 Financial year (Attachment 1) and endorses it to proceed to Council.**
2. **Acknowledge the contribution that members of the Geelong Major Events Committee have made over the period.**

### ***Financial Sustainability***

3. The total Council allocation of sponsorship funding of \$1,536,518 paid during the period was within budget. With \$930,739 coming from the \$1.2 million Geelong Major Events allocation and \$605,779 for the Cadel Evans Great Ocean Road Race and the Avalon Australian International Airshow, paid directly from the council budget.

### ***Community Engagement***

4. The 2024-2025 GME-sponsored events provided social benefits for the local community through participation and spectator opportunities, with 91 per cent of funded events offering some form of free public access.
5. During the period, 295 responses were received from the community through the Have Your Say event surveys. A majority of attendees viewed the events positively, with 89% agreeing or strongly agreeing that they had a beneficial impact on the local community, both economically, socially, and culturally. Additionally, 70% of respondents felt the event significantly enhanced Geelong's reputation as a premier event destination. In comparison, 66% expressed satisfaction with the event's sustainability efforts, including waste management and use of eco-friendly materials.
6. GME meetings during the period were held on the third Monday of each month, commencing at 5:30 pm at Wurriki Nyal. Ordinary meetings are open to the public, with details advertised in City News and on the City's website. During the term, one member of the public attended a GME meeting.
7. GME consists of:
  - a. Up to six (6) external representatives of the business/media/arts or events community;
  - b. Up to four Councillors of Council (which includes the Chair);
  - c. The Executive Director of Tourism Greater Geelong and the Bellarine; and
  - d. The Chief Executive Officer (or a CEO Proxy).

All members have full and equal voting rights.

### ***Social Equity and Sustainability***

8. GME funding decisions are guided by the Geelong Major Events Strategy 2024-2029, the Committee's Terms of Reference, and an assessment framework that ensures decisions are strategic, well-informed, and aligned with governance rules.
9. Major events in Geelong make a significant contribution to the community's social, environmental, and economic well-being. In line with the Geelong Major Events Strategy, funded events aim to minimise environmental impacts while maximising positive legacies, supporting the City's long-term sustainability goals.
10. The events staged within this reporting period provided social benefits for the local community through participation and spectator opportunities, with 11 of these major events offering some level of free public access to the event.

11. It is estimated that 499,004 spectators attended the 12 events staged during the period ending 30 June 2025.

***Relevant Law/Policy/Legal Implications***

12. In August 1998, Council established GME as a section 86 Committee under the provisions of the Act to stimulate and encourage events within the municipality.
13. The objectives of the Committee are:
  - a. GME will strive to stimulate and encourage events that offer the best opportunity to provide measurable economic benefits, potential to market Geelong outside the municipality and enhance local community life through participation of residents.
  - b. GME will support the development and sustainability of events while focusing its activities on a clearly defined strategic program.
  - c. GME will establish and maintain strong links with the private sector, government and our communities to achieve high levels of stakeholder investment and engagement required to realise the potential of the events sector in Geelong.
  - d. Specific actions to the achievement of the objectives include:
    - i. A Geelong Major Events Strategy and Annual Business Plan in accordance with the terms of reference;
    - ii. Maintenance of a funding submissions and evaluation process;
    - iii. The development and attraction of new events;
    - iv. The continuous improvement of current events;
    - v. Facilitation of state and federal government and private sector funding wherever possible;
    - vi. Recommendations to Council regarding event infrastructure needs; and
    - vii. Allocation of funds from the budget or make recommendations to the Chief Executive Officer or Council for funding of proposals that have satisfied the criteria and are in accord with the strategy.

***Alignment to Community Plan and Vision***

14. This report aligns with Our Community Plan 2021-2025 strategic priority:  
Economic Development
15. This report aligns with the Community led 30-year Vision, “Greater Geelong: A Clever and Creative Future” community aspiration:  
A destination that attracts local and international visitors.  
An inclusive, diverse, healthy and socially connected community.

***Conflict of Interest***

16. No officer involved in the preparation of this report declared a general or material conflict of interest.

### ***Risk Assessment***

17. The management of risks associated with events is an important aspect to protect the community and Council's assets. Significant processes are in place to ensure all events staged in the region have adequate risk and emergency management procedures in place. In addition risk profiling is completed on all events during the application and assessment phase.
18. All high-risk major events are required to present detailed event plans to Geelong's Events Multi Agency Working Group, coordinated by Council's Event Services Unit and chaired by Victoria Police. Through this process, event organisers receive feedback and advice from key agencies and stakeholders, including Victoria Police, WorkSafe, Fire Rescue Victoria, Ambulance Victoria, Regional Roads Victoria, and the Municipal Building Surveyor, to ensure events are delivered safely and effectively.

### ***Environmental Sustainability***

19. Each application for funding to GME is assessed against a range of criteria, including environmental impact.
20. Environmental considerations include energy usage, use of renewable sources, water usage, waste and recycling generated, traffic congestion, use of non-powered transport options, pollution, damage to natural environments, and event legacies such as new or reinvigorated resources. The environmental impact of each event is assessed, and where appropriate, actions are identified to protect the environment.
21. Council plays a leading role in working with external agencies and event organisers to ensure that environmental implications are appropriately managed.
22. Events staged during this period implemented a range of programs to minimise environmental impacts and carbon footprint, while also proactively delivering positive legacies.

### ***Attachments***

1. Geelong Major Events Committee Annual Report 2024-2025