

**Notice of Meeting:**

I hereby give notice that an ordinary meeting of the Dunedin City Council will be held on:

**Date:** Thursday 23 April 2026  
**Time:** 9.00 am  
**Venue:** Council Chamber, Dunedin Public Art Gallery, the Octagon, Dunedin

Sandy Graham  
Chief Executive Officer

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**Council**  
**SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA**

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**MEMBERSHIP**

<b>Mayor</b>	Mayor Sophie Barker	
<b>Deputy Mayor</b>	Cr Cherry Lucas	
<b>Members</b>	Cr John Chambers	Cr Christine Garey
	Cr Doug Hall	Cr Marie Laufiso
	Cr Russell Lund	Cr Mandy Mayhem
	Cr Benedict Ong	Cr Andrew Simms
	Cr Mickey Treadwell	Cr Lee Vandervis
	Cr Steve Walker	Cr Brent Weatherall
<b>Senior Officer</b>	Sandy Graham, Chief Executive	
<b>Governance Support Officer</b>	Lynne Adamson	

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Lynne Adamson  
Governance Support Officer

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**Note:** *Reports and recommendations contained in this agenda are not to be considered as Council policy until adopted.*

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## REPORTS

### NEW YEAR'S EVE CELEBRATION 2026 UPDATE

Department: Events and Enterprise Dunedin

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#### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1 Staff have worked with the Economic Development (ED) Portfolio Leads to present two options in this paper that enhance/improve on the event that was delivered in 2025/26.
- 2 The purpose of this report is to provide Council with options to consider the shape of the 2026/27 New Year's Eve celebration event.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Council:

- a) **Considers** its preferred option for delivering the New Year's celebration event 2026/27

#### BACKGROUND

- 3 The 2025/26 celebration took place across two locations within the central city. A Family Zone operated on George Street from 5:00pm following sentiment around the suitability of a family event in the drinking precinct.
- 4 This celebration hub featured a range of activities tailored for children and families. A special parade to the Octagon for an 8:00pm kids' countdown drew the audience to the Octagon Main Stage. The evening programme included a line-up of local talent musical acts from 8:00pm to 12:15am.
- 5 The midnight countdown was marked onstage with a countdown, live bagpipers, music from the Ōtepoti All Stars and a small lighting display on stage. Roaming performers, interactive elements, diverse food offerings and visual features all added to the celebratory experience.
- 6 Following the event a survey was undertaken and the feedback showed 61% of 432 respondents indicating dissatisfaction. Council requested staff work with one of the Economic Development (ED Lead) Portfolio Leads to build on the 2025/26 event within the existing budget and provide costed alternative options (including fireworks) for consideration at the April 2026 Council meeting when they resolved:

*Moved (Cr Andrew Simms/Mayor Sophie Barker):*

*That the Council:*

- a) **Notes** the feedback from the community on the 2025/26 New Years Eve event.
- b) **Commits** to building on the previous event for the 2026/27 New Years celebration within the existing budget.
- c) **Asks** staff to work with the ED portfolio leads to cost alternative options (including fireworks at various locations) with appropriate consultation and bring costed options back to Council by April 2026.

**Motion carried (CNL/2026/016)**

## DISCUSSION

- 7 Fireworks were traditionally a key feature of the city's New Year's Eve celebrations in the Octagon until 2020/21. That year, the presence of scrim around the Civic Centre and Municipal Chambers posed a fire risk, resulting in the discontinuation of the display. Over the following three years, the event featured light and laser shows as an alternative. These received increasingly mixed reviews from the public through direct feedback, media coverage, and online commentary. Public feedback consistently referenced the absence of fireworks during these years.
- 8 With scrim around the Civic Centre being reduced in 2025, possible fireworks display off the Civic Centre is again possible.
- 9 Staff worked closely with ED Lead and relevant city stakeholders to identify a New Year's celebration schedule that will be attractive to residents and visitors of all demographics and deliver a 'wow factor' befitting the change of year.
- 10 Through the process, potential fireworks locations including the harbour and Robin Hood Park were investigated. In the case of the harbour, staging fireworks from a barge was found to be cost prohibitive and moved economic activity away from the central business district. In the case of Robin Hood Park, staging fireworks within the Octagon was found to have a greater impact for event attendees.
- 11 To improve on the 2025/26 event staff worked with ED Lead to assess options. The key aspects of the 2026/27 event can be summarised as follows.
  - A local entertainment company and covers band have been approached to perform for two hours leading up to midnight presenting a programme of rock and popular music designed to appeal to a wide audience demographic.
  - A fireworks display from the Civic Centre area with the possibility of curating the display to music
  - The early evening offering, which received strong positive feedback from the public, will be strengthened with enhanced workshops and children's entertainment. This component will be located within the Octagon area rather than George Street to mitigate costs incurred by operating across two city locations.

- 12 The following table provides the cost breakdown for the event in 2025/26 and proposed budget for 2026/27. The 2025/26 event was delivered below budget. Different entertainment options and adding the fireworks display increases the budget required for this event by approximately \$27,000 to \$159,000. This budget increase can be accommodated within the existing Festival and Events plan delivery budget.

Activity	2025/26		2026/27 Budget	
	\$ Actual	\$ Budget	\$ Option 1	\$ Option 2
Production	56,346	58,500	60,000	60,000
Contractors	7,934	36,800	6,000	6,000
Traffic Management	11,742	12,000	10,000	10,000
Advertising	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000
Entertainment	15,836	20,900	30,000	30,000
Fireworks	-	-	50,000	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>94,848</b>	<b>131,200</b>	<b>159,000</b>	<b>109,000</b>

- 13 A decision is required to enable delivery of Dunedin’s New Year’s Eve celebrations. Planning for this event, particularly securing contractors to deliver fireworks or lightshows during a high demand period must occur in the first quarter of the year to secure contracts.

## OPTIONS

### Option One

- 14 Deliver a family friendly celebration with city activations, a headline covers band and fireworks display at midnight.

#### *Advantages*

- Provides an event likely to have broad appeal for public to attend the Octagon New Year’s Eve activities retaining locals that might otherwise leave the city.
- Fireworks, coupled with the headline artists, present a strong opportunity to promote the event regionally to attract people to the city.

#### *Disadvantages*

- Additional cost is incurred for the fireworks display
- The location of the display means fireworks will not be seen from around the city, with sightlines only visible from around the Octagon area.
- Could have an impact on wildlife and other animals within the Octagon and CBD area.

### Option Two – Status Quo

- 15 Continue with city centre activations and concert without a fireworks display. The family friendly celebrations continue to be developed with city activations, activities and a headline covers band.

#### *Advantages*

- Will provide reduced budget spend.
- No impact on wildlife and other animals.

#### *Disadvantages*

- Event delivered may not address the feedback received following the 2025/26 celebration.
- By not acting on the public sentiment, there is a risk of losing residents and visitors over the holiday period to other destinations.

### NEXT STEPS

- 16 The next steps will depend on the decision that Council makes regarding their preferred option. Once confirmed, staff will manage the recommendation and deliver the required activities.

### Signatories

Author:	Dan Hendra - Team Leader - Events Teresa Fogarty - Destination Manager
Authoriser:	Mike Costelloe - General Manager, Arts, Culture & Economic Development

### Attachments

There are no attachments for this report.

**SUMMARY OF CONSIDERATIONS**

***Fit with purpose of Local Government***

This decision enables democratic local decision making and action by, and on behalf of communities. This decision promotes the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of communities in the present and for the future.

***Fit with strategic framework***

	Contributes	Detracts	Not applicable
Social Wellbeing Strategy	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Economic Development Strategy	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environment Strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>
Arts and Culture Strategy	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3 Waters Strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	✓
Future Development Strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	✓
Integrated Transport Strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	✓
Parks and Recreation Strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	✓
Other strategic projects/policies/plans	✓	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

This decision fits within the Council’s key strategies, particularly the Festivals and Events Plan and Destination Management Plan.

***Māori Impact Statement***

The Events team are standing up a Māori advisory panel that will consult and advise on the team’s schedules to ensure and facilitate appropriate consultation and advice on how to integrate Te Ao Māori into our events portfolio.

***Sustainability***

Fireworks cause short spikes in air pollution, emissions and debris that can contaminate land. They also disturb wildlife. Modern pyrotechnics companies use more sustainable materials and methods to reduce debris and general environmental effects of fireworks. The companies approached for Dunedin’s New Year celebrations will use pyrotechnics designed to produce no debris and no fallout.

***LTP/Annual Plan / Financial Strategy /Infrastructure Strategy***

There are no impacts.

***Financial considerations***

Covered in the body of the report.

***Significance***

This decision is considered a low assessment in terms of the Council’s Significance and Engagement Policy.

***Engagement – external***

A public survey was conducted by staff following the 2025/2026 NYE event and this report responds to the feedback received.

