

Palmerston North City Council  
Community Events Review 2023

## Executive Summary

Palmerston North City Council provides community events for its residents through the Community Events Programme which is managed and delivered by the Events Team of council. This team aims to make Palmy Proud, protect the reputation of the council and the city, give residents a sense of belong to the community and give residents and visitors things to do in the evenings and weekends.

The 2021-2031 Long Term Plan of council proposes a review of how Programme 1506 Community Events is utilised to ensure aspirations of the community are met, and the current and future make-up of the annual calendar of events delivered by council is appropriate, fit for purpose, embraces the history and looks to the future of event trends.

A range of surveys have been undertaken during the summer of 2022-2023, with formal and informal canvassing of residents at events and online to seek general satisfaction with the current calendar of events as well as event elements that residents would like to see both more and less of at community events in Palmerston North.

# 1 Current Landscape

The current calendar of events delivered as part of Programme 1506 is below. Commemorative Events (Anzac Day and Armistice Day) are included here to gauge levels of service for officers but are funded from a separate programme. This programme has been developed since the last event review in 2017. A number of new events have been added to the calendar without an increase in staffing levels.

There is a mix of what can broadly be described as cultural events, festive events and annual “Palmy” events. Funding allocations made by officers are managed by assessment of appropriate funding levels to meet aspirations of the organising committees and balancing cost estimates for necessary elements such as infrastructure or health and safety requirements.

**Table 1: 2022-2023 Financial Year Events Calendar**

Event	Date	Location	Community Stakeholder	Funding
Moon Festival	05-18/09/22	Library, Massey, MCA Hall	MCA, MCCT, IPU, Manawatu Vietnamese Association, Manawatu Malasian Society, Active Learning, Global Parents, Korean Society, MUSA	\$12,000
Diwali	29/10/22	Te Marae o Hine – The Square	CDIA, MUSA, IPU, Manawatu Hindu Association, Telegu Society, UCOL	\$25,000 (plus \$8,000 MBIE funding)
Armistice Day	11/11/22	War Memorial, Conference and Function Centre	NZDF (NZ Army, Royal NZ Airforce, NZ Navy) Merchant Navy, RSA	\$5,000
A Very Palmy Christmas Concert	3/12/22	Te Marae o Hine – The Square		\$90,000
A Very Palmy Christmas Parade	4/12/22	Te Marae o Hine – The Square, Central City	Kairanga Lions (under contract)	\$30,000
New Year's Eve	31/12/22	Te Marae o Hine – The Square	Performance Consulting (under contract)	\$95,000
Lunar New Year	28/1/23	Te Marae o Hine – The Square	MCA, MCCT, IPU, Manawatu Vietnamese Association, Manawatu Malasian Society, Active Learning, Global Parents, Korean Society, MUSA	\$12,000
Waitangi Day	6/2/23	Te Marae o Hine – The Square	Rangitāne o Manawatū	\$30,000 (plus \$10,00 funding MCH, \$7,000 MBIE)
Explore Esplanade Day	12/2/23	Victoria Esplanade		\$80,000

Festival of Cultures	23-25/2/23	Te Marae o Hine – The Square, Caccia Birch House	Manawatū Multicultural Council	\$120,000
Festival of Colours	17/3/23	Te Marae o Hine – The Square	UCOL, IPU, MUSA, Manawatu Multicultural Youth Council	\$18,000
Anzac Day	25/4/23	War Memorial, Te Marae o Hine – The Square	NZDF (NZ Army, Royal NZ Airforce, NZ Navy) Merchant Navy, RSA	\$35,000
*Puanga Twilight Festival (Matariki)	14/7/23	TBC	Rangitāne o Manawatū	\$35,000

\*Matariki falls just after the financial year but is included for reference on the annual calendar

Funding of \$25,000 for a feasibility study has been allowed for this financial year for a possible arts festival in the city. Event marketing and city promotional costs (advertising, city flags, banners and installation labour) make up the remaining budget.

Moon Festival will be funded from the Community Led Initiatives Fund in future years due to the content and aspirations of the organising committee.

NB: Major Events funded projects delivered by external producers have been left off this list as they are funded through a different programme and therefore outside of the scope of this review, however each of these events are provided appropriate wrap-around support and contract management by a council officer.

## 2 Review Findings

Residents were asked about the current event programme and what they enjoyed and did not enjoy. They were also asked to think about what they believe is missing and to provide any ideas that council officers could look to add to the current offering of events. 751 responses were received via online surveys and on-site event questionnaires between October 2022 and March 2023. Residents who responded are either online (website and Facebook) or visited events this season.

Residents were specifically asked if they think large, publicly funded Fireworks displays should continue. 35% of respondents were not supportive, 25% neutral and 40% supportive. Several respondents suggested the current Speedway fireworks as being sufficient for Palmerston North citing animal welfare and environmental concerns as considerations and justification to reduce spending on public displays.

Many respondents wish to continue a mix of locations for events including Te Marae o Hine – The Square, The Esplanade and locations on the River Reserve such as Ahimate Reserve.



## 2.1 Survey Results

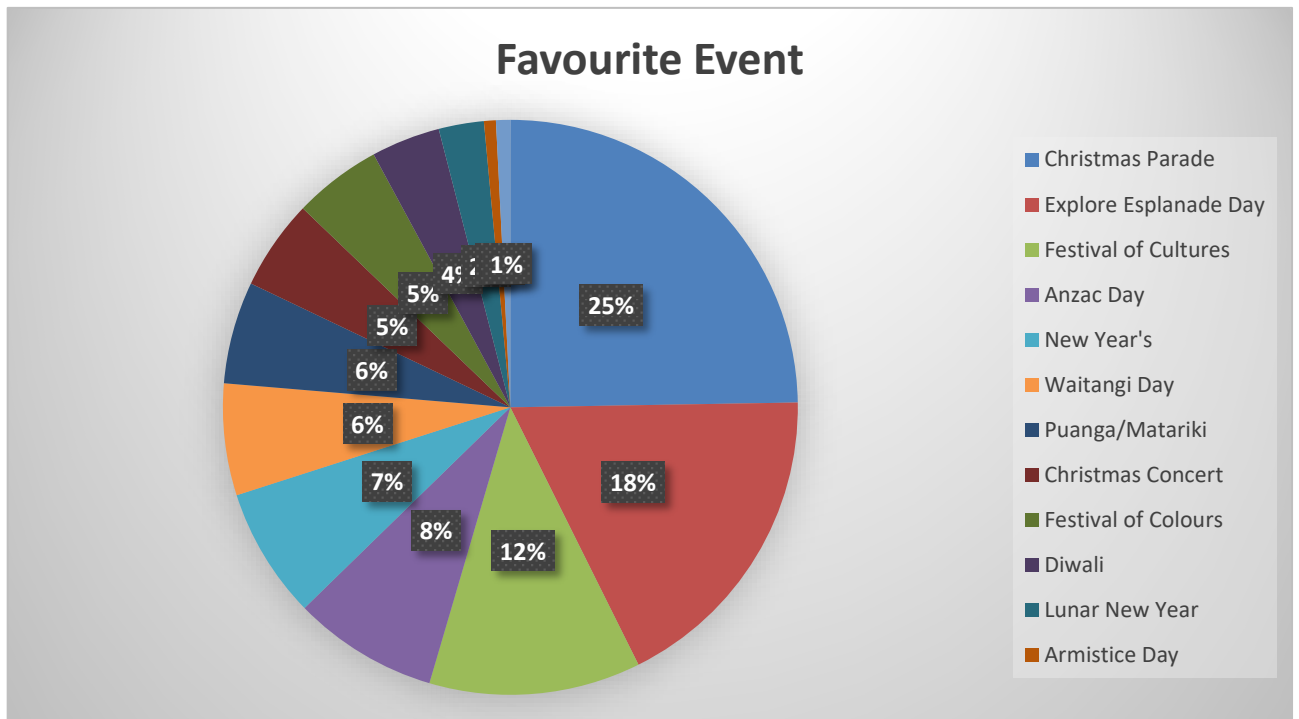


Figure 2-1: Favourite Event delivered by PNCC Events Team

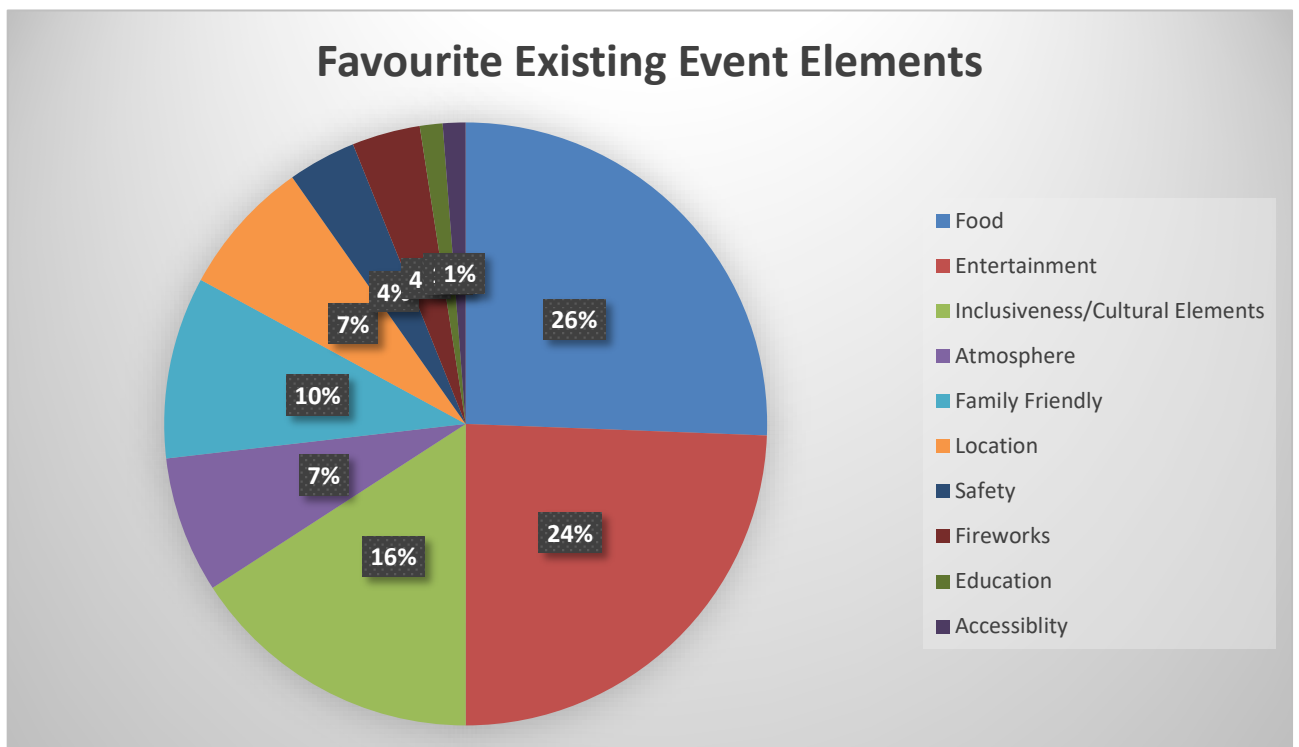


Figure 2-2: Favourite Existing Event Element



**Figure 2-3: Suggestions**

### 3 For consideration

Residents have shown general satisfaction with the current programme of events the council delivers however an opportunity exists to look at the types of activities and entertainment provided at council events. A strong anchor is needed as a purpose of each event as demonstrated by the community appreciation for recent additions to the annual calendar such as Diwali, Puanga (Matariki) and Lunar New Year.

Residents have shown an appetite for innovation to be included either in our existing events or as a stand-alone event (see Lights, drones and tech above). This is likely to appeal to a wide audience, including residents in the 18-35 demographic who often lament that the lack of events relevant to them as demonstrated through recent resident satisfaction surveys. It would be worth considering the cost of such an event if council sees value in this. At the least, community events should provide locally accessible offerings and continue to evolve innovative elements such as light and laser shows.

There is a general desire for “food” events – elements which could be incorporated in other celebrations through street festivals and activations that target local food innovation and producers. However, this also provides council with an opportunity to think more creatively in this space and develop a bespoke food focussed event for Palmy. It is suggested that the

events team look at who might partner such an event and report back to council with some ideas through the next LTP considerations.

Resident desire for publicly funded and delivered fireworks is shifting and as such, council should reduce spending and support for fireworks displays and instead rely on community delivered displays such as Speedway and Lions Clubs.

Increased funding, as trialled this financial year, should be allocated to Waitangi Day and Matariki events to meet the aspirations of Mana Whenua as well as the interests of residents as demonstrated through surveying.

A proposed calendar follows. This calendar assumes the current proposed annual budget is adopted.

#### Proposed 2023-2024 Financial Year Events Calendar

Event	Date	Location	Community Stake- Holder
*Puanga Twilight Festival (Matariki)	14/7/23	TBC	Rangitāne o Manawatū
Palmy Pride	October (TBC)	Various	(TBC) ACROSS social services, ITS Industry Training – All Sorts Café, ARCS – Rape Crisis, Inside Out – Working around rainbow awareness in schools, MALGRA, Women’s Centre, Joseph St Kitchen, Enabling Good Lives
Diwali	18/11/23	Te Marae o Hine – The Square	CDIA, MUSA, IPU, Manawatu Hindu Association, Telegu Society, UCOL
Armistice Day	11/11/23	War Memorial, Conference and Function Centre	NZDF (NZ Army, Royal NZ Airforce, NZ Navy) Merchant Navy, RSA
A Very Palmy Christmas Concert	2/12/23	Te Marae o Hine – The Square	
A Very Palmy Christmas Parade	3/12/22	Te Marae o Hine – The Square, Central City	Kairanga Lions (under contract)
New Year’s Eve	31/12/22	Te Marae o Hine – The Square	
Lunar New Year	TBC	Te Marae o Hine – The Square	MCA, MCCT, IPU, Manawatu Vietnamese Association, Manawatu Malasian Society, Active Learning, Global Parents, Korean Society, MUSA
Waitangi Day	6/2/23	Te Marae o Hine – The Square	Rangitāne o Manawatū
Explore Esplanade Day	3/3/24	Victoria Esplanade	
Festival of Cultures	22-23/2/24	Te Marae o Hine – The Square, Caccia Birch House	Manawatū Multicultural Council

Festival of Colours	TBC	TBC	UCOL, IPU, MUSA, Manawatu Multicultural Youth Council
Anzac Day	25/4/24	War Memorial, Te Marae o Hine – The Square	NZDF (NZ Army, Royal NZ Airforce, NZ Navy) Merchant Navy, RSA
*Puanga Twilight Festival (Matariki)	28/6/24	TBC	Rangitāne o Manawatū



# PALMY<sup>TM</sup>

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PALMERSTON  
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CITY