

Steampunk The Thames - grant funding variation request

TO Thames Community Board
FROM Brian Robson – Thames Community Manager
DATE 08 May 2018
SUBJECT Steampunk the Thames - grant funding variation request

1 Purpose of Report

To obtain approval for Steampunk The Thames Inc to repurpose and retain the 2017/2018 Thames Community Board Local Economic Development grant of \$15,000.

2 Background

Steampunk The Thames Inc applied for a Thames Community Board Local Economic Development Grant of \$45,000.00 (**Attachment A**) and was granted \$15,000 at the 22 May 2017 Thames Community Board meeting, to set up and implement the long term plan to create a Steampunked Destination iSite.

47/17 Resolved

TCB That the Thames Community Board:

1. Receives the 'Allocation of 2016/2017 Thames Local Economic Development Grant' report, dated 3 May 2017.
2. Permits the successful applicants to retain the funds for expenditure in the 2017/2018 financial year.
4. Confirms the allocation of funding from the 2016/2017 Thames Local Economic Development Grant budget to organisations who have applied for financial assistance as follows, with conditions to be provided by Visitor Solutions:

	Organisation Name	Initiative	Grant Sought	Grant Given	Given
3	Steampunk the Thames	To help set up and implement the long term plan to create a Steampunked destination i-SITE	\$45,000	\$15,000	

Moved/Seconded By: Yates/French

The Thames Local Economic Development Grant Funding Agreement (Clause 1.3 Other terms) stipulated that:

Steampunk The Thames is required to develop a plan for the practical implementation of a Steampunk hub [...] which should include proposed location, visitor experience outline, preliminary concept plans, development cost, operational plan and demonstrated linkages with the Thames Promotion and Optimisation Plan.

On 14 April 2018 Steampunk The Thames President, John McKeowen informed Thames Community Manager (**Attachment B**) that a suitable location for Steampunk Central has been made available by local businessman Steve Sowerby. Mr McKeowen clarified that Steampunk Central was to be a visitor destination but not a visitor information centre. The letter further stated that Visitor Solutions had not delivered a succession plan for Steampunk The Thames and that they were drawing one up themselves.

Mr McKeowen also requested permission to retain a portion of the funds for the 2018/2019 financial year and to use the funds for more practical implementation steps, specifically materials and labour to create the initial phase of Steampunk Central.

Due to concerns about security of tenure in Steve Sowerby's premises, an assurance was sought that no grant funding would be used for structural improvements to the site. Mr McKeowen wrote to Thames Community Board on 1 May 2018 (**Attachment C**) with an assurance that the items to be constructed - a movable stage, a freestanding lean-to, shelving and cupboards, work benches, three sculptures, 50 chairs and a forge - would all be able to be relocated if the site were no longer available. Estimated costs are provided and an opening date of 4 August 2018 is proposed.

Clause 1.3 (Other terms) of the Thames Local Economic Development Grant funding agreement required concept and operational plans. Steampunk The Thames Inc is now asking to move directly to an implementation phase. Therefore the Thames Community Board needs to consider whether it wishes to allow the grant money to be spent on functional enhancements to the Steampunk Central space on the basis of estimated expenses alone.

Whether Thames Community Board allows the funds to be used for construction or whether it upholds the original planning requirement, some portion of the grant money will be left unspent by the termination date of 30 June 2018. Point 14 in the Thames Community Board Grants criteria states that:

Any Community Grant funds not spent on the project for which the funds were applied for by the close of the Council's financial year must be returned to the Thames-Coromandel District Council unless written approval to retain the funds is obtained from the relevant Community Board.

3 Discussion

The original Local Economic Development Grant application was made in conjunction with Craig Jones of Visitor Solutions and the focus was on drawing up a Business and a Strategic plan and securing a contract for a long term site. For a variety of reasons, there was limited collaboration between Steampunk The Thames Inc and Visitor Solutions in 2017 and it was concluded by both parties that there was little to be gained by maintaining the relationship. Steampunk The Thames went on to produce a Business Plan for the 2017 festival and to secure the premises for Steampunk Central independently.

4 Suggested Resolution(s)

That the Thames Community Board:

1. Receives the request from Steampunk The Thames Inc to repurpose and retain 2017/18 Thames Community Board Local Economic Development Grant Funding report.
2. Approves the retention of any portion of the \$15,000 Thames Community Board Local Economic Development Funding Grant for 2018/19 by Steampunk The Thames Inc.
3. Approves the repurposing of the \$15,000 Thames Community Board Local Economic Development Funding Grant for implementation of the plan to create a Steampunk Central hub.

References-Tabled/Agenda Attachments

Attachment A *Local Economic Development Grant Application*

Attachment B *Request to repurpose and retain the funds*

Attachment C *Estimate of costs*

Attachment D *Floor Plan*

[Attachment A - Thames Local Economic Development Grant Application - S...](#)

Attachment B
Attachment A - Expressions of Interest

[Attachment C - Update - Donation received for establishment Steampunk...](#)

Attachment D - Steampunk Central Floor Plan

Attachment D