

AMENDED ITEM

25 September 2013
To the Ordinary Council Meeting

Director's Report
Community and Recreation Services
Department

6.6 Wyong Shire Council Beach Services Agreement

TRIM REFERENCE: F2004/06257 - D03811755

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SUMMARY

This report outlines what will be included and excluded from the Wyong Shire Beach Safety Service for the 2013/14 swimming season which commenced on the 21 September 2013 as per the Council resolution of 11 September 2013.

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receive the report on Wyong Shire Council Beach Services Agreement.

Beach Safety Services

A service level agreement has been signed between the Director of Infrastructure and Operations and the Manager of Open Space to supply beach safety services as stated in the body of this report for the next three years with a year one budget of \$669,112.76.

The table below sets out the level of service that is being provided under this Service Level Agreement as per Council resolution 11 September 2013 and any differences from the previous season's level of service.

Lifeguard Service	2013/14	2012/13
Six Beaches	✓	✓
Minimum two lifeguards per beach	x*	✓
Open between the hours of 9am – 5pm with a 1hour extension during Christmas holidays to 6pm.	✓	✓
A third lifeguard at three high usage beaches over Christmas holidays.	✓	✓
A fourth lifeguard if required at Soldiers Beach or Shelly Beach in extreme periods	x**	✓
Peak period education program	x**	✓
Shared Plant except jet skis	✓	✓
Discretionary extra hours for risk reduction in peak periods	x***	✓
Reduction in lifeguards on beach if closed and weather permits	✓	x

* As per alternative 2 in the Tender documents, there will only be two lifeguards on the North Entrance beach during school holidays. All other periods will have one lifeguard on duty with support from the lifeguards at The Entrance beach.

** Not part of the tender specification.

*** Was removed by Council resolution.

Changes to service from previous year

There are four areas of significance in relation to reduction in service from previous years.

Minimum of two lifeguards per beach

As a cost saving initiative, an alternative was offered in the tender process, which Council resolved to adopt, that reduces the number of lifeguards at North Entrance outside of school holiday periods to one lifeguard with support from the two lifeguards at The Entrance, one who is in the channel tower and the other in the surf club tower, with the use of a jet ski.

Another alternative Council resolved to accept is to reduce the lifeguards by one, if the weather conditions deem that the beach could be closed without increasing the risk to the community. This alternative valued at \$23,241 over three years of the contract will only be realised if weather conditions allow. If this alternative isn't realised, as stated in the tender, this cost will be an increase on the amount stated above. Hours saved in this alternative will be monitored against estimated hours and reported by the Manager of Open Space to the Director of Infrastructure and Operations on a monthly basis.

Peak season education

As per a previous Council resolution, Council staff have undertaken a very successful peak season education program focused on a target audience that are overrepresented in drownings within Wyong Shire. This included:

- Beach safety radio advertisements
- Regular visits to unpatrolled beaches
- Seminars at caravan parks
- Handout of educational materials at beaches
- Educational programs highlighting the risks of mixing alcohol consumption with recreational swimming

This program was not part of the tender specification and will not be provided as part of the beach safety service this year.

Discretionary extra hours

As per a previous Council resolution, staff were given the ability to extend service hours if the level of risk to the community was considered too high to close the beaches and leave. This consideration was based on the number of people on the beach along with surf and weather conditions and determined in consultation between the lifeguards and the lifeguard co-ordinator. This discretionary service was utilised predominantly at Soldiers Beach during the school holiday period on approximately 15 occasions. There were numerous times during this extra period where lifeguards were required to rescue people in trouble. Under this agreement there is no allowance to increase the hours that the beaches are open, regardless of the level of risk and likelihood that a person may drown. Staff will be instructed to have a procedure to inform beachgoers of the fact that the beach will close at the designated time regardless of conditions. Only in the case of an emergency, where they are treating a member of the public for an injury or they are in the process of making a rescue, will they work past the designated closing time. This emergency work will not be considered as part of the contract and will need to be funded from a different source. Emergency support functions will be discussed later in this report.

The option of a fourth lifeguard

On very few occasions over the past number of years has it been necessary to bring in a fourth lifeguard at Soldiers Beach and Shelly Beach for short periods of between three and four hours to deal with extreme levels of patronage. This was not part of the tender and has not been considered as part of the new level of service. It will increase the risk of an incident occurring on very few occasions during each year.

Emergency support

Prior to the competitive tendering process there were a number of areas of emergency support beyond the designated patrol beach locations and times that Council undertook. These can be broken up into two areas, persons in distress or body recovery. There is no allowance in the tender price for emergency support and this will not be undertaken by Council lifeguards as part of the tender.

If Council's lifeguard coordinator is contacted about attending an emergency where a person's life is at risk, the lifeguard coordinator or manager of Open Space will determine whether we will supply a lifeguard at Council's cost. If a decision is made to attend an emergency, the cost of that work will not be from the tender price.

If Council is asked to support the Police in body recovery, as has happened numerous times, staff will be asking for them to supply the funds to undertake the work.

Services offered but not included

A number of beach safety service improvements were offered but not included in the agreed tender. These have been set out in the table below for the consideration of Council at any time during the agreement period.

Service Type
The Entrance Channel Option
The Entrance Channel weekends and public holidays - One lifeguard conforming tender period
Extended Hours - Soldier Beach and Shelly Beach Options
Soldiers Beach and Shelly Beach open until 7:30pm in Christmas school holidays - two lifeguards
Soldiers Beach and Shelly Beach open until 7:30pm in Christmas school holidays + 7pm for the remainder of December - February – two lifeguards
Winter Service Options
Weekdays April – June long weekend (outside conforming tender period)
Weekends April - June long weekend inclusive (outside conforming tender period)
Weekdays after June long weekend - end of August.
Weekends after June long weekend - end of August.
Weekdays September (outside conforming tender period)
Weekends September (outside conforming tender period)
Winter school holidays weekdays and weekends

Budgewoi Beach Options
Christmas school holidays – weekdays, one lifeguard and weekends/public holidays, two lifeguards
Weekends and public holidays - full patrol season – two lifeguards (tender period)
School holidays – one lifeguard weekdays + two lifeguards for weekends/public holidays
Christmas school holidays weekdays – one lifeguard
School holidays – one lifeguard, weekdays only
Christmas school holidays – two lifeguards + weekends/public holidays – two lifeguards
School holidays – two lifeguards + weekends/public holidays – two lifeguards
Weekdays - one lifeguard, weekends and public holidays - two lifeguards for tender period
Weekdays - one lifeguard conforming to tender period

**Please note all Budgewoi options listed above are for the conforming tender period only and do not include winter school holidays*

Lifeguard uniform

The Wyong Shire Lifeguard Service Tender Submission was based on the existing uniforms but allowed for the use of alternate uniforms if Council chose to fund them. All current permanent and temporary lifeguards are already in possession of the previous seasons uniform. The tender from the Wyong Shire lifeguard service did not allow funds to fully replace all uniforms. For the first year of the agreement lifeguards will continue to wear the current uniform with the red and yellow to be worn in year three. This avoids unnecessary expenditure of community funds on new uniforms given there is an adequate stock of existing uniforms. It also allows sufficient time to design and procure new uniforms for year three.

ATTACHMENTS

- 1 Beach Safety Services - Service Level Agreement (D03855393) -

