



**Lane Cove  
Council**

# Late Agenda Ordinary Council Meeting 19 March 2026, 7:00 PM

Council will commence consideration of  
all business paper agenda items at 7.00 pm.

## Notice of Meeting

Dear Councillors,

Notice is given of the Ordinary Council Meeting, to be held in the Council Chambers on Thursday 19 March 2026 commencing at 7:00 PM. The business to be transacted at the meeting is included in this business paper.

In accordance with clause 3.26 of the Code of Meeting Practice Councillors are reminded of their oath or affirmation of office made under section 233A of the Act, and of their obligations under the Council's Code of Conduct to disclose and appropriately manage conflicts of interest.

Yours faithfully



Louise Kerr  
**General Manager**

## Council Meeting Procedures

The Council meeting is chaired by the Mayor, Councillor Merri Southwood. Councillors are entitled to one vote on a matter. If votes are equal, the Chairperson has a second or casting vote. When a majority of Councillors vote in favour of a Motion it becomes a decision of the Council. Minutes of Council and Committee meetings are published on Council's website [www.lanecove.nsw.gov.au](http://www.lanecove.nsw.gov.au) by 5.00 pm on the Tuesday following the meeting.

The Meeting is conducted in accordance with Council's Code of Meeting Practice. The order of business is listed in the Agenda on the next page. That order will be followed unless Council resolves to modify the order at the meeting. This may occur for example where the members of the public in attendance are interested in specific items on the agenda.

The Public Forum Meetings are no longer part of Ordinary Council Meetings and are now held separately.

Public Forum Meetings are held on the Monday prior to the Ordinary Council Meeting. Register by using the online form no later than 10.00 am on the day of the Public Forum Meeting.

Please refer to the [Public Forum Meeting Guidelines](#) on Council's website for further information [www.lanecove.nsw.gov.au/meetings](http://www.lanecove.nsw.gov.au/meetings)

Alternatively, members of the public can submit their written address via email to [service@lanecove.nsw.gov.au](mailto:service@lanecove.nsw.gov.au). Written addresses are to be received by Council no later than midnight, on the day prior to the meeting. (500 words maximum).

Please note that meetings held in the Council Chambers are webcast, and recordings are made publicly available on the Council's website. Should you require assistance to participate in the meeting due to a disability; or wish to obtain further information in relation to Council, please contact Council's Director - Corporate Services and Strategy on (02) 9911 3550.

**11 NOTICES OF MOTION**

**11.7 NOTICE OF MOTION - THE GALLERY LANE COVE + CREATIVE  
STUDIOS - SUSTAINING OUR ARTS PROVISION IN LANE COVE. .... 4**

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**NOTICE OF MOTION - THE GALLERY LANE COVE + CREATIVE STUDIOS - SUSTAINING**  
**OUR ARTS PROVISION IN LANE COVE.**

**Item No: 11.7**

**Item No:** 11.7  
**Subject:** Notice of Motion - The Gallery Lane Cove + Creative Studios - Sustaining our arts provision in Lane Cove.  
**Record No:** SU5749 - 18300/26  
**Division:** Lane Cove Council  
**Author(s):** Councillor Kathy Bryla; Councillor Katie Little

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## **PURPOSE**

For Council to provide short-term financial assistance to Gallery Lane Cove + Creative Studios to stabilise operations, enable a structured organisational reset, and support the development of a sustainable operating model that recognises the Gallery's importance and community value to Lane Cove.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That Council:

1. Acknowledges its commitment to the cultural sector and recognises that there is currently no alternative operational funding available from State or Federal Government sources to sustain this program.
2. Provide a one-year financial assistance package of \$100,000 to Gallery Lane Cove + Creative Studios, commencing on 1 July 2026, to stabilise operations and support a structured turnaround plan.
3. To work collaboratively with the Gallery Lane Cove + Creative Studios Board over the next 6 months to determine the sustainable operational funding model for both the Creative Studios Agreement (expires June 2027) and the Gallery Management Agreement (due for renewal December 2026) to ensure the new funding arrangement tied to these agreements reflects the true cost of maintaining and sustaining this valuable community asset.
4. Requires the Gallery to use this financial assistance package to:
  - Implement improved financial management and cost-control measures.
  - Invest in technology and systems to reduce administrative workload and staffing pressure.
  - Strengthen targeted marketing to grow earned revenue and participation.
  - Align a minimum of three key exhibitions with Council's Community Strategic Plan priorities (e.g. Chinese New Year, NAIDOC Week, curated cultural programs, Children's Art Award).
  - Deliver measurable outcomes in arts education, social inclusion, community connection, and career pathways for artists.
5. This one-year investment would act as a stabilisation and reset measure, enabling the gallery and studios to restructure, improve efficiency, and position itself for longer-term financial sustainability.
6. Delegate to the General Manager to:
  - a) Write to the Federal Member for Bennelong seeking support for the organisation (Gallery Lane Cove + Creative Studios), including advocacy, opportunities for additional arts and cultural funding streams, and partnership or community-engagement opportunities;
  - b) Write to the Commonwealth Special Envoy for the Arts and the New South Wales Minister for the Arts seeking support and opportunities for additional arts and cultural funding streams relevant to the organisation; and
  - c) Report back to Council on outcomes of this correspondence and any identified opportunities for collaboration or support.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Background**

The Lane Cove Gallery began life as a dedicated exhibition space in 2012, established to provide a community-centred art gallery showcasing contemporary and modern art by local, national and international artists. It is managed by Centrehouse Incorporated, a long-standing local not-for-profit arts organisation and is partly funded with support from Lane Cove Council (Council). In June 2018, the facility expanded with the opening of creative studios, transforming the site into an integrated arts hub combining gallery and studio spaces. The Gallery Lane Cove + Creative Studios (the Gallery) runs a program of workshops, term classes and masterclasses across diverse disciplines, and continues to act as a cultural focal point in Lane Cove — blending exhibition, education and creative practice under one roof.

The Community Strategic Plan (CSP), adopted by Council on 19 June 2025, sets a long-term vision for the area as a connected, inclusive and sustainable community. The CSP includes a dedicated theme on Our Culture, emphasising the importance of arts, cultural engagement, education and community participation in building social cohesion and a vibrant local identity. The Gallery contributes directly to these objectives by offering accessible contemporary art exhibitions, creative education and community-focused workshops that encourage participation across ages and backgrounds — fostering cultural expression and inclusion within the local community. In this way it not only enriches the cultural life of Lane Cove but also embodies the CSP's commitment to nurturing a socially engaged, culturally vibrant and connected community by 2035.

### **Context**

Local galleries across New South Wales are facing significant financial strain as a result of several changes:

- Restructured state government funding to the arts have resulted in these galleries not receiving long term, recurrent support, creating uncertainty and forcing local councils to absorb funding shortfalls.
- Scaling back and discontinuation of children's arts initiatives such as the Creative Kids component of the NSW Government voucher schemes has reduced financial support for families participating in gallery workshops and creative programs.
- Rising costs of art materials, workshop supplies, and general operational expenses due to inflation, galleries are under pressure to either increase participant fees or cut programming.
- Increase in wages to pay artists and staff working in galleries in the aim to ensure the arts workplace is fair in its approach to staff employment.

Together, reduced government funding, lower youth participation support, and higher delivery costs are placing sustained pressure on the sustainability and accessibility of local gallery services.

Local galleries play a vital social role within their communities. They act as accessible cultural hubs where people of different ages and backgrounds can gather, connect and participate in shared experiences. Educational arts programs in particular foster creativity, confidence and critical thinking in children and young people, while also strengthening intergenerational engagement through workshops, talks and community exhibitions.

There are also significant psychological benefits associated with having accessible arts programs locally. Participation in creative activities has been linked to reduced stress, improved emotional regulation and enhanced overall wellbeing. For young people, structured arts education can support resilience, communication skills and self-expression; for adults and older residents, creative engagement can reduce social isolation and support mental health. When galleries are

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adequately funded and able to deliver inclusive educational programs, they contribute not only to cultural life but to the broader social and emotional wellbeing of the community.

**Strengthening a Critical Cultural and Community Asset**

As community-based, not-for-profit organisation operating on behalf of the Lane Cove community, the Gallery delivers outcomes efficiently and with a high level of community engagement, leveraging Council’s investment to deliver significant social and cultural return. However, like many small cultural organisations, the Gallery operates within a structurally constrained financial model. While program revenue contributes significantly to operating costs, the Gallery’s ability to fully recover its costs through user charges alone is inherently limited by its community access mission and Council’s shared objective of ensuring arts participation remains accessible and inclusive.

Council’s existing operational funding has provided essential support and enabled the Gallery to deliver important community outcomes. However, this funding level has not kept pace with the increasing cost of service delivery, including staffing, program delivery, and operational costs, nor the growing demand for community arts programs.

Without an increase in baseline operational funding, the Gallery faces increasing constraints in its ability to:

- Sustain current levels of community access and programming
- Maintain operational stability and organisational capability
- Expand programs to meet demonstrated community demand
- Continue delivering on Council’s strategic objectives for cultural participation and community connection

The Gallery operated on \$518,000.00 in revenue in its last reporting year, significantly lower in funding than its relevant peers. A comparison shown below.

Community and Regional Gallery Revenue Comparison (Australia)

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Total Annual Revenue (approx.)</b>	<b>Source</b>
Ngununggula Southern Highlands Regional Gallery (NSW)	\$1.2m – \$1.6m	Annual reports and charity financial filings (regional gallery scale benchmark)
Maitland Regional Art Gallery (NSW)	\$2.5m – \$4m	Maitland City Council annual reports (council-operated regional gallery)
Hazelhurst Arts Centre (Sutherland Shire Council)	\$3m – \$5m	Sutherland Shire Council annual reports
Mosman Art Gallery (NSW)	\$1.5m – \$3m	Mosman Council annual reports (cultural services division)
Woollahra Gallery at Redleaf (NSW)	\$1.5m – \$2.5m	Woollahra Council cultural services financial statements
New England Regional Art Museum (NERAM, Armidale)	\$1.5m – \$2.5m	Council and charity annual reports

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Overall, the Gallery is struggling to maintain financial viability under its current funding model, despite playing a central role in building cultural capital, fostering collaboration, celebrating local identity and diversity, and creating opportunities for community connection and wellbeing through arts participation in Lane Cove. It has been identified by the Board of the Gallery Lane Cove + Creative Studios that it is facing significant financial and operational pressure that threatens its ongoing viability. Additional annual operational funding has been identified as necessary in order for the Gallery to continue to:

- Ensure long-term organisational sustainability and stability
- Maintain and expand accessible arts education and cultural programming
- Strengthen its capacity to serve Lane Cove's growing and evolving community
- Continue delivering strong alignment with Council's Community Strategic Plan priorities
- Protect and enhance an important cultural asset for current and future residents

The Gallery represents a modest but highly leveraged investment for Council, delivering significant and measurable community benefit, and ensuring that arts and cultural participation remain an accessible and valued part of life in Lane Cove.

Councillor Kathy Bryla  
**Councillor**

Councillor Katie Little  
**Councillor**

**ATTACHMENTS:**

There are no supporting documents for this report.