

Live Music Circuit - Venue Recognition Scheme

Strategic Alignment - Our Community

Public

Tuesday, 3 November 2026
City Community Services and Culture Committee

Program Contact:
Martin Smallridge, Acting
Associate Director City Culture

Approving Officer:
Jo Podoliak, Director City
Community

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an update on the development of the Live Music Circuit - Venue Recognition Scheme and to seek approval of the proposed Framework and Implementation Plan to pilot (**Attachment A**).

At its meeting on 23 June 2026, Council resolved:

That Council:

1. Endorses the delivery of an integrated Live Music Circuit combining physical, digital and promotional elements, subject to stakeholder permissions for rollout as part of the *2026/27 Annual Business Plan*.
2. Endorses Option 2 – Partnered Program, as contained in Attachment A to Item 7.1 on the Agenda for the meeting of Infrastructure and Public Works Committee held on 16 June 2026, as the preferred delivery model for a venue recognition scheme, noting that the detailed implementation approach, budget requirements, governance considerations and concept design will be subsequently approved by Council.

The Live Music Circuit - Venue Recognition Scheme Framework and Implementation Plan sets out for this pilot:

- The Scheme's purpose, principles and scope;
- Governance, responsibilities and approval pathways;
- Venue identification and assessment;
- Implementation and ongoing management; and
- Evaluation and review.

The proposed Framework and Implementation Plan also proposes the Adelaide City of Music Office as the delivery partner, supported by a time-limited Advisory Group providing sector input into venue assessment and recognition.

RECOMMENDATION

The following recommendation will be presented to Council on 10 November 2026 for consideration

THAT THE CITY COMMUNITY SERVICES AND CULTURE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS TO COUNCIL
THAT COUNCIL

1. Notes progress on the Live Music Circuit following Council's June 2026 decision.
 2. Approves the Live Music Circuit - Venue Recognition Scheme Framework and Implementation Plan as contained in Attachment A to Item 7.1 on the Agenda for the meeting of City Community Services and Culture Committee held on 3 November 2026.
-

IMPLICATIONS AND FINANCIALS

City of Adelaide 2024-2028 Strategic Plan	Strategic Alignment – Our Community Supports vibrant, connected and inclusive communities by celebrating live music culture and heritage, increasing participation, visitation and lively cultural experiences.
Policy	This proposal aligns with the <i>Cultural Policy</i> principles of <i>Amplifying Creative Capital</i> , <i>Preserving Cultural Heritage</i> , <i>Embracing Progress</i> , and <i>Creating Space for Cultural Expression</i> . It also supports the Economic Development Strategy goal of strengthening Adelaide as Australia's festival and creative capital by enabling live music, cultural experiences and creative industries.
Consultation	Preliminary discussions with UNESCO City of Music Office; further consultation with partners, venues, owners, heritage stakeholders and peer reviewers will be part of the implementation process.
Resource	Implementation will prioritise existing operational budgets and leverage existing programs, platforms and channels, including the City's partnership with the Adelaide City of Music Office.
Risk / Legal / Legislative	Progression of the Live Music Circuit - Venue Recognition Scheme will require stakeholder approvals, property owner consent and compliance with relevant Council policies and requirements. Recognition schemes also carry governance and reputational risks where inclusion is contested, venues close or change, audiences and cultural significance shift, or content becomes outdated. Risks are mitigated through a partnered delivery with the Adelaide City of Music Office, supported by clear eligibility criteria, transparent and arm's-length assessment, peer and expert validation, agreed governance and decision-making responsibilities, and defined review, update, removal and retirement protocols. This approach also helps ensure recognition remains credible, current and clearly distinguished from commercial endorsement.
Opportunities	Drive visitation to City businesses and sites of cultural and heritage significance; deepen connection with Adelaide's live music cultural heritage and venues; amplify Adelaide's UNESCO City of Music designation
26/27 Budget Allocation	The pilot has an indicative planning allowance of \$10,000–\$15,000, subject to detailed scoping and costing, and will be delivered within existing budget allocations.
Proposed 27/28 Budget Allocation	Not as a result of this report
Life of Project, Service, Initiative or (Expectancy of) Asset	Pilot implementation is proposed to be completed by June 2027, covering development and delivery of the pilot. Any continuation or expansion would be considered as a subsequent phase.
26/27 Budget Reconsideration (if applicable)	Not as a result of this report
Ongoing Costs (eg maintenance cost)	Ongoing costs may include content updates, plaque maintenance, promotion and evaluation. Any future intake would depend on pilot outcomes, resourcing and Council direction.
Other Funding Sources	Potential sources include Adelaide City of Music partnership contributions and relevant State Government or sector funding, subject to eligibility and future program scope.

DISCUSSION

Background

1. At its meeting on 10 March 2026, Council resolved to:
 - 1.1. Request Administration investigate options for a walkable Live Music Circuit celebrating Adelaide's live music culture, including:
 - A. expanding the Heritage Plaques Program to recognise Adelaide's live music history;
 - B. establishing a bespoke plaque or footpath inlay recognition scheme; and
 - C. identifying promotional opportunities through AEDA to increase the visibility of historical and existing live music venues.
 - 1.2. Request Administration produce a report detailing these possibilities for consideration in the 26/27FY business plan and budget.
2. At its meeting on 23 June 2026, Council resolved:

That Council:

 - 2.1. Endorses the delivery of an integrated Live Music Circuit combining physical, digital and promotional elements, subject to stakeholder permissions for rollout as part of the 2026/27 Annual Business Plan.
 - 2.2. Endorses Option 2 – Partnered Program, as contained in Attachment A to Item 7.1 on the Agenda for the meeting of Infrastructure and Public Works Committee held on 16 June 2026, as the preferred delivery model for a venue recognition scheme, noting that the detailed implementation approach, budget requirements, governance considerations and concept design will be subsequently approved by Council.
3. Administration has developed the venue recognition component and prepared the Live Music Circuit - Venue Recognition Scheme Framework and Implementation Plan (Framework and Implementation Plan) (**Attachment A**).
 - 3.1. The Framework and Implementation Plan establishes the proposed purpose, scope, governance, venue identification, assessment, implementation, lifecycle and evaluation arrangements for recognising both active and culturally significant former venues and sites.
 - 3.2. The proposed model would recognise both active and culturally significant former venues across the City of Adelaide local government area, while remaining distinct from existing initiatives such as the SA Music Hall of Fame and Heritage Plaques Program.
4. Council approval of the Framework and Implementation Plan is now sought to enable Administration and Adelaide City of Music to progress the Advisory Group, assessment and delivery.

Progress on Live Music Circuit Activities

5. Administration has progressed the broader Live Music Circuit, which celebrates Adelaide's live music heritage and contemporary venue network while amplifying Adelaide's UNESCO City of Music designation.
6. A key milestone has been the development of the new *Adelaide Live Music Circuit: Your Guide to our City of Music* pocket guide, bringing together live music venues, landmarks and stories as part of the Circuit's printed and digital visitor experience.
 - 6.1. Distribution of the new pocket guide will include featured venues and businesses, City of Adelaide public-facing locations and local street press, supported by promotional activity.
 - 6.2. The new pocket guide forms part of the broader Circuit's coordinated visitor experience and will be supported by renewed digital content, wayfinding and promotional activity.
7. Research for the Heritage Plaques / Blue Plaques component has been completed. Engagement with relevant venue and property owners will progress to secure installation approvals, with delivery anticipated across 2026/27 subject to permissions.
 - 7.1. Existing Live Music Circuit elements, including City of Music Laneways, music-themed public art, venue decals and mapped live music venues, continue to provide the foundation for the Circuit.
 - 7.2. A review of the Circuit's online and digital resources is underway across Experience Adelaide and other City platforms, including existing trails, venue profiles and related music content.
 - 7.3. The review will consider how these resources can be better consolidated and structured around precincts and city quadrants to support navigation and discovery.

- 7.4. Development of QR-enabled signage and wayfinding is continuing alongside the digital review and will be refined to align with the new pocket guide and consolidated web assets, ensuring physical and digital elements operate as a coordinated visitor experience.

Live Music Circuit - Venue Recognition Scheme Delivery Partner

8. Administration recommends that the City partners with the [Adelaide City of Music Office](#) (ACOM) noting that preliminary discussions have been undertaken regarding the proposed delivery model.
 - 8.1. ACOM is considered well placed to support the Scheme through its independent sector role, connection to Adelaide's UNESCO City of Music designation, and established relationships across artists, venues and the broader music sector, providing arms-length expertise and peer input.
 - 8.2. This partnership model has precedent through ACOM's advisory role in the assessment and recommendation of venues recognised through the City of Music Laneways initiative.
 - 8.3. ACOM would convene a time-limited Advisory Group to provide independent sector expertise and peer input.
 - 8.4. The City of Adelaide would retain accountability for governance and delivery, including due diligence, permissions, budget, procurement, assets, evaluation and Council reporting.

Eligibility, Criteria and Assessment

9. The pilot recognition cohort will be limited to venues and venue sites within the City of Adelaide local government area.
 - 9.1. Recognition would be based on cultural significance and community value rather than popularity, commercial success or prominence alone.
 - 9.2. Venue identification will be informed by research and sector expertise rather than an open public callout or application process.
10. A two-stage assessment process is proposed, commencing with an eligibility assessment by Administration and the Adelaide City of Music Office to confirm:
 - 10.1. Evidence of a current or significant historic live music function;
 - 10.2. Sufficient evidence for assessment;
 - 10.3. A viable pathway to operator and owner consent; and
 - 10.4. No material legal, safety, integrity or reputational barriers.
11. Eligible venues would then be assessed by the Advisory Group against four cultural criteria:
 - 11.1. Longevity – sustained contribution to live music.
 - 11.2. Cultural and community significance – influence on Adelaide's music culture, identity and communities, including support for diverse genres, cultures and participation.
 - 11.3. Contribution to the live music ecology – support for artists, audiences and the broader music sector.
 - 11.4. Connection to place – relationship with its precinct and Adelaide's broader music narrative,
12. The final assessment criteria will be refined by Administration with Adelaide City of Music and the Advisory Group before assessment commences.

Next Steps

13. Following Council's decision, Administration will implement the Scheme in accordance with the approved Framework and Implementation Plan, incorporating Council's feedback.
 - 13.1. December 2026 through early 2027: Progress partnership arrangements, detailed assessment criteria, Advisory Group arrangements, due diligence, permissions and concept development.
 - 13.2. Early 2027: Progress venue research and assessment.
 - 13.3. From mid-2027: Implementation coordinated with the broader Live Music Circuit, including the renewed digital content, pocket guide, QR-enabled signage, promotion, launch or showcase activity.
 - 13.4. December 2027: Evaluate pilot cohort to inform any future resourcing of the Scheme.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A – Live Music Circuit - Venue Recognition Scheme Framework and Implementation Plan.

- END OF REPORT -