




Speech By
Hon. Amanda Stoker

MEMBER FOR OODGEROO

Record of Proceedings, 10 June 2025

ADJOURNMENT

WorldSkills; Redfest Cancellation

 **Hon. AJ STOKER** (Oodgeroo—LNP) (9.15 pm): I would like to begin with a shout-out to two representatives from my local area who will be fighting for Queensland and Australia at the WorldSkills event that is being held in South Bank this week. To Joshua Cohen who is competing as a plumber and heater from good old Ormiston and to Charlie Warner who is in the healthcare category from Wellington Point: all the very best as you take on the Olympics of trades. We know you will do us proud.

I want to move on to speak about RedFest, which has been a local icon in the Redlands for generations. It started out as the strawberry festival, and I might be a little bit biased, but I think it was at its best ever in 2024. It has always—always—been the second weekend of September and so the organisers engage early and seek to book the Cleveland Showgrounds with council which would ordinarily come alive with music, food, stalls, local produce, rides and all the community groups that make up our wonderful area. But in November 2024 when the organisers went to book, organisers were informed that the weekend they always had would now be affected by a new policy that said there must be five days between bookings and that council had already booked somebody else for the third weekend in September. That had the effect of ruling out their usual weekend.

The inflexible approach that was taken by council and their unwillingness to negotiate has seen RedFest organisers only offered the Father's Day weekend at the beginning of September. They have been forced either to confront the lower numbers and reduced viability that would come from that weekend or to cancel. I am sad to say they have had no option—given the lack of engagement and inflexibility that council has demonstrated—but to take the unfortunate course of cancelling this year.

To be honest, it looks to me like it started out as a mistake. Someone has made a boo-boo and booked an alternative event too close to RedFest's traditional date. There has been mismanagement, but it is a mistake that has denied our community a lovely tradition—one that it really needs. RedFest have been forced to cancel for 2025 and I am so sad to tell locals that that is the case. I can only hope that Redland City Council will learn from this mistake so that this incredible loss to our community is not repeated in future years. I take this moment to thank the people who put so much work into RedFest year after year, whether it is Arno Nel or volunteers like Adrian Addicott—there are so many more. We love what you do for our community and we hope that you will dust yourselves off again in 2026 and bring this great event back to our community so we can enjoy it for generations to come.