



LITHGOW CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA

ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL

TO BE HELD AT

THE ADMINISTRATION CENTRE, LITHGOW

ON

19 MARCH 2007

AT 7.00pm

AGENDA

PRESENT

QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC GALLERY

PRESENTATIONS -NIL

CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD ON 19 FEBRUARY 2007

DECLARATION OF INTEREST - NIL

NOTICES OF MOTION - NIL

NOTICE OF RESCISSION - NIL

CORRESPONDENCE AND REPORTS

General Manager Reports
Regional Services Reports
Community and Corporate Services Reports

CLOSED REPORTS - NIL

REPORTS FROM DELEGATES - NIL

COMMITTEE MEETINGS - Tourism Advisory

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

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GENERAL MANAGER REPORTS

ITEM: 1 GM - 19/03/07 - PORTLAND SWIMMING POOL

REFERENCE

Min 05-325: Special Meeting, 27 June 2005
Min 05-496: Council Meeting, 4 October 2005
Min 06-369: Policy and Strategy Committee Meeting, 6 November 2006

SUMMARY

This report seeks Council approval to undertake the tendering process for the relining of the Portland Swimming Pool in 2006/07 and undertake the works in 2007/08.

COMMENTARY

Council will recall that over a number of financial years it has included an amount of \$200,000 from its loan borrowing program for the relining of the Portland Swimming Pool. These works have not commenced to date nor have the loans ever been initiated. Therefore, the following proposed works are outlined for Council's consideration:

- 2006/07 – commence and finalise the tendering process
- 2007/08 – commence and complete the construction work.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The provision of \$200,000 for the Portland Swimming Pool does not comply with Council's Policy on Financial Assistance to Community Groups and Organisations. However, it is acknowledged that this has been a long standing undertaking by Council and a moral obligation exists to finalise this program.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The \$200,000 allocation and associated loan was resolved to be revoked in the 2006/07 Budget by Council at its Policy and Strategy Committee Meeting on 6 November 2006. Furthermore, as advised at the Councillor Budget Briefing Session on 12 March 2007, the \$200,000 allocation and associated loan has been placed into the draft 2007/08 Budget for the draft Management Plan 2007/08 to 2009/10.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The tendering requirements of the Local Government Act 1993 and Local Government (General) Regulation 2005 will apply in this case. The previous tender was not entered into (although being offered but not accepted as previously reported) and no loan funding has been received, or called in to date for this project.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the tender process for the relining of the Portland Swimming Pool be undertaken in 2006/07 and works be undertaken during 2007/08.

ITEM: 2 GM - 19/03/07 - REVIEW OF RURAL FIRES ACT

REFERENCE

06-387: Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 20 November 2006

SUMMARY

This report outlines correspondence received from the Local Government Association of NSW in relation to a decision from the 2006 Annual Conference of the Local Government Association of NSW.

COMMENTARY

Correspondence has been received from the Local Government Association of NSW in relation to a Motion that was adopted at the 2006 Annual Conference of the Local Government Association of NSW.

Motion 7 was presented by Penrith City Council requesting that a full review be conducted of the Rural Fires Act and associated reimbursement to Local Government.

Motion 8 presented by Council to the Conference was ruled to be covered by the resolution carried by Conference on Motion 7.

Correspondence received from the Minister of Emergency Services, Mr Tony Kelly dated 13 February 2007 states:

"While I am aware of significant changes in bush fire management in the State, particularly over the last 10 years, legislation and policy changes have generally reflected these improvements.

I acknowledge the Associations view that further improvements can be made. I would welcome more detailed proposals so that I am in a position to assess them, taking into consideration the views of other land management agencies. I am aware of the Associations concerns regarding assets purchased through the Rural Fire Fighting Fund, and no doubt those concerns will be reflected in any proposal I receive from the Association.

I appreciate the commitment from the Association to fostering constructive discussion on matters of mutual concern. I trust that I can continue working with the Association in a spirit of goodwill and co-operation to the lasting benefit of the local communities".

Council will continue to monitor the program of Rural Fires Act Review through the LGSA and will continue to lobby for such changes to be made.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

NIL

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

NIL

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

NIL

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the information be noted.

REGIONAL SERVICES REPORTS

ITEM: 3 REG - 19/03/07 - AWNING IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

REPORT FROM: GROUP MANAGER REGIONAL SERVICES – ANDREW MUIR

SUMMARY

Report for information advising of concerns expressed about the street awning improvement program.

COMMENTARY

Council has received a number of approaches from a local resident expressing concern at the condition of street awnings within Lithgow and Portland. The concerns relate to a perception that Council has failed to follow up on necessary repairs to awnings resulting from structural inspections carried out some years ago on behalf of Council.

Repairs have been completed on most of the awnings identified in the structural reports. It is important to note that the inspections were to determine structural repairs required to make awnings safe and did not specify repairs of a minor nature. Those few awnings that are still outstanding are subject to investigation with notices and orders to be issued as required. A number of follow up inspections have revealed that many owners have voluntarily carried out repairs to their awnings. It appears as though the concerned resident may be under the impression that a number of minor aesthetic issues, other matters relating to development work and recently damaged awnings have a relationship to the structural inspection program as mentioned above and this may have lead to the mistaken belief that this program had not been followed through.

Photographs provided to Council by the complainant reveal a number of awnings requiring minor repairs, but include two awnings being the Court House Hotel and the Old Idle Gossip Café that have Development Consent for major repair work and discussions are being held with the owners of both premises to ensure that this work proceeds with minimum delay. Structural Engineers have inspected both awnings and their requirements have been implemented to ensure public safety.

Those awnings requiring minor aesthetic repairs will be investigated as part the ongoing program of improvement to all street awnings and necessary directions given as required.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Nil

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The financial obligations are with the owners of the awning.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Council is meeting its legal obligations by requiring repairs to street awnings that present a risk to the public.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the information be received and the concerned residents be advised of the situation.

COMMUNITY AND CORPORATE SERVICES REPORTS

ITEM: 4 COMM - 19/03/07 - SEC 356 DONATIONS

REPORT FROM: COMMUNITY AND CULTURE MANAGER – P. HALL

REFERENCE

- Minute 06-162: Finance and Services Committee 5 June 2006
- Minute 06-183: Council Meeting 19 June 2006
- Minute 06-229: Finance and Services Committee 7 August 2006
- Minute 06-292: Finance and Services Committee 4 September 2006
- Minute 06-332: Finance and Services Committee 3 October 2006
- Minute 06-378: Finance and Services Committee 6 November 2006
- Minute 06-439: Finance and Services Committee 4 December 2006
- Minute 07-51: Council Meeting 19 February 2007

SUMMARY

To advise Council of payments allocated in 2006/07 from Local Government Act Section 356 donations which have been approved by Council resolution or as previously approved through the process to adopt the Management Plan for 2006/07 and to further seek Council consideration for current requests.

COMMENTARY

Council allocated \$20,000 in the 2006/09 Management Plan for donations approved under Section 356 of the Local Government Act.

As at 19 February 2007 the following payments have been made:

DATE	ORGANISATION	ASSISTANCE	AMOUNT
Management Plan Allocation 2006/07			\$20,000.00
24.07.06	GLATSIC Naidoc Week	Cont :Min 06-162 05.06.06	500.00
04.08.06	Lithgow High School	Presentation Day : as per Policy	50.00
07.08.06	Bicentennial National Trail	Refund DA Fees: Min 06-229	261.95
04.09.06	Lithgow Country Women's Assoc	General Rate Component Min 06-292	417.21
04.09.06	Wallerawang Country Women's Assoc	General Rate Component Min 06-292	408.69
04.09.06	Portland Dist Motor Sports	Sponsorship (Following Advertising) Min 06-292	60.00
04.09.06	Lithgow & District Poultry Club	Sponsorship Min 06-292	300.00
04.09.06	Lithgow Golf	Sponsorship (Following Advertising) Min 06-292	1,000.00
04.09.06	Crystal Theatre Com Cinema	Sponsorship (Following Advertising) Min 06-292	500.00

04.09.06	Lithgow Greyhound Club	Sponsorship (Following Advertising) Min 06-292	4,350.00
03.10.06	Mitchell Conservatorium Inc	Scholarships for local students Min 06-332	275.00
03.10.06	Pied Piper Preschool	Assistance with equipment purchase Min 06-332	50.00
06.11.06	Blinky Bill Child Care	Assistance with Fundraising Min 06-378	50.00
06.11.06	Portland Golf Club	Sponsorship Min 06-378	750.00
06.11.06	Portland Central School	Annual Presentation Min 06-378	50.00
06.11.06	Ironfest	Assistance with rental 2005/06 Min 06-378	2,840.00
04.12.06	Cullen Bullen Progress Assoc	Rates assistance Min 06-439	\$313.21
04.12.06	Lithgow Small Arms Rifle Club	Open championship prize Min 06-439	\$50.00
04.12.06	Lithgow Workmen's Valley Women's Bowling Club	Assistance with Versatility Sixes Min 06-439	\$50.00
04.12.06	Rydal A H & P Society	Cash and in-kind – Heavy horses display Min 06-439	\$300.00
04.12.06	Xmas and Beyond	Xmas for disadvantaged Min 06-439	\$100.00
04.12.06	Cullen Bullen Public School	Annual Presentation Min 06-439	\$50.00
04.12.06	Zig Zag Public School	Annual Presentation Min 06-439	\$50.00
04.12.06	Coerwull Public School	Annual Presentation Min 06-439	\$50.00
19.02.07	First Portland Scout Group	Donation Min 06-	\$50.00
19.02.07	Western Academy of Sport	Reimbursement of pool entry fees Min 06	\$138.60
19.02.07	Lithgow Show Society	Sponsorship of the main event Min 06	\$8,000.00
19.02.07	Lithgow Enterprise Development Agency Inc.	Final audit fees Min 06	\$869.00
Total: Sec 356 Donations to 19.02.07			\$21,933.66
2006/07 Allocation Remaining - NIL – over expended			<u>-\$1,933.66</u>

Council is in receipt of the following requests for assistance however as there is no remaining funds in the budget none are recommended to Council. These requests would add \$1,908.43 to make a deficit of \$3,914.09 if Council resolved to support all of the requests listed below.

It would be necessary to locate this expenditure from another budget area and cut other programs to fund additional expenditure above the \$20,000 already budgeted for donations.

The applications are summarised as follows:

1. **Joel White's film production** – Hire of the Civic Ballroom 2 days (3 hours per day) at \$110.00 per day for shooting a film scene (a refundable bond of \$285.00) Request to waive hire fees of \$220.00
2. **Central West NSW Regional Business Awards Request for sponsorship** - Support from Council to assist in generating awareness in the program Amount not disclosed.
3. **Winter Soccer Camp July 2 – July 4 2007** - Football Excellence Academy Request to waive hire fees for use of the Tony Luchetti Sportsground - \$330 per day (a refundable bond of \$285 per day) for wet weather use of the Civic Ballroom
4. **Kids Alive 14th March 2007** - Hire of the Union Theatre waiving of fee 2 x 4hour sessions \$330 in total (a refundable bond of \$110.00) Request to waive hire fees \$330
5. **Lithgow Valley Community Cinema** – renewal of the public risk insurance premiums repayment in quarterly instalments \$1,165.43. Period of insurance cover 01/02/07-01/02/08
6. **Junior Rock Eisteddfod Challenge** - Request for a cash donation from Sec 356 Donations policy - only one donation made to any particular organisation within a financial year - already received annual presentation Min 06 – 439
7. **LINC Mini Olympics Hire of the Civic Ballroom** - Request to waive hire fees in inclement weather \$110 per day. Cannot confirm date of this event.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Payments in accordance with Donations Policy are recommended.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Donations of \$21,933.66 have already been approved from \$20,000 allocated in the 2006/07 Management Plan. \$1,980.43 is the additional allocation being requested in the applications made as presented in this report. The budget would then be overspent by \$3,914.09 and funding from another program area would need to be cut to accommodate any further over expenditure. No savings have been identified at this point.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Nil

RECOMMENDATION

THAT:

1. Council note donations of \$21,933.66 made under Section 356 arising from previous resolutions or as included in the Council's Management Plan and those assessed in accordance with Council's Donations Policy;
2. As the Section 356 donations budget is already overspent it is recommended that no further funds be allocated in 2006/07.
3. Council consider the current requests in the 2007/08 donations program.

COMMITTEE MEETINGS

ITEM:5 MINUTES OF THE TOURISM COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 12
 MARCH 2007

REPORT FROM: TOURISM MANAGER - JODIE RAYNER

REFERENCE

NIL

COMMENTARY

This report outlines the Minutes of the Tourism Advisory Committee meeting held on 12 March 2006 at the Lithgow Visitor Information Centre.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

NIL

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

NIL

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

NIL

ATTACHMENTS

1. The Minutes of the Tourism Advisory Committee meeting held on 12 March 2007.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the minutes of the Tourism Advisory Committee meeting held on 12 March 2007 be noted.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

Nil.

ATTACHMENTS

ITEM:5 MINUTES OF THE TOURISM COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 12 MARCH 2007

Present: Councillor M Collins, Mr P Anderson, Mr B Fitzpatrick (GM Oberon), Ms V Vallee (Bookeasy), Mr M Wells, Mr G Johnston, Mr B Hustwaite, Mr D Whitty

Apologies: Mrs K Fryer, Mr M Pascoe, Mr R Kingswood, Mr D Noble, Mr N Stone, Mr J Eggenhuizen

Declaration of Interests:

ITEM: 1 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

SUMMARY

Confirmation of the minutes

COMMENTRY

Minutes of the meeting of the 13th November 2007 be taken as read and confirmed.

(a) Policy Implications

Nil

(b) Financial Implications

Nil

(c) Legal Implications

Nil

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 – minutes of the previous meeting of the Tourism Board held of the 13th November 2006

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Minutes of the meeting of the 13th November 2006 be taken as read and confirmed.

MOVED: Mr B Hustwaite **SECONDED:** Mr M wells

ITEM: 2 TOURISM MANAGER'S REPORT

SUMMARY

Report on items from the Tourism Manager

COMMENTRY

Visitation Statistics

Visitation statistics for the 2006/07 period for door statistics at the Lithgow Visitor Information Centre are as follows:

Month	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07
Jul	2995	3181	3617
Aug	2741	2846	3138
Sept	2085	2948	4186
Oct	3854	4132	4774
Nov	3258	3701	3266
Dec	3755	3557	3599
Jan	4241	4310	4922

Feb	3254	4310	3162
Mar	3795	3952	0
Apr	4661	5365	0
May	3136	2994	0
June	3059	2956	0
Total Visitation	40834	44252	30664

Total commissionable bookings at the Lithgow Visitor Information Centre for the 2006/07 period are as follows:

Month	Total Price for Accommodation	Total Commission	No. of Visitor Nights	Employee attaining most Bookings	Total no. of bookings for the month	VIC Total monthly visitation - Door	Booking % to Visitation
Jul-06	\$ 2,467.00	\$246.69	23	Simon	19	3617	5.25%
Aug-06	\$ 1,506.00	\$150.09	13	Jodie	10	3138	3.19%
Sep-06	\$ 3,639.00	\$363.17	29	Jodie	25	4186	5.97%
Oct-06	\$ 9,875.00	\$994.99	75	Kellie	44	4774	9.22%
Nov-06	\$ 2695.00	\$269.45	21	Jodie	25	2511	9.96%
Dec-06	\$ 3,148.00	\$313.80	24	Kellie	14	3599	3.89%
Jan-07	\$ 5,424.00	\$540.40	44	Jodie	38	4922	7.72%
Feb-07	\$ 3,544.20	\$365.85	41	Bev	26	3162	8.22%
	\$ 32,298.20	\$ 3,244.44	270		201	29909	6.68%

Meeting Dates – Lithgow Tourism Advisory Committee

Meeting dates for the Lithgow Tourism Advisory Committee are scheduled for the following dates:

- 12th March 2007
- 14th May 2007
- 9th July 2007
- 10th September 2007
- 12th November 2007

Lithgow City Council Corporate Re-brand

As reported in the last Tourism Advisory Committee minutes, Lithgow City Council placed on exhibition a Corporate re-brand.

Community feedback on this issue was high and Council has recommended maintaining the current logo, with some minor alterations. The logo is as follows:



The Lithgow City Council current logo features:

- , Brush Tailed Rock Wallaby
- , Pagoda Rock formations
- , Native endemic flora – Macrocarpum Leptosperm
- , Rail cog – the wheel of industry
- , Mountain backdrop
- , Sandstone viaducts

Council is currently developing a style guide, which will streamline all communications. From this the Lithgow Signage Strategy will be developed.

Staffing at the Lithgow Visitor Information Centre

The Lithgow Visitor Information Centre is pleased to welcome Tourism Trainee Ms Kirsty Melnyk. Kirsty started work at the Visitor Information Centre on Monday 5th March 2007, on a two year traineeship. As part of her traineeship, Kirsty will undertake to learn all aspects of the Visitor Information Centre operations and guiding at Eskbank House Museum.

Staff Product Famils

Product famils are currently being planned for staff at the Lithgow Visitor Information Centre. The next famil will take place on the 21st March 2007, in collaboration with Blue Mountains Tourism Ltd, with staff visiting BMTL member product in the Lithgow area. Monthly famils of local product will also be planned, in addition to famils with Mudgee which have also been organised for March.

2007/08 Business and Marketing Plan

Attached is the 2007/08 Business and Marketing Plan for Lithgow Tourism. Ms J Rayner also read out for operators the tourism budget for 2007/08 to implement marketing strategies within the plan. This budget is currently in draft format and will be provided for public submission from Council.

Lithgow Website

The Lithgow website has undergone an upgrade and will be live before the end of March 2007. The tourism website features upgraded information on the regional attractions, accommodation, visitor facilities and tourists drives available in the area. Operators have been asked to update information.

Tourism Awards

Mayor Neville Castle has requested the Tourism Advisory Committee investigate the idea of Tourism Awards on an annual basis, showcasing and promoting business excellence.

Currently, operators are provided with the opportunity to enter the NSW Tourism Awards, which are an annual award, and the Lithgow Business Awards.

Previously, Lithgow tourism operators have entered the NSW Tourism Awards, with Dargan Springs successful in obtaining an award in 2005.

The NSW Tourism Awards, co-ordinated through Tourism NSW, nomination process consists of operators answering a range of set questions, dependant upon the relevant category. Judges also personally visit all nominated properties as part of a site inspection. Operators are short listed as finalists, with winners presented via a gala evening, generally held in Sydney. Categories available for tourism operators to enter the NSW Tourism Awards are:

- Major tourist attractions
- Significant tourist attraction
- Major festivals and events
- Significant festivals and events
- Ecotourism
- Heritage and cultural tourism
- Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Tourism
- General Tourism Services
- Meetings & Business Tourism
- Tourism Retailing
- Major Tour & Transport Operators
- Significant Tour & Transport Operators
- Adventure Tourism
- Destination Promotion
- Tourism Product Marketing
- Media
- Tourism Education & Training
- Tourism Restaurants & Catering Services
- Tourism Wineries
- Tourist & Caravan Parks

- Backpacker Accommodation
- Hosted Accommodation
- Unique Accommodation
- Standard Accommodation
- Deluxe Accommodation
- Luxury Accommodation
- New Tourism Development
- Outstanding Contribution by an Individual
- Outstanding Contribution to Regional Tourism by an Individual
- Wendy O'Donohue Young Achiever in Tourism Award
- Registered Clubs

The relevant Lithgow Business Awards for tourism operators include the following categories:

- Restaurant/ Café/ Bistro
- Travel & Tourism
- Accommodation Services.

Nominations for the Lithgow Business Awards are called for from the general public and also businesses are able to enter. Judging is co-ordinated by an independent panel, with winners announced at a gala evening, held at the Tony Luchetti Showground

It is deemed appropriate to consult with the Lithgow Business Association with a view to expanding the relevant tourism categories and refining a list of questions that are in line with the Tourism NSW Awards and having the presentation of the Tourism Awards in line with the Lithgow Business Awards.

The Blue Mountain Business Advantage Programme is also currently investigating Tourism Award programme, which will provide the opportunity for Regional Awards. Award winners from these awards will automatically be finalists for the NSW Tourism Awards. A launch event on these awards will be held.

Caravan & Camping Show – Rosehill

The Lithgow Visitor Information Centre will be attending the 2007 NSW Caravan, camping, 4WD and Holiday Supershow at Rosehill in collaboration with Tourism NSW. The show is set to be held from 14th to 22nd April 2007.

The event provides the opportunity to showcase local product to an expected audience of over 80,000 consumers. The show displays a range of caravan and camping product and domestic tourism locations.

Tourism operators are invited to provide tourist brochures as part of the Lithgow stand. Involvement costs are as follows:

- Brochures display only - \$110
- Trade show attendance - \$200

(a) Policy Implications

Nil

(b) Financial Implications

Budget implications for the implementation of the 2007/08 Lithgow Tourism Business and Marketing Plan. Budget currently being co-ordinated as part of Council budgeting process.

(c) Legal Implications

Nil

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 2 Business & Marketing Plan

RECOMMENDATION**THAT**

1. the information be received
2. operators are to provide feedback on the 2007/08 Lithgow Tourism Business & Marketing Plan to the Tourism Manager
3. the Tourism Manager to consult with the Lithgow Business Association with regards to Tourism Awards
4. Local operators be encouraged to enter the Regional Tourism Awards

MOVED: Mr B Hustwaite **SECONDED:** Mr M wells

ITEM: 3 BMTL REPORT – MR M WELLS**SUMMARY**

Mr M Wells provided an update report on the operations of Blue Mountain Tourism Ltd.

COMMENTRY**Greater Blue Mountains World Heritage Drive**

Blue Mountains Tourism Ltd are currently working all facets of the drive, including working with stakeholders like The Tablelands Way and The Botanist's Way. A project team have been contracted to develop the project.

So Much To See and Do Expo

The So Much to See and Do Expo was recently held at the Edge Cinema. Two bus loads of concierges and inbound operators were presented with information on the area, with the weekend opened up to visitors and locals. Lithgow was represented with a display. The expo was well received by all that attended.

(a) Policy Implications

Nil

(b) Financial Implications

Nil

(c) Legal Implications

Nil

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the information be received

MOVED: Mr D Whitty **SECONDED:** Mr G Johnstone

ITEM: 4 PRESENTATION: MR BRUCE FITZPATRICK – GM OBERON – THE TABLELANDS WAY**SUMMARY**

Mr Bruce Fitzpatrick, General Manager from Oberon Council presented updated information on the Tablelands Way project.

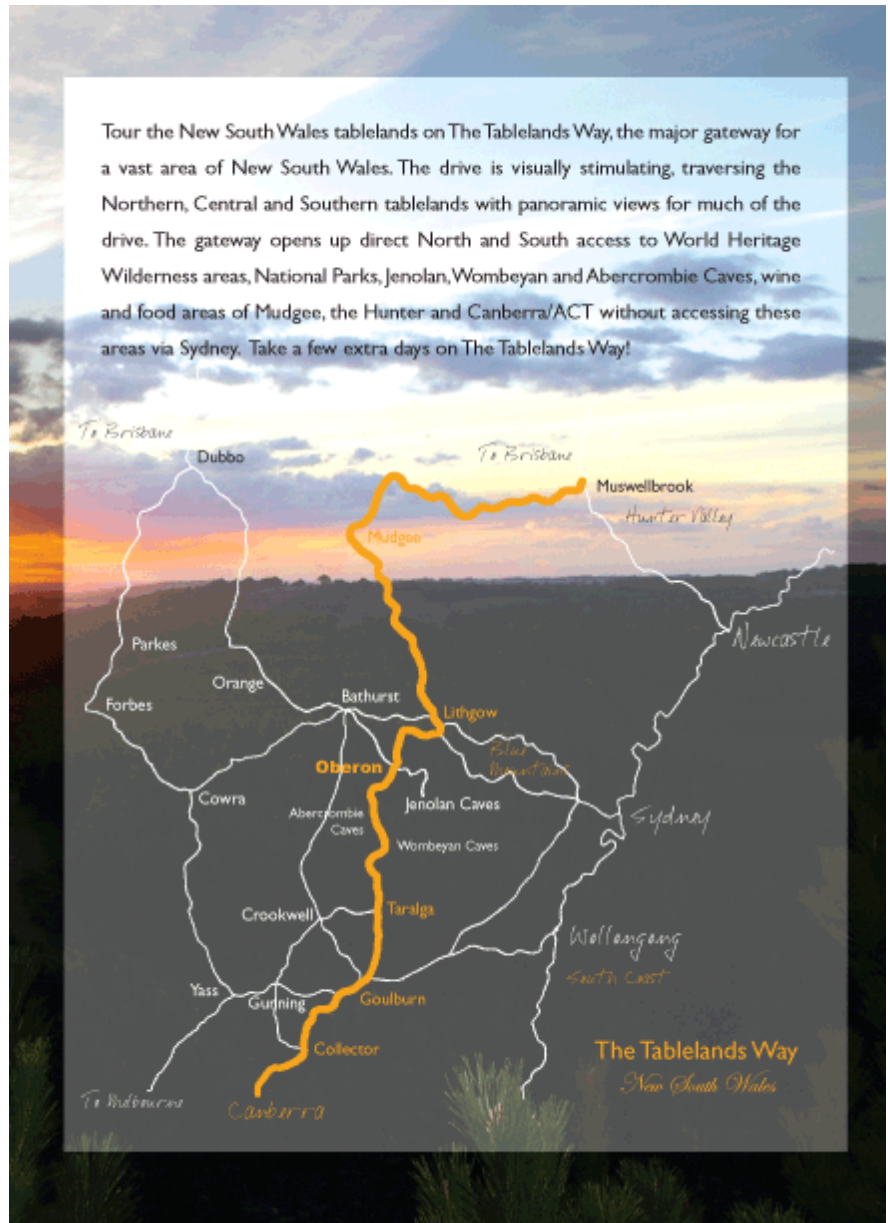
COMMENTRY

The Tablelands Way Project

The Tablelands Way touring route is a visually stimulating drive, traversing the Northern, Central and Southern tablelands. The drive links the regions of Oberon, Lithgow, Goulburn, Canberra, Mudgee and the Hunter region, connecting World Heritage Wilderness, National Parks, Jenolan, Wombeyan and Abercrombie Caves, wine and food areas of Mudgee, the Hunter and Canberra/ACT without accessing these areas via Sydney. Take a few extra days on The Tablelands Way!

Travellers along The Tablelands Way will be able to explore the many rural towns, country markets and heritage museums indulging in the mouth watering tastes found in the gourmet cafes and boutique wineries. The region also has a host of accommodation experiences including motels, guest cottages and B&B's as well as country pubs, farm stays and camping, depending on what visitors are looking for, there is accommodation to suit all tastes and budgets.

Oberon Council, as lead applicant in a Council Alliance, has been consulting with Lithgow, Goulburn Mulwaree, Mudgee and Upper Lachlan Councils, and will receive over \$400,000 in the latest round of Australian Tourism Development Programme federal grants towards the promotion and development of The Tablelands Way tourist route.



A range of teams are currently being co-ordinated including signage, infrastructure and research and marketing, with Lithgow represented on these target teams.

The Tablelands Way project completion date is February 2008.

(a) Policy Implications

Nil

(b) Financial Implications

Nil

(c) Legal Implications

Nil

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

**RECOMMENDATION
THAT**

1. A complete list of potential locations in the Lithgow region that are to be marketed via The Tablelands Way project be collated and operators be provided with the ability to have input into this list
2. Information on local attractions be forwarded to The Tablelands Way committee

MOVED: Mr B Hustwaite **SECONDED:** **Mr M Wells**

ITEM: 5 PRESENTATION: MRS VALERIE VALLEE – BOOKEASY ACCOMMODATION SERVICE

SUMMARY

Ms Valerie Vallee of Bookeasy presented information on a booking system that can be installed into the Visitor Information Centre providing an automated online reservation system tool.

COMMENTRY

BookEasy is a software solution for the Australian tourism industry providing an automated online reservation system. The system provides a “complete business tool” that aims to increase booking revenue, provide financial management, destination and product marketing, and customer servicing online. The system allows for a 24 hour online booking system, attached to the destination website that is also available from operator’s website. The BookEasy System integrates online bookings, secure payments, sales reports and customer management options. Bookings can be carried out for both accommodation and tour packages, with payments accepted online with a credit card. The system also provides content Management Tools that can track return visits, send e-newsletters and SMS notifications for bookings. It also allows tourism merchandise to be sold online.

Visitors booking online with a destination pay the full amount for the accommodation and tours package online and Visitors Centres forward payments to operators on a monthly basis.

BookEasy is currently being used by 90 visitor centres across Australia.

BookEasy is compatible with Microsoft Office, importable into Excel and would therefore be able to be manipulated into Council’s Finance System.

The Tourism Advisory Committee expressed a keen interest in this type of software and see definite advantages for customer service for visitors to the region and streamlining the way commissionable payments are taken. The advantage of the system is that it allows operators that do not currently take credit card payments an alternative to take the payments as well as ensuring that the Lithgow Visitor Information Centre has a 24 hour revenue stream for commissionable bookings.

Ms Wendy Dollin provided some information on the Book Right system that has been installed at Blue Mountains Tourism Ltd. This system however is not available for the consumer. Ms Dollin to provide the committee with further information on this system.

(a) Policy Implications

Nil

(b) Financial Implications

BookEasy Automated Reservation System - \$7,215
Incidentals - \$800

(c) Legal Implications

Nil

ATTACHMENTS

Nil

**RECOMMENDATION
THAT**

1. Ms Wendy Dollin provide an update of the Bookright system currently being implemented at BMTL
2. Ms J Rayner further investigate other competitors of the Bookeasy system
3. The Tourism Advisory Committee support the implementation of an online booking system including it in the 2007/08 Business and Marketing Plan

MOVED: Mr G Johnstone**SECONDED:** Mr M Wells**ITEM: 6 GENERAL BUSINESSES**

1. Mr D Whitty advised that the National Trust has submitted a grant application for \$10,000 for the Charles Darwin Memorial, which will include monies for signage, landscaping and interpretation. Information and guidelines on the RTA and TASAC policies to be provided to the National Trust.

Next Meeting: Monday 14th May 2007 at 4.00pm at the Lithgow Visitor Information Centre*Meeting closed: 6.20pm*