



MINUTES

Seven Valleys Tourism Committee

held at

Maldhan Ngurr Ngurra - Lithgow Transformation Hub
Training/meeting room
154 Mort Street, Lithgow

on

Tuesday 9 May 2023

at 3:00 PM

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The Chairperson declared the meeting open at 3:05 pm.

1. Acknowledgement of Country

Lithgow City Council acknowledges Wiradjuri Elders past and present of the Wiradjuri nation - the original custodians of the land on which the Lithgow's communities reside. The Council also extends our respects to our neighbouring nations.

2. Present

Mayor Maree Statham - Chairperson
Councillor Almudena Bryce
Simon Francis - LCC
Sarah Lewis (Minutes) - LCC
Larry Pitts - CDV Design
Ann Thompson - MTA Travel
Dan Zolfel - Zig Zag Railway
Louise Wallace - NPWS
Wendy Stephens - Belle Bois Luxury Getaway,
Sharon Howard - Gang Gang Gallery
Kylie Blakemore - LCC
Carl Solomon - DMS
Charlotte Prouse - DMS
Jonathan Edgecombe - LCC

3. Apologies

Deborah McGrath - LCC
Emily Seliscar - Hometown Cafe
Kat Alexander - The Blue Fox

4. Declaration of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made.

5. Presentations

5.1. Presentation by Carl Solomon – Destination Marketing Store

The committee introduced themselves, who they represent and what they wish to achieve from this committee and tourism in the Seven Valleys area.

Destination Marketing Store (DMS) presented an action plan and strategic direction for the Destination Management Plan (DMP).

It was asked if there was a timeline for the document and how the feedback process will work. DMS advised that a project plan and timeline will be provided to the committee outlining the process. This committee and DMP is the beginning of the journey.

It was asked what methods of engagement will be used as there are a diverse range of communities in the LGA. DMS advised that a mix of approaches will be used including workshops with the different industries, one-on-one's or small group meetings, meeting First Nations people on their land and to do most sessions face-to-face. Information that requires feedback from the committee will be sent through prior to the next committee meeting to be discussed or information will be provided as an agenda item at the meeting and for feedback to be given the week after.

It was asked if the consultation process will be similar with the consultation for Destination Network Central West NSW. It was advised that improvements have been made since that consultation and that the DMP will be specific in Lithgow. As Lithgow is situated between the Central West and the Blue Mountains, the DMP will be carefully designed to suit the Seven Valleys tourism area. Seven Valleys has assets that are unique to Seven Valleys and with the help of this committee and developing the DMP, points of difference can be identified, while also working collaboratively with the surrounding regions and utilising the knowledge of the committee to achieve success. At present Seven Valleys does struggle with attracting tourism to the area, for long term Lithgow in particular to be more than just a through town.

ACTION / RECOMMENDATION

THAT The committee note the presentation by Carl Solomon

MOVED: Wendy Stephens

SECONDED: Larry Pitts

CARRIED: Unanimously

6. Reports

6.1. Zig Zag Railway Update – Daniel Zolfel

D Zolfel provided an update on Zig Zag Railway. He advised that Zig Zag is back and will publicly announcing the opening weekend at a media event this weekend. Opening will be very soon for Winter, operating times will be every second weekend with 3 sessions a day accommodating 900 passengers and a new cafe will open in the precinct. D Zolfel advised that the opening isn't the finish line but the beginning with ideas for hosting events, exhibitions and markets in the future.

Zig Zag wants to ensure that they are firmly associated with the Seven Valleys and to work alongside and in partnership with the local attractions, accommodation and food in Lithgow. Comment was made that to help attract these visitors to come into Lithgow, shops and cafes need to be open. D Zolfel advised that he would like to have displays, banners and brochures for Lithgow businesses on display to encourage visitors to come into Lithgow and for local businesses to have the same for Zig Zag.

ACTION / RECOMMENDATION

THAT The committee note the update by Daniel Zolfel.

MOVED: Daniel Zolfel

SECONDED: Councillor Bryce

CARRIED: Unanimously

6.2. Gardens of Stone SCA Update

L Wallace provided a presentation on the scope of work for the Garden of Stones project. L Wallace advised that construction on some of the bike tracks will commence in September 2023 and sections of the campground areas will be open by December 2023.

It was asked how the issue of 4WD's and motor bikes entering from the Clarence entrance to the National Park near the Zig Zag Railway will be managed. L Wallace advised that data has been collected on all entrances into the park and a Road Access Strategy will be developed to help manage this issue. This strategy directs visitors to use the State Mine Gully entrance to the park.

NPWS encourages partnerships to be developed with local businesses to help champion Lithgow and to encourage visitors to stay in the Seven Valleys and use local businesses.

ACTION / RECOMMENDATION

THAT The committee note the information from Louise Wallace.

MOVED: Councillor Bryce
CARRIED: Unanimously

SECONDED: Larry Pitts

6.3. Marketing Update

The Tourism Manager S Francis provided a brief update on the marketing data and advised that his intention is to provide the committee with monthly statistics for each meeting. He also advised that new advertising videos are now out in the market to attract visitation.

ACTION / RECOMMENDATION

THAT The committee note the marketing data from the month leading up to the meeting.

MOVED: Simon Francis
CARRIED: Unanimously

SECONDED: Councillor Bryce

6.4. Events Update

The committee discussed the most recent events, the upcoming events and the potential for other events that can be hosted in Seven Valleys.

- Business Expo event last weekend at the Portland Foundations.
- Travelling theatre production 'Euphoria' at the Union Theatre last weekend
- LithGlow is the next big event coming this weekend at the Blast Furnace.
- Multiple upcoming events taking place at the Union Theatre in the coming months.

ACTION / RECOMMENDATION

THAT The committee notes the event activity having taken place in the last month.

MOVED: Simon Francis
CARRIED: Unanimously

SECONDED: Councillor Bryce

6.5. Visitor Guide Update

L Pitts provided an update on the new visitor guide. It was advised that there have been delays due to photography but that it is back on track. D Zolfel advised that he will be able to provide more photographs that can be used.

ACTION / RECOMMENDATION

THAT the committee notes the progress of the visitor guide and gives feedback.

MOVED: Larry Pitts

SECONDED: Councillor Bryce

CARRIED: Unanimously

6.6. Community Update

K Blakemore provided an update from Community and Culture. It was discussed that is it hard to get events to the town and how this can be achieved for the future.

Waste 2 Art is the upcoming event to be hosted by the Lithgow Library and Learning Centre.

ACTION / RECOMMENDATION

THAT The committee notes the update on tourism related activities within the Community and Cultural Development department.

MOVED: Councillor Bryce

SECONDED: Larry Pitts

CARRIED: Unanimously

7. General Business

A Thompson asked if this committee is the place to bring ideas for Main Street. It was advised that yes it is and that for the next meeting an agenda item will be added for discussion.

D Zolfel formally invited the committee to the media event this weekend at the Zig Zag Railway.

ACTION / RECOMMENDATION

THAT an agenda item be added to the next meeting for Main Street ideas.

MOVED: Councillor Bryce

SECONDED: Ann Thompson

CARRIED: Unanimously

8. Meeting Close

There being no further business the Chairperson declared the meeting closed at 5pm.