



# MINUTES

Seven Valleys Tourism Committee

held at

Council Administration Centre  
Committee Room  
180 Mort Street, Lithgow

on

Tuesday 6 June 2023

at 2:00 PM

# ORDER OF BUSINESS

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|  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. Acknowledgement of Country .....                | 3 |
| 2. Present.....                                    | 3 |
| 3. Apologies .....                                 | 3 |
| 4. Declaration of Interest.....                    | 3 |
| 5. Confirmation of Minutes .....                   | 3 |
| 6. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes.....      | 3 |
| 7. Staff Reports .....                             | 4 |
| 7.1. Frequency of Committee Meetings .....         | 4 |
| 7.2. Main Street Group Presentation .....          | 4 |
| 7.3. Seven Valleys Visitor Guide .....             | 6 |
| 7.4. Beatlesfest - Seven Valleys Presentation..... | 6 |
| 8. General Business .....                          | 7 |
| 9. Meeting Close .....                             | 8 |

The Chairperson declared the meeting open at 3pm.

## **1. Acknowledgement of Country**

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The Mayor acknowledged Wiradjuri Elders past and present of the Wiradjuri nation - the original custodians of the land on which the Lithgow's communities reside and extended respect to our neighbouring nations.

## **2. Present**

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Mayor Maree Statham - Chairperson  
Councillor Almudena Bryce  
Larry Pitts - CDV Design  
Ann Thompson - MTA Travel  
Daniel Zolfel - Zig Zag Railway  
Louise Wallace - NPWS  
Wendy Stephens - Belle Bois Luxury Getaway  
Sharon Howard - Gang Gang Gallery  
Councillor Cassandra Coleman  
Councillor Eric Mahony

Officers:

Simon Francis – Tourism Manager  
Kylie Blakemore – Community & Cultural Development Coordinator  
Deborah McGrath – Corporate Planning and Communications Officer  
Trinity Newton (Minutes) – Executive Assistant to the Office of the General Manager and Mayor

## **3. Apologies**

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Carl Solomon - DMS  
Charlotte Prouse - DMS  
Emily Seliscar - Hometown Cafe  
Kat Alexander - The Blue Fox

Officers:

Craig Butler, General Manager  
Jonathon Edgecombe, Director Infrastructure and Economy

## **4. Declaration of Interest**

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The Mayor called for any declarations of interest.

There were Nil declarations of interest.

## **5. Confirmation of Minutes**

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The minutes of the previous meeting were confirmed at the May meeting of Council.

## **6. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes**

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The Chair called for any matters arising from previous minutes.

Waste to Art launch was a great success. The deadline for entries has been extended.

Update on LithGlow:

- around 5000 people attended which was on average with previous years.

- complaint regarding the 2022 food trucks and entertainment had been addressed with extra vendors.
- Surveys were carried out which had positive results.
- there were more children's activities and rides planned but didn't eventuate
- Aussie Night Markets were used for the 2023 event. In 2024 more versatile options will be reviewed and sourced.
- There is a new stage at the Blast furnace being installed prior to the 2024 event.

Item 7.4 - Beastlesfest - Seven Valleys Presentation will be discussed at this point in the meeting.

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## **7. Staff Reports**

### **7.1. Frequency of Committee Meetings**

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The committee discussed the pros and cons of bi-monthly or quarterly meetings.

#### **ACTION / RECOMMENDATION**

THAT the committee endorses a change to the meeting frequency of the Seven Valleys Tourism Committee to bi-monthly.

**MOVED:** Daniel Zolfel

**SECONDED:** Larry Pitts

**CARRIED**

### **7.2. Main Street Group Presentation**

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This matter was requested by Anne Thompson who was representing the Main Street Presentation Group (MSPG). The Committee discussed:

Points of note:

- Main Street vitality and should be looking better than what it is. With budget constraints of council, it is requested that the presentation of Main Street needs to be addressed. Main Street promotion.
- The MSPG is a group of concerned community members and invite other individuals and businesses to join.
- They aim to work together with Council and seek guidance from and collaboratively work with Council to enhance the overall presentation of Lithgow.
- The flags and banners on Main Street were discussed in detail with members stating that they look tatty and torn.
- Suggestion of lights in the big trees in QE Park and the at the top end of Main Street.
- Requests that businesses wanting to put flower pots in front of their business be able to use the older ones that were taken away and ask them to water the plants and maintain them?
- The presenter highlighted that the business on Main Street and the overall community have low morale at present and to enhance Main Street will help lift community and business

morale.

- The Main Street Presentation Group enquired what the policy of Council is on the Main Street and specifically if there was a specified ratio of retail businesses to government businesses within the precinct.
- Sharon Howard - a lot of activity on QE Park, art trail on murals in the area. There are things that can be done that can enhance the Main Street as it is an essential artery of the Town.
- Seeking a policy on the number of government buildings within the precinct.
- Banners:
  - Request banners promoting events in the area.
  - The contract with the current supplier/contractor is expiring soon
  - There is a budget for further banners etc.
  - Request that banners are changed more frequently and made with different material to ensure longevity.
- The MSPG asked that some of the planters previously removed from Main Street, that are stored in the depot, be reinstalled.
- The MSPG asked when will the Main Street revitalisation be started? Suggestions of street scaping and small trees with little up lighter at their base was made. The Committee were informed that there will be consultation with CBD prior to the commencement to the Main Street Revitalisation Project commences.
- Suggestion of empty shops being filled by getting a creative local person to have a demonstration what they can do in the shops whilst empty. Also suggested was a TV in empty shops that promote the events or businesses in the area.
- Proposal that Council owned buildings could be used for pop up restaurants and cafes to draw new businesses into the area.
- Businesses will need to help.
- The Committee asked what role the Chamber of Commerce play in the equation.
- Who is promoting the area and bringing business to the area.
- Food and wine markets in Cook Street Plaza in September.
- The MSPG will seek expressions of interest in which shop owners want planters in front of their shop if this can be arranged.
- GWH - Beautification was discussed and the committee was informed of the evolving proposal and collaboration with Council.
- A community billboard was requested to be placed in an area of high visibility.
- The light sign on the Visitors Information Centre was requested to face both directions. There are a lot of restrictions on signage on the Great Western Highway.
- The Committee requested that the administration find out what the Chamber's next event is and when it will be. A delegate from the Chamber of Commerce to be appointed to the committee to represent all Chambers of Commerce in the LGA.
- Administration advised the committee that a Smart Cities Hub is going into Cook Street Plaza and is already in the budget. It involves Wi-Fi, can charge scooter etc. Electronic signage for when you get off the train, electronic kiosk. Funding sourcing for all those proposed actions from the committee.
- The Committee discussed the NSW Royalties for Rejuvenation grants that may be available to help.

## **ACTION / RECOMMENDATION**

THAT the committee notes the presentation by the 'Main Street Group'.

**MOVED:** Councillor Almy Bryce

**SECONDED:** Sharon Howard

**CARRIED**

### 7.3. Seven Valleys Visitor Guide

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The guide was sent out as an attachment. The Committee discussed and agreed that the catalogue is well done and congratulated Larry on the good work.

Feedback from The National Parks & Wildlife on their content is required by end of the week.

Blue Mountains advertisement was discussed and would be more beneficial for LCC / Seven Valleys to not use on the back cover, instead the inside back cover.

#### **ACTION / RECOMMENDATION**

THAT the committee provide feedback on the Visitor Guide to Simon Francis, Tourism Manager, by Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> June.

**MOVED:** Councillor Almy Bryce

**SECONDED:** Sharon Howard

**CARRIED**

### 7.4. Beatlesfest - Seven Valleys Presentation

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The event organisers of the "Beatlefest", Wade and Jonathon, presented their proposed event which is being planned for the long weekend in October.

Points of note:

- Local business are to be invited to organise events that can be linked to the main event that of the Beatles era.
  - The event organisers are seeking support from Council by way of:
    - activating the streets and the public areas with street performers in Cook Street Plaza, buses between locations, band in QE Park, would like Council support with financial contributions to the event.
    - Activation of as many venues across the Seven Valleys.
  - Believe it is a really good repositioning of Lithgow away from a coal mining town.
  - Zig Zag Railway is planning a Steam Fest on the long weekend in October also and can possibly bring in a further 5-6 thousand people to the town. These patrons can be encouraged to go into Lithgow for the Beatlesfest.
  - Cross promotion of Halloween can be done at the same time.
  - Double decker and heritage buses were discussed for the moving of people from town to town.
  - Requesting Main Street to be vibrant and full of life and character for the long weekend.
  - Online booking system for buses would be used for the data on attendees. Walk up will also be required to board buses. Booking will help to assist with requirements of number of buses and attendees etc.
  - The Committee were informed that the Council budget is going to Council meeting for final adoption this month. This funding request will be sent to Simon to for inclusion in the council reports.
  - Destinations NSW funding submission was lodged.
  - Fantastic Aussie Tours could be approached for the bus. These suppliers are not classed as regional but if being approached independently.
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- The use of local business are preferred for everything.
- Cost from Council expectations as per list on the last page of document tabled.
- Beatlesfest is not done anywhere else in NSW or Australia.
- Budget would have to be determined - for Council to fund this other services would need to be cut.

## **ACTION / RECOMMENDATION**

THAT the committee note the progress of Beatlesfest.

**MOVED:** Councillor Almy Bryce

**SECONDED:** Sharon Howard

**CARRIED**

## **8. General Business**

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The Committee were informed that the Sydney Weekender is coming to Zig Zag Railway. The visit is proposed for Saturday 15th July. Lithgow will be promoted within the interview.

Blue Mountains Flyer - Transport Heritage is planning to have events and to base themselves here in Lithgow. In September this year trains will be coming from Central station to Mt Vic and bussed to the Zig Zag Railway.

The Committee suggested that pop up local stalls to Zig Zag Railway to promote Lithgow at these events. Promotion of the Beatlesfest, Halloween etc could occur.

Zig Zag Railway were proposing to hold an event on the long weekend.

A new booking agent for LCC Seven Valleys Tourism is being sought and LCC Seven Valleys Tourism would like to work on a compatible ticketing function with both Zig Zag and Beatlesfest.

Zig Zag would like to be part of local LCC Seven Valleys Tourism events offering the Halloween festivities with a Halloween train / ghost train or light up the viaducts as part of LithGlow.

LCC Seven Valleys Tourism informed the committee that the Halloween funding this year is less than previous years due to the lack of funding covering the event.

LCC Seven Valleys Tourism Events include the Opera, Halloween and food and wine festival.

LCC Seven Valleys Tourism visitation dropped when Zig Zag railway closed. ZZ Railway informed the committee that this month there is 4.5 thousand people coming to Lithgow with tickets booked.

Zig Zag and Gardens of Stone are to collaborate on ticketing from bottom points.

It was raised that Zig Zag is promoting on their website the Blue Mountains and not the Seven Valleys.

Zig Zag would like to partner with food outlets and accommodation venues. Zig Zag and Seven Valleys will meet offline to discuss further.

The Mayor brought to the attention of the committee, the proposed Tina Turner Flash mob tribute for the Main Street in late July on Friday afternoon or early Saturday.

**ACTION / RECOMMENDATION**

That the information in General Business be noted.

**Moved:** Daniel Zolfel

**Seconded:** Councillor Almy Bryce

**CARRIED**

**9. Meeting Close**

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There being no further business the Chairperson declared the meeting closed at 5:01 pm.

DRAFT