



# MINUTES

Seven Valleys Tourism Committee

held at

Council Administration Centre  
Committee Room  
180 Mort Street, Lithgow

on

Monday 25 September 2023

at 3:00 PM

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The Chairperson declared the meeting open at 3:02 pm.

## **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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Present: Mayor Maree Statham, Ann Thompson - MTA Travel, Daniel Zolfel - Zig Zag Railway, Sharon Howard - Gang Gang Gallery, Wendy Stephens - Belle Bois Luxury B&B, Kat Alexander - Blue Fox, Lee Wiggins - Zig Zag Railway, Mandy Wiggins - Zig Zag Railway, Natalie Hagopian - Halloween

Officers: Craig Butler - General Manager, Matthew Johnson - Manager Community and Culture

Trinity Newton - Minutes

Guests: Sean Haylan - Destination Network Central West, Wade Jackson & Jonathan Sequeira - Beatlesfest.

## **3. Apologies**

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Apologies: Deb McGrath, Simon Francis, Jonathon Edgecombe, Councillor Almy Bryce,

## **4. Declaration of Interest**

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The Mayor called for any declarations of interest.

There were no declarations of interest made.

## **5. Confirmation of Minutes**

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The minutes of the Seven Valleys Tourism Committee held 31 July 2023 had been endorsed at the Ordinary meeting of Council 31 July 2023.

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

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The Chair called for any matters arising from previous minutes and no matters were raised.

## **7. Staff Reports**

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### **7.1. Beatlesfest Update - Wade Jackson & Jonathan Sequeira**

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The Beatlesfest team updated the Committee on the events occurring on the long weekend for the Beatlesfest event.

- Positive response from businesses and the community.
- The initial year establishing a new event is the hardest the to organise and get recognition from the community.
- The two main events on Saturday night are almost sold out.
- the Portland and Wallerawang businesses are also involved in a positive way.
- The Mayor congratulated the Beatlesfest team on great work.

## **ACTION / RECOMMENDATION**

THAT The committee note the presentation by Wade Jackson and Jonathan Sequeira about Beatlesfest.

**MOVED:** Sharon Howard

**SECONDED:** Mandy Wiggins

**CARRIED**

## **7.2. Destination Network Central West Presentation - Sean Haylan**

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Mr Haylan presented to the Committee on Destinations Network - Destinations Central West.

Destinations Management Plan was overviewed and discussed.

Five strategic objectives were outlined.

Agritourism - facilitate the discussion with businesses and community on Agritourism.  
Some projects - truffle farmers, farm stay, pick your own orchards etc. more specific to LCC area - accommodation is the current strongest agritourism opportunity.

The engagement with agritourism stakeholders has been difficult in this area.

Agritourism – Experiential travel which connects people to product or produce, delivered on farming land through a direct "on farm" experience.

Destinations Network will be gathering insight - Literature review, product and experience audit and assessment, stakeholder consultation.

Blueprint & roadmap will be developed to be able to understand the opportunities, mapping pathways etc.

Agritourism accelerator program

A review of the methodology and criteria was covered outlining the process.

Agritourism gives the ability to generate further income on farm.

The Committee discussed insurance requirements for agritourism business. Education and training is required to support startup businesses.

Cycle strategy - Understanding of the opportunities for cycle events in the LCC.

Mapping of the findings and consultation with stakeholders has occurred. Strategy and action plan will be available to use to apply for grant funding. The plan of management is still to be established.

Reidentification are of the flow off of the cycle events.

The heritage loops in which Lithgow local government area have been established but not promoted.

Chance will to speak to TLC - opportunities for LCC to be sent by Sean.

Lithgow is great location, for this tourism after, close to Sydney.

Wolgan Valley rail line

Wolgan Valley will be the most isolated community – there was encouragement of examination of ways to open up the tourism opportunities for the business in Wolgan Valley. Cycle tracks are able to be established alongside railway lines which may be an opportunity for Wolgan.

The region does not have an established tourism database for available suppliers.

Gap analysis update on listings will be done on the region. Identify experience improvement opportunities.

Budget for Destinations Central West is available until 2026 and staff are engaged to work with tourism managers in the region.

The Growing Regions fund has been cancelled by the new NSW Government.

#### **ACTION / RECOMMENDATION**

THAT the committee notes the presentation by Sean Haylan, General Manager DNCW.

**MOVED:** Sharon Howard

**SECONDED:** Mandy Wiggins

**CARRIED**

#### **7.3. Tourism Managers Report**

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The committee reviewed the brief written report in the business paper.

The Lithgow Tourism Visitors Guide has been printed and distributed. Matthew Johnson will find out where these have been distributed and have them sent to the committee members.

Daniel from ZigZag Railway gave positive feedback on the proposal for a number of community events (Beatlesfest, Halloween etc.) and encourage that Zig Zag also be integrated into these.

#### **ACTION / RECOMMENDATION**

THAT The committee note the update on tourism and events projects.

**MOVED:** Lee Wiggins

**SECONDED:** Sharon Howard

**CARRIED**

#### **7.4. Cultural Development Update - Matthew Johnson**

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Matthew Johnson informed the committee of the events happening including the Union Theatre, the upcoming opera gala event occurring in early November. This event is over two nights on 3 and 4 November. The Opera "Rita" is being performed.

The new seats for the Union Theatre will be installed in time for this event.

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Tickets to the Opera will be advertised and go on sale. Local businesses were approached to supply catering.

The Committee sought information regarding the role of the management of the Union Theatre by Council. This position is currently vacant. There was encouragement for the theatre to be more dynamically curated.

## **ACTION / RECOMMENDATION**

THAT the committee notes the update on cultural events.

**MOVED:** Kat Alexander

**SECONDED:** Lee Wiggins

**CARRIED**

### **7.5. Lithgow Halloween Update - Natalie Hagopian**

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The events organiser, Natlie Hagopian, overviewed planning for the event:-

- New things this year are tailored to the children, kids zone, cookie decorating,
- There will be two stages - mobile stage in Cook Street Plaza, and rides will be in Main Street this year.
- Main Street businesses have been approached to encourage their participation.
- Food vendors are arranged.
- In addition to the stores and restaurants opening, there will be some outside vendors attending to ensure that there will be enough of a food offer during the event.
- Bunnings and Hartley Realty are contributing as sponsors.
- With all of the activities, the community are being encouraged to stay longer than 2 hours.
- The marching band will be on the program again this year.
- The vouchers for the prizes for best dressed are donated by Bunnings and Coles.
- There are two points of purchase for ride tickets; at the library and near Bridge Street. Presale of tickets will be confirmed.
- The market stalls will be spread out over the entire Main Street.
- Zig Zag Railway asked if they could be included in the Halloween event for 2024.

## **ACTION / RECOMMENDATION**

THAT the committee note the report by Natalie Hagopian on the organisation of Lithgow Halloween 2023.

**MOVED:** Mayor Maree Statham

**SECONDED:** Sharon Howard

**CARRIED**

## 8. General Business

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The meeting schedule for the Seven Valleys Tourism Committee was set at the last week of the the month on a Bi monthly cycle, proposed for a Tuesday. Dates will be sent out of the next twelve months.

### ACTION / RECOMMENDATION

THAT items of general business items be noted by the committee.

**MOVED:** Mandy Wiggins

**SECONDED:** Sharon Howard

**CARRIED**

## 9. Meeting Close

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The Mayor declared the meeting closed at 4:59 pm.