



MINUTES

Seven Valleys Tourism Committee

held at

Maldhan Ngurr Ngurra
Lithgow Transformation Hub
Zoom Room
154 Mort Street, Lithgow

on

Tuesday 26 March 2024

at 3:00 PM

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The Chairperson declared the meeting open at 3pm.

1. Acknowledgement of Country

The Chair 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

Present:

Mayor M Statham,
Councillor A Bryce,
Wendy Stephens - Belle Bois Luxury B&B,
Louise Wallace - National Parks & Wildlife,
Daniel Zolfel - Zig Zag Railway,
Mandy Wiggins - Zig Zag Railway
Sharon Howard - Gang Gang Gallery,
Kat Alexander - Blue Fox (via Zoom)

Officers:

Shaun Elwood - Director People and Places
Simon Francis - Tourism and Events Manager
Trinity Newton - Minutes

3. Apologies

Apologies received from:

Ann Thompson - MTA Travel
Councillor D Goodwin
Craig Butler - General Manager

4. Declaration of Interest

The Chair called for any declarations of interest.

There were no declarations of interest made.

5. Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the 27 November 2024 and the 23 January 2024 Seven Valleys Tourism meeting were presented to and endorsed by Council at the Ordinary Meeting of Council held 26 February 2024.

ACTION

THAT the Minutes of the 27 November 2024 and the 23 January 2024 Seven Valleys Tourism meetings of be taken as read and confirmed.

MOVED: Daniel Zolfel

SECONDED: Louise Wallace

6. Matters Arising from Previous Minutes

The Chair called for any matters arising from previous minutes.

The Committee requested an update on the progress of engaging a contractor to undertake a Marketing and Branding strategy and were informed that this matter will be discussed in today's meeting.

7. Staff Reports

7.1. Destination Action Plan Presentation - Destination Marketing Store

The Committee welcomed Carl Solomon and Oliver Batten from Destination Marketing Store to present the Destination Action Plan (DAP)

Quick recap on the development process for the DAP:

- Over 12 stakeholder sessions,
- workshops reinforced the value of adopting a whole-of-region approach.
- Many challenges, opportunities and potential actions raised by stakeholders - which created an opportunity to identify opportunities to grow and expand.
- Strategic directions and draft presented for feedback. Emerging insights were shared.
- Penultimate draft (today) to be reviewed before DAP goes on public exhibition (likely April)

Framework

To grow civic pride and capitalise on assets such as history and nature.

Purpose is to provide prioritised roadmap / action plan broken down and linked back to core goals - Enablers, supply and demand.

The Action plan takes into consideration the resources of council to be able to take action and implement. It also looks at game changers such as private sector input or private / public partnership.

A collaboration between Council and the tourism industry is key and actions are designed to reinforce industry engagement. The relationship between the industry and Council should be a two-way relationship.

Supply - How do you enhance existing products to encourage locals, attract investors and bring tourists to the area.

Advocates – Word of mouth is the most powerful tool in the toolkit.
Digital marketing is also a great tool for advocacy.

Four High-level key outcomes

- The importance of building civic pride currently not a strong sense of civic pride - stakeholders are keen to see this grow.
- To create a distinctive strategic place brand - it starts with civic pride and with community but in through consultation.

A distinctive Place Brand

- Helps with investment attraction encouraging community spirit and pride, evident to visitors.
 - A great place to work, live and visit which leads to companies looking to relocate and new residents willing to relocate.
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Increasing the average length of stay

- One extra night stay for any visitor would lead to an economic boost of \$23.6 million.
- Promoting opportunities across the LGA including itineraries and packaging are crucial.
- Experiences are more important than destinations.
- Elevating experience content

Arts & Culture is an NSW Govt. priority.

- Domestic trends show a huge post covid increase in - wellness, outdoor activities, cultural experiences, and sustainability.

Mountain biking marketing presentation

- Importance of putting strategy first to make the most of your points of differences.
- It's a highly competitive marketplace and not all riders are the same. Focus, focus, focus on assets and target market.
- Collaboration and partnership are a key to success. A strong brand can be the foundation for building stronger relationships.
- Makes it easier to deliver - from marketing, to promoting events, to the design of street furniture and merchandises.

Money talks - making revenue to maintain, evolve and grow the trail network has never been more important - don't miss the opportunity to own the revenue stream (sugar hits vs. long term)

Bike friendly & Rider friendly local industry - start engaging early to bring industry along the ride.

Why Be Dull? Riders Aren't!

Be distinctive - stand out from the crowd.

Great Creative - brings your brand and marketing position to life.

Create assets you can licence as well as ones that partner or industry can use - this will help to grow our reach and revenue.

Some examples of mountain bike destination promotions were shared with the Committee.

The Committee requested further detail on the Destination Action Plan from page 25 – specifically regarding the Tourism delivery model. Expand on the information and what should be considered.

- Some services are being outsourced but Hybrid model or integrated model is being suggested.
- Industry engagement – this is a core responsibility of Council in relation to tourism.

The promotion of Seven Valleys and/or Lithgow is considered for review.

The roles and impacts of council structure impacts the DAP.

- Discussion on funding of the project and the delivery model

Currently working through budgets for next financial year and there are proposals for implementation of the first stages of the DAP. There is an intention to go to market for a contractor to provide the first stages of a marketing and branding strategy.

First element - funding for branding strategy and the destination marketing strategy are scheduled to take place next financial year.

First thing that often doesn't happen is that there is not a brand implementation road map / strategy. In order to get the 'best bang for buck' is to firstly use and establish the social media and website promotion.

Promote great stories and build engagement to establish a platform to launch the new brand. Engagement is a longer burn.

It has been identified that the Seven Valleys social media platform needs to be managed more actively.

ACTION / RECOMMENDATION

THAT the committee note the presentation and provide feedback on the draft DAP before, or during, the public exhibition.

MOVED: Daniel Zolfel

SECONDED: Councillor A Bryce

CARRIED

7.2. Lithgow Mountain Bike Transformation Project - Ray Christison & Craig Flynn

The Lithgow Mountain Bike Transformation Project was presented to the Committee by Ray Christison and Craig Flynn.

The proposal is for a 25km single track with supplementary proposals in the National Park and utilising LCC and Crown Land.

Objective of the Lithgow Mountain Bike Transformation Project is: "To provide a world class mountain biking destination in the township of Lithgow that promotes health and wellbeing, economic resilience and environmental stewardship."

This will be the Gateway - to Gardens of Stone and other attractions etc.

Some benefits to Lithgow LGA:

- bring more jobs
- business opportunities
- Increase in overnight stays, day trips and repeat visitations.

The trail design is currently underway.

This is a multi-contributor project with Project Control Group members being:

- Central Tablelands Mountain Bike
- National Parks
- Lithgow Council
- Crownlands
- The City of Greater Lithgow Mining Museum Inc.

The steps of the project anticipated to take approximately 18months of planning were outlined.

The trails will be purpose built and designed by world leaders in the industry.

ACTION / RECOMMENDATION

THAT the committee note the contents of the presentation by Lithgow State Mine Heritage Park and Central Tablelands Mountain Bike Club.

MOVED: Councillor Bryce

SECONDED: Daniel Zolfel

CARRIED

7.3. Role and purpose of the Tourism Committee - Shaun Elwood

This item regarding the role and purpose of the Tourism Committee was discussed but was deferred due to the lack of quorum (as the Mayor and Councillor Bryce left the meeting due to a previous Council engagement) and will be brought back to the next Seven Valleys Tourism Committee Meeting. Discussion amongst members that remained focussed on the need to have a number of further industry representatives on the committee and the establishment of an industry led forum for tourism advocacy and development.

8. General Business

No General Business was raised.

9. Meeting Close

There being no further business the Chairperson declared the meeting closed at 4:30 pm.