

**GO5 – Revitalise Picton Project Update**

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267389

TRIM 9193

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- This report provides an update on the progress of the Revitalise Picton project, outlining:
  - The continual recovery of Picton Main Street and general Business sentiment
  - Promotions that have occurred to assist business recovery
  - Update of Actions taken since the 5 July 2016.
- It is recommended that Council note the attached Revitalise Picton Action Plan.

**REPORT**

**INTRODUCTION**

In early June 2016, NSW experienced devastating storms that resulted in Natural Disaster Declarations in 41 Local Government areas, including Wollondilly. While this storm also caused significant damage in other parts of Wollondilly (particularly Broughton Pass) this report focuses on the Picton Revitalisation Project as other measures are in place to address the damage to Broughton Pass as quickly as possible.

In the wake of this devastating storm event, Council has been actively supporting and communicating with the Picton business community to assist during this difficult time.

In order to assist this process, a Workshop was held on the 5 July for the stakeholders of the local CBD to get a wide range of viewpoints and ideas regarding priorities in assisting our community move forward, rebuild and flourish.

The outcomes of the Workshop were addressed internally within Council and continue to be actioned.

**BACKGROUND**

On 5 June 2016 after a severe East Coast low weather system struck Picton causing significant damage, Picton and its surrounds found themselves inundated with stormwater, due to the storm event.

Quick acting community, Council and emergency services ensured that this event culminated in not one loss of life.

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As a result Council resolved on 20 June 2016:-

1. *That Council note the information regarding the Local Recovery Operations.*
2. *That Council approve the commencement of the Revitalising Picton project.*
3. *That an expenditure budget of \$100,000 be approved in the 2015/16 budget for the Local Recovery Operation clean-up works and urgent infrastructure repairs/replacement with funding provided from Council's internally restricted cash.*
4. *That an expenditure budget of \$100,000 for the Local Recovery Operation clean-up works and urgent infrastructure repairs/replacement be approved for 2016/17 in addition to the annual budget adopted in this meeting in report G08, with funding provided from Council's internally restricted cash.*
5. *That an expenditure budget of \$50,000 for the Revitalising Picton project be approved for 2016/17 in addition to the annual budget adopted in this meeting in report G08, with funding provided from Council's **internally restricted cash**.*

Council officers quickly set up a disaster recovery team located in the Council foyer area with extended operating hours to assist the local residents and businesses.

Once the initial disaster had been addressed, Council approved the commencement of the Revitalising Picton project.

The Picton Revitalisation Team was formed and comprises of the General Manager, Economic Development Manager, Manager Development.

The team organised a Revitalisation workshop as its first action, to bring the Picton Business community and stakeholders together to explore opportunities for Picton's renewal. The aim of this collaborative project was to identify strategies and options to 'future-proof' Picton, focusing on social, economic and physical (infrastructure) recovery and resilience.

**Update**

To date it can be considered that Picton Main Street and general Business recovery is progressing well:

- 44 severely affected businesses have reopened
- 12 businesses are operating from alternate spaces. This includes the Wollondilly Visitor Information Centre
- 20 businesses are still to reopen, of these around 5 are expected not to reopen at all, 3 are scheduled to be open imminently.

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- A Key traffic generator, Picton Courthouse is scheduled to be reopened in January or February 2017
- There are ongoing disputes relating to the insurance coverage of some businesses with insurers IAG, CGU and NRMA. These issues continue to affect the redevelopment and reopening of some businesses.

Various Promotions have taken place and have been valuable during this period:

- The Picton Chamber of Commerce and Industry is continuing with the Flourish Picton Festival with the final event scheduled to be held at Picton RSL Park on 15 October. During this event the prize giveaway will be drawn with over \$30,000 worth of prizes to be won with first prize being a Holden Trax Active.
- As part of the Flourish Picton Festival “Picton’s White Christmas” was held. This ran during the month of July. Picton was transformed into a with snow covered trees, sparkling fairy lights, light clusters of snow falling from above with carolling in the village square on Argyle Street along with other performances by local performers.

Since the 5 July the following actions have been completed:

- Established an internal working group within Council to respond to the business priorities and establish a plan for action in the short-term (NOW), medium – term (NEXT) and long term (SOON)
- Pursued ongoing communication with damaged businesses and provided information and support as necessary regarding relocation or reopening of their businesses
- Supported Picton Chamber of Commerce and Industry’s ‘Christmas in July’ and Flourish Picton Events
- Maintained regular contact with damaged and condemned building owners regarding challenges and consideration of various requests
- Jointly with the Chamber of Commerce, provided a shop front sign for business to explain to tourists what has happened and that recovery is underway.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

N/A

**ATTACHMENTS IN A SEPARATE BOOKLET**

1. Revitalise Picton Action Plan

**RECOMMENDATION**

That Council note the attached Revitalise Picton Action Plan.