

MEETING MINUTES

Tourism Advisory Group



Date: Thursday 15 February, 2024
Time: 4:00pm to 6:00pm
Location: Banksia Boardroom, Wollondilly Shire Hall and via Teams

Council	Attended	Apology
Cr. Judith Hannan (Chair)		✓
Cr. Blair Briggs (Deputy Chair)	✓	
Caroline Argent, Director Customer & Corporate Services		✓
Peter Wright, Manager Engagement and Performance	✓	
Kersti Martin, Tourism & Business Support Team Leader	✓	
Kim McGuinness, Tourism & Business Support Officer	✓	
Amanda Johnson, Digital Marketing Officer	✓	
Stephen Gardiner, Manager Sustainable Growth	✓	
Advisory Group Members		
Kimberley Cook (Horse and Harpy)		
Brad Wilson (Australian Wildlife Sanctuary)	✓	
Rob Thompson (Yerranderie Arts, Culture & Community Association)	✓	
Damien Silm (Cedar Creek Orchard)	✓	
David Bennett (Transport Heritage NSW – NSW Rail Museum)	✓	
Kayla Seeney (Camden Valley Inn)	✓	
Bob Clayton (Destination Wollondilly Magazine)	✓	
Mandy Barnes (Kalinya Estate)	✓	
Lyn Davey (former Wollondilly Tourism Association – WTAI)	✓	
Sandra Harlor (former Event Organiser)	✓	
Louise Clifton (National Parks & Wildlife Service)	✓	
Councillors		
Cr. Banasik		✓
Cr. Brandstater	✓	
Cr. Deeth		✓
Cr. Spearpoint	✓	
Guest Speaker		
Josh Mathews, Manager Local Government (Destination NSW)	✓	

Agenda Item	Notes	Agreed Actions
1. Acknowledgement of country	Deputy Chair Cr. Briggs delivered Acknowledgement of Country.	
2. Attendance and apologies	As noted in table above.	
3. Disclosure of interests	<p>Deputy Chair Cr. Briggs asked attendees to disclose any conflict of interests.</p> <p>Nil to report.</p>	
4. Confirmation of previous Minutes & Actions	<p>Previous Minutes and Actions confirmed by Tourism Advisory Group, see below Actions update.</p> <p>All actions from the last meeting in September have been addressed or are ongoing. Noticeable updates include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Love the Dilly videos shared in September. • Cafes / Restaurants are maximising outdoor space with extra dining areas. • Shared Small Scale Signage Report, and will provide more information at the next meeting. • Ongoing work on Tourism Asset Plan for Picton Viaduct and through Council and various departments. • Economy SRG; one of the members requested the Tourism Advisory Group and the business support actively promote Avon Dam now it has reopened. A social post on Visit Wollondilly was featured in December, with another scheduled for March. "Dams of the Dilly" driving Itinerary will feature in the next VW seasonal newsletter, and it is already featured on the VW website and the Dams itinerary. Bob Clayton advised he is doing an article in the next Destination Wollondilly on Avon Dam. 	
5. Wollondilly Tourism Association Acknowledgement	<p>Kersti Martin thanked WTAI executive team;</p> <p>Fortunate to attend the December event for Tourism After 5; many people thanked WTAI for their support and advocacy for tourism and everything they've done to put tourism at the forefront in Wollondilly.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cr. Briggs advised the strength of WTAI and the community is still strong. It's important to keep conversations going with all members and to share, discuss and learn all things tourism. • Lyn Davey advised the WTAI website has been unpublished, but not yet finalised with fair trading. For those who did not attend Tourism after 5, there is still a lot of interest and synergy 	

	<p>in economic development and the visitor economy - watch this space.</p>	
<p>6. Tourism Connect</p>	<p>Kersti Martin provided a brief introduction to Tourism Connect;</p> <p>In order to move forward and deliver great events like WTAI's Tourism After 5, the networking event has been rebranded to Tourism Connect. The first Tourism Connect event will be held on Wednesday 20th March 6pm – 8pm at Razorback Ridge Wines.</p> <p>Early next week an invitation will be sent out to all tourism members. Council is excited to deliver the event with a slightly different model and to share collaborations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lyn Davey asked if a fee is attached. Kersti Martin confirmed there is no fee, and the event is free to attend. • Peter Wright advised the invitation is extended to those who have an interest or passion in the local tourism industry. Council is still looking for funds to run the Tourism Connect events. It is technically a pilot; however, Council is confident funds can be secured. 	
<p>7. Council Projects Update</p>	<p>Peter Wright provided an update on Council Projects;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performing Arts Centre next to the Council building estimated completion date is July 2024. Raina Savage is the Transitional Performing Arts Centre Manager and working on the planning and coordination. From the completion of the building to the end of 2024, smaller pilot events will run to test the building's technology and capabilities. It will progress to a full program of events in 2025. A new website is being constructed for the public to book shows, as well as provide a portal for touring shows to look at the building and submit an EOI. • Government Services building will be behind the new Performing Arts Centre. Considering DA and the expected time frame for approval is likely to be forthcoming on 3rd March. Construction of the Government Services building may commence later this year. • Council has purchased land at the back of Picton Hotel on either side of the existing car park. This land will be used to create 50-70 car parking spaces, with construction expected to commence soon. • Stephen Gardiner provided an update; Employment & Rural Industry is a new team at 	

	<p>Council, with Nicole Dukinfield as the Team Leader. Nicole has a strong approach on job Creation and agritourism and agribusiness. Horticulture; there is a push to finish last year's work in events. Nicole has great ideas for the future and will likely attend the next Tourism Advisory meeting. Planning proposals to do with economic growth and employment. Over next 12 months, very active in the space around Morton Park Rd and activity in West Wilton.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An online Agri Hub including relevant content will be created on the Business Wollondilly website in the coming weeks, which will provide a space for all things rural. This will also be linked to the Council home page. 	
<p>8. Destination NSW Update</p>	<p>Josh Mathews provided a brief introduction and an update on DNSW;</p> <p>Josh, Manager Local Government is the new representative for this region for DNSW, and has taken over from Bianca Gilmore. Josh has been in the role 5 weeks; he started his career in broadcasting and has previously worked in stakeholder engagement, and for Service NSW.</p> <p>Josh is pleased to be working with Wollondilly and engages with 33 LGAs that make up Greater Sydney. The 3 metropolises; Western Parkland City, Eastern Parkland City and Western River City. Josh's role is to grow the NSW visitor economy, and is the front door for Councils; feeding questions into NSW Government that are relevant and important issues to Councils.</p> <p>Since April 2022, there has been significant change to the visitor economy landscape, with a new Government, budget reviews state-wide, and development of the very first creative industry policy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DMP Western Parkland City policy is still being finalised. • Create NSW was released in Dec 2023; recommendation to read this policy, as a lot of information related to Western Sydney. • NSW First Program – Selling Experience workshop is being held on 30 April, Parramatta. All businesses are welcome to attend. • NSW First Program Online webinars are available in the First Program including wellness, culinary, and world-class agritourism experiences. • Agritourism guide is being Created, with the completion date to be determined. • Recommend looking at the open streets grant; applications are now open. Consider if it appropriate to apply for that program. 	

	Cr. Briggs asked if Josh can attend Tourism Connect on 20 March; yes is attending.	
9. Update of Teams Actions and Deliverables	<p>Kersti Martin provided a brief update; business as usual and the following actions;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to create awareness of Wollondilly • Great content for our social media schedule, to include driving people to VisitWollondilly.com.au (own internal target). • Agri online hub; working on getting this set up in coming weeks. • Tourism Connect • October 2023 Small Business workshops were very successful, and Kim McGuinness is working on getting some set up for April 2024. 	
10. Local Government Election – 14 September 2024	<p>Peter Wright raised awareness that advisory groups cease at the end of term. Statement renewed in line with Council.</p> <p>Tourism Advisory Group will fold when the new Council is elected. The newly formed Council will need to consider what model they want to have.</p> <p>Today is the second last meeting, and the next meeting will be the last one in this current form. Unable to predict the new model, however there is the option for Council to have a similar model. Membership would be whatever model the new Council chooses to adopt, most likely some sort of EOI.</p>	
11. Dilly Events	<p>Kersti Martin provided details of upcoming events. There are a great range of events coming up, which will attract a large number of visitors and is beneficial for the local community;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2024 Spartan National Championship Trifecta Weekend (27 & 28 April) – DA for the next 3 years. Event to be held in Maldon; same location as last year click here • Thirlmere Festival of Steam (18 & 19 May) – collaborating again with NSW Rail Museum, click here for more information. • Huff N Puff Road Race (26 May) – second year and more exciting things happening including family / work teams race and carnival rides. David Bennett advised following a discussion with Rob Moran (Events Manager), it was best to separate Huff N Puff from Thirlmere Festival of Steam for logistics purposes, and to make it a stand-alone event. • Illuminate Festival of Art and Light (20-22 September) – again happening in September; warmer weather is better suited to an outdoor event click here 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owlween (25 & 26 October) – shortly signing a 3-year Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), Council is happy to collaborate with this event. • Small Business Month Free Workshops (1-31 October) For more details click here • BLOOM (Tentative - 3 November) <p>Kayla Seeney, Licensee, CVI advised that their Valentines outdoor cinema and dining event was successful. Business has slowed a little with children returning to school, and they are busy preparing for St Patricks weekend 15-17 March.</p>	
<p>12. General Business</p>	<p>Deputy Chair Cr. Briggs asked Tourism Advisory members for any general business;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sandra Harlor asked if all the Dams are featured on Visit Wollondilly and to further promote Warragamba Dam on social media, as well as the walks around Warragamba. Kersti Martin confirmed all the Dams are on the itinerary ‘Dams of the Dilly’ and Council continues to feature all the dams in the social media schedule. • Lyn Davey asked if more free RV park zones are being looked into across Wollondilly; work in progress. There are still no Warragamba stats on RVs; unable to provide any unless vehicle counters are explored. Peter Wright suggested if waste be measured? Encourage Council to have a tracker mechanism. • Cr. Spearpoint advised she is looking at a RV discount booklet for visitors to spend at local shops and to receive a discount. Businesses can track how many discounts processed. • Mandy Barnes – Kalinya Estate will represent at AIME early next week. AIME (Asia Pacific Incentives and Meetings Events) with local and international organised meetings. Mandy is attending with Southern Highlands (Gibraltar & Centennial), and would love to go with Wollondilly in the future. In the last few weeks several corporate groups have spent a lot of money at Kalinya and Wollondilly. Attendees at AIME are high spend, visit locations in the community and can sometimes bring families back on another trip. Mandy will sell the Wollondilly region and local operators. • Rob Thompson advised the events ‘what’s on’ page on Council’s main website only features events up until 3 March. Kersti Martin advised this will be passed onto the Council events team. Visit Wollondilly What’s On events page features all events toward the end of the year. This page is managed by the Tourism team. 	<p>Action 1: Council to update the ‘What’s On’ page with events after March</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Damien Silm advised they are doing more promotion and visitation is going well at Cedar Creek with Persimmon season arriving early. • Louise Clifton (National Parks) advised Wombeyan Caves is opening mid-March, waiting on Roads to finalise. A famil was organised last year for local Councils and tourism associations, which couldn't go ahead. If anyone is interested in attending, to let Louise know. Updates include access to Victoria arch, wheelchair accessible, picnic areas restored, new amenities, new viewing platform, and an area for small events. All the caves are now online and bookable, including combo passes, and camping is online bookable. Louise asked if there has been any follow up on the Bioluminescent fungi (ghost mushrooms) at Thirlmere NP, as it's mentioned on social media and a good way to highlight the park. Would suggest there has been an increase in visitation, but there isn't a way to quantify the numbers. • David Bennett asked if there are any plans in the future to update the Wollondilly DMP. Peter Wright advised we were waiting to see Western Parklands City DMP first, Council will discuss and provide an update on how best to pursue this and the timing. • Brad Wilson asked if there is any progress in getting a brown tourism sign for the Australian Wildlife Sanctuary. Brad has previously spoken with Kersti and is keen to get this signage at the front of the property for more visibility and awareness. 	<p>Action 2: Council to continue looking into tourist signage information and opportunities and reply to AWS.</p>
Meeting Close	Meeting concluded at 5:11pm	
13. Next Meeting	<p>Thursday 20 June 2024, 4:00pm to 6:00pm</p> <p>Wollondilly Shire Hall (Banksia Boardroom) or Teams</p>	

Action Items – Tourism Advisory Group

Meeting	Item	Action	Responsible	Status	Due
08.09.2022	1	Council to share the Love the Dilly campaign channel plan	Council – T&BS	Provided with Minutes 13/9/2022	15.12.2022
	2	Council to provide links to Wollondilly DMP and Delivery Plans for Tourism	Council – T&BS	Link included in Minutes above	15.12.2022
	3	Invite Transport Heritage NSW to give update on Loop-Line Project	Council – T&BS	Confirmed	15.12.2022
	4	<p>Council to provide status of Mushroom Tunnel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mushroom Tunnel is open weekdays for public access from 08:30am – 2:30pm, closed weekends and public holidays. Site is also accessed by Water NSW so gates may be open for their access outside of these hours. T & B I Team to review signage content, design 	Council – T&BS	Update provided	15.12.2022
	5	Invite Stephen Bennett to present on The Oaks Airport Project	Council – T&BS	Confirmed	15.12.2022
	6	<p>Provide update on digital signage grant project</p> <p>Digital signage is for recovery and resilience purposes and will display emergency and other important community messages as well as provide wi-fi access in natural disasters. They are not for general promotional purposes.</p>	Council – T&BS	Update provided	15.12.2022
15.12.2022	1	Oaks Airport Presentation to be shared with Sandra Harlor (screen wasn't showing presentation on her end)	Council – T&BS	Complete	04.05.2023
	2	Sandra Harlor to share WaterNSW Liaison contact with Council	Sandra Harlor	Complete	04.05.2023
	3	Council to touch base with WaterNSW to have representative attend future TAG	Council – T&BS	Complete	04.05.2023
	4	Move 'Delivery Action Plans' items to the next meeting – Link to Draft Operational Plan in Minutes above	Council – T&BS	Complete	04.05.2023
	5	Shaun Beckley to share Section 68 proposal for review and feedback	Shaun Beckley	Complete	04.05.2023
4.5.2023	1	<p>Caroline Dearson from Water NSW to confirm the following questions from the group;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Kilometre distance for the Warragamba self-guided tour 	Caroline Dearson (WaterNSW)	Complete	27.9.2023

	<p>Response: There are approximately 3kms of walking tracks throughout the Warragamba Dam grounds – approx. 1km of these tracks are accessible only on weekends and public holidays when access to the dam and the lower gardens is open to the public.</p> <p>2. Are there any other walks at Wollondilly Dams that can be promoted?</p> <p>Response: Each dam has walking paths/ roadways from either the front gate or the main car park down to the dam wall, as detailed in the site maps below - unlike Warragamba Dam these are not currently interpretive walks.</p> <p>https://www.waternsw.com.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/55990/Cataract-Dam_WaterNSW.pdf https://www.waternsw.com.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0003/111855/Cordeaux-Dam.pdf https://www.waternsw.com.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0015/56004/Nepean-Dam_WaterNSW.pdf https://www.waternsw.com.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/55976/Avon-Dam_WaterNSW.pdf</p> <p>3. When will Avon Dam likely reopen?</p> <p>Response: Avon Dam Flood repairs to access roads at Avon Dam are currently on track, aiming at this stage to reopen around early November.</p> <p>4. Who at WaterNSW is Council best to approach to consider nature walks / experiences in the area?</p> <p>Response: Please direct correspondence to mary.knowles@waternsw.com.au, Area Manager Catchments or caroline.dearson@waternsw.com.au, Education and Visitor Services Manager.</p> <p>5. In order to connect the Warragamba Visitor Centre to the Warragamba Township to support local businesses are there opportunities to work together to include a more formal short walking path connecting the two?</p> <p>Response: We currently have a maintained pathway that joins our grounds through to the back of the council managed car park. After the car park the pathway finishes then it's</p>			
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		roadway for the short distance into town. Please direct correspondence to Mary or Caroline, as above.			
	2	Council to lead on submitting an enquiry into the possibility of opening Dam grounds for recreational use awaiting most appropriate contact	Council – T&BS	Complete	27.9.2023
	3	Council to provide feedback on the NSW Top Tourism Awards voting form	Council – T&BS	Complete	09.05.2023
	4	Council to share Draft Operational Plan 2023/24 with TAG	Council – T&BS	Complete - see link in Minutes above. Group TAG email sent 3/5/2023	11.05.2023
	5	Council to share link to the Community Grants Program	Council – T&BS	Complete – see link in Minutes above	11.05.2023
28.9.23	1	Dine & Revitalise - Council to investigate sending out a survey to existing food businesses to see if they are considering or interested expanding dining areas. Most businesses are already maximising space available.	Council – T&BS		
	2	Council to share Love the Dilly videos via YouTube Chanel for sharing	Council – T&BS	Complete	29.9.23
	3	Small Scale Tourism Signage Report - Council to view Snowy Mountain Signage concepts for inspiration	Council – T&BS	Ongoing	
	4	Small Scale Tourism Signage Report - Council to continue to work on report	Council – T&BS	Ongoing	
	5	Tourism Asset Plan - Council to continue to work on report	Council – T&BS	Ongoing	
	6	Council to view SWSTTF YouTube channel for content and add Visit Wollondilly themed videos if possible	Council – T&BS	Ongoing	
	7	Tourism After 5. WTAI decision to be made regarding future including networking events 18/10. Council is considering support for up to 3 networking events per year depending upon association's outcome.	Council – T&BS	Complete	
15.02.24	1	Council Events team to update the 'What's On' page with events after March 2024	Council – T&BS		
	2	Council to continue looking into tourist signage information and opportunities for Australian Wildlife Sanctuary and provide an update to them.	Council – T&BS		