

MEETING MINUTES

Tourism Advisory Group



Date: Thursday 4 May, 2023
Time: 4:00pm to 6:00pm
Location: Library View Room 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		✓
Belinda Fleming, Acting Manager Engagement and Performance	✓	
Kersti Martin, Tourism & Business Support Team Leader	✓	
Kim McGuinness, Tourism & Business Support Officer		✓
Denika Vatovec, 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)	✓	
Nicholas Wright for Kayla Seeney (Camden Valley Inn)	✓	
Bob Clayton (Destination Wollondilly Magazine)	✓	
Mandy Barnes (Kalinya Estate)	✓	
Lyn Davey (Wollondilly Tourism Association – WTAI)	✓	
Sandra Harlor (Bold Jack & DamFest)	✓	
Bianca Gilmore (Destination NSW)	✓	
Louise Clifton (National Parks & Wildlife Service)		✓
Councillors		
Mayor Matt Gould		✓
Deputy Mayor Deeth		✓
Cr Banasik		✓
Cr Gibbs		✓
Cr Spearpoint		✓

Cr Rogers		✓
Cr Brandstater		✓
Guest attendees		
Rosemary Jenkins (Water NSW)	✓	
Caroline Dearson (Water NSW)	✓	

Agenda Item	Notes	Agreed Actions
1. Acknowledgement of country	Deputy Chair delivered Acknowledgement of Country.	
2. Attendance and apologies	As noted in table above.	
3. Disclosure of interests	Deputy Chair asked attendees to disclose any conflict of interests. Nil to report.	
4. Confirmation of previous minutes & actions	Previous minutes and actions confirmed by Tourism Advisory Group. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Congratulations were extended to the Council Tourism & Business Support Team on the quality of the new Visit Wollondilly Guide 	
5. Warragamba Dam Visitor Centre	<p>Rosemary Jenkins and Caroline Dearson, Water NSW provided an update;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CD provided an overview of the Warragamba Dam Visitor Centre and its operations. Annual visitation statistics include 80k visitors to the visitor centre and 110k to the Dam grounds. Cataract Dam grounds receive 48k visitors CD explained there was a decision made not to sell food or beverages to encourage visitors to head into town to support local businesses. Also contributing towards promoting tourism is the newly installed Visit Wollondilly Tourism Kiosk at the visitor centre BB questioned if visitor point of origin data is currently collected. CD explained that access to the visitor centre and grounds is free / without ticketing and therefore there isn't opportunity to track data BG queried how education groups book excursions. CD clarified that a new booking system was launched at the beginning of 2023 which has streamlined the process for teachers and WaterNSW BB recommended the Dam and Visitor Centre be listed on ATDW. Note: Council advises it is listed on Sydney.com and VisitNSW.com already and shared link shared with RJ and CD to review and update if 	<p>Action 1: Caroline Dearson to confirm kilometres for the Warragamba self-guided tour and when Avon Dam will reopen after flood repairs</p> <p>Action 2: Council to lead on submitting an enquiry into the possibility of opening Dam site further for recreational use. Enquire about a walking track / path connecting the Visitor Centre to the town</p>

	<p>needed. Also advised WaterNSW to check other Dam listings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LD asked if there has been any movement towards reopening accommodation / conferencing at other WaterNSW dams. CD responded that all buildings are being used by WaterNSW staff with no intention of reopening to the public at this stage • BB questioned which WaterNSW dam offers the best bush walking opportunities. CD explained that current classifications restrict bush walking. Warragamba is the only dam with a self-guided track, respective to visitation rates • BB questioned how many kms long is the Warragamba Dam self-guided walk? CD to confirm length and if there are other walks available at other Dams that can be promoted • KC enquired if there is any scope for more bush walks in the local Warragamba catchment area. DC explained that requests and applications are approved on a case by case basis for one-off access and unfortunately there currently isn't an intention to publicly open the catchment area. Council would be keen to see a walk connecting the Dam to the town to leverage visitors supporting local business • BC asked when Avon Dam is going to reopen and whether the Warragamba Dam Visitor Centre would be open to displaying the Destination Wollondilly publication. CD was unsure of any updates to works but will confirm. The visitor centre would be happy to add to the current tourism display i.e. Destination Wollondilly Magazine. • RT commented on overseas and interstate Dams in more highly populated areas that allow recreational access and suggested WaterNSW consider tempering restrictions. LD agreed and questioned why Fitzroy Dam water supply is different to the water Sydney residents consume as the area is open for recreational use. • MB asked if there are any recommendations on the best way to approach WaterNSW in regards to future walking / hiking trails. CD replied that there are multiple departments involved in decision making therefore addressing an enquiry to the organisation through the customer centre would be the best approach to reach the right people • BB concluded that as a collective the group is asking WaterNSW to consider including nature experiences through walks and recreation on Dam 	
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	grounds and an enquiry will be submitted to gain momentum on the issue	
6. Destination NSW Western Parkland City (DMP) Update	<p>Bianca Gilmore, DNSW provided an update on Destination NSW and the Western Parklands City Destination Management Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BG congratulated council on the Love the Dilly campaign and Picton and surrounds being a finalist in the 2023 NSW Top Tourism Town Awards • BG provided an update on Destination NSW, domestic and international travel figures (\$42 billion expenditure in year ending December 2022) and the appointment of John Graham as Minister for Jobs & Tourism. As a result of this recent appointment, the draft DMP has been delayed • BB questioned how DNSW collected visitor and spend data? BG confirmed that statistics are provided by Tourism Research Australia from the national visitor survey reported each quarter (arriving tourists are interviewed and postcode data is collected). • MB provided feedback on the NSW Top Tourism Awards online voting form, advising the form isn't user friendly. BG agreed and confirmed the form isn't developed by DNSW. KM suggested council will share feedback with awards contact • RT voiced concerns with Wollondilly being a part of Western Parklands City as the region doesn't have a great deal in common with other LGAs. • SH responded that the fact Wollondilly is different gives us an edge. BB agreed that in the early stages there were concerns, but as an agritourism centric area Wollondilly holds a unique position and will be heard against the other 8 regions. Concern is that we are unable to now tap into Regional Grants which we had access to under DSSS. • LD commented that the lack of consultation when Wollondilly joined Western Parklands City is still a sore point for WTAI operators, but understand it's the way forward and the point has now been made • BB questioned if tourism showcases have returned. BG confirmed they are still being run and are a great opportunity to share destination content • BG shared new NSW First program opportunities and encouraged the committee to register their business with ADTW as well as getting in touch with the media team to help share tourism news. Council share DNSW opportunities already via their Business 	<p>Action 3: Council to provide feedback on the NSW Top Tourism Awards voting form</p>

	Wollondilly eNews and on the BusinessWollondilly.com.au website	
7. Love the Dilly Campaign	<p>Kersti Martin, Wollondilly Shire Council provided a project update;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Picton is a finalist in the 2023 Top Tourism Town Awards. KM encouraged spreading the word across the committee's networks to get as many votes as possible, votes count for 25% of the competition • Four social media influencers have been engaged and scheduled across May 2023 to visit the Dilly on a full day trip itinerary and provide static, video and reel content for Instagram and TikTok • KC question who the influencers are, the following and how much they typically charge. KM confirmed that the decision process was lengthy to ensure the influencers align with the ideal Wollondilly visitor profile with a typical following of around the 30k mark. Depending on the available budget, influencer rates generally range between \$800 - \$2,000 for a 10k – 30k following • SH asked how much of the shire will the influencers cover. KM advised that the selected stops are spread out as much as possible and are from the 5 campaign itineraries chosen by the influencer to match their content. The itineraries are aimed at families and day trippers • KM encouraged businesses to order bulk copies of the Visit Wollondilly Guide for customers / visitors 	
8. General Business	<p>KM provide an overview of the following;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councils Draft Operational Plan 2023/2024 is now on public exhibition for community comment until 28 May. Tourism falls under Pillar 4, Economy, see page 36 onwards – Click here to view • The Thirlmere Festival of Steam date may shift to a winter month in 2024 to avoid potential heat and fire bans which could impact the running of steam trains, date TBC shortly. WTAI have also suggested we investigate a new date. • Illuminate is confirmed for 15 – 17 September, 2023, stall applications are now open click here for details. The Tourism & BS team will have a Visit Wollondilly stall again • Council's Community Grants Program is now open and closes 31 May for community groups and associations to apply for new equipment or funding for initiatives from \$500 – \$3,000. Click here to view • LGNSW Destination and Visitor Economy Conference is May 29, 30, 31 in Manly • WTAI Tourism After 5 is being held 21 June at the Wollondilly Heritage Centre & Museum. Click here • WorkLife has been selected for the Old Picton Post Office co-working space and will open July 2023. Click here for details 	<p>Action 4: Council to share Draft Operational Plan 2023/24 with TAG</p> <p>Action 5: Council to share link to the Community Grants Program</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding needs to be sourced for any new historic, wayfinding and State road tourism signage, the T & B I team is looking into requirements in particular for Wayfinding (Brown and White signs) and State Road signage (Blue and White) • BC questioned DB if funding will still be coming through for the Loopline Project. DB confirmed Transport Heritage NSW met with the Minister who promised a visit to the NSW Rail Museum and reaffirmed support for the Loopline Project • RT mentioned he had a productive meeting with Member for Wollondilly Judith Hannan, MP in regards to advocating for a Yerranderie Plan of Management • KM confirmed we have been advised that there are currently no plans for NPWS to update the existing Statement of Management Intent for Yerranderie Regional Park as it is meeting their management need and that Council will be notified should there be updates made in the future. • SH asked if WaterNSW can advertise the dams more as a tourism destination via their own social media. KM referenced the 'Dams of the Dilly' driving itinerary already on VisitWollondilly.com.au can continue to be shared to assist promotion Click here to view • DB provided a brief update and advised that the NSW Rail Museum had their biggest April on record with over 7,100 visitors 	
Meeting close	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting concluded at 5:54pm 	
Next Meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thursday 28 September, 2023 • 4:00pm to 6:00pm • Wollondilly Shire Hall (Banksia Boardroom) or Teams 	

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	Council to provide status of Mushroom Tunnel <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	Provide update on digital signage grant project 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.	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	Caroline Dearson to confirm kilometre distance for the Warragamba self-guided tour and when Avon Dam will reopen	Caroline Dearson (WaterNSW)		

	2	Council to lead on submitting an enquiry into the possibility of opening Dam grounds for recreational use	Council – T&BS		
	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