

**REPORT OF THE BALRANALD SHIRE COUNCIL TOURISM COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD AT THE BALRANALD SHIRE COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON TUESDAY 6th
November, 2018 COMMENCING AT 5.09 PM**

1. **PRESENT:** Iain Lindsay-Field (Chair), Michael Kitzelmann (GM), Terri Bilski, Gavin Helgeland (BSC), Simone Carmichael, Dianne Williams, Ken Spinks, Vivienne McEvoy (BSC), Ritchie Robinson GM Destination Riverina Murray (Guest), Peter Lawler, Alan Purtill (Mayor), German Ugarte, Linda Nelson, Jenny Bax Alvarado (BSC)

Ritchie departed at 6.30pm

2. **APOLOGIES RECEIVED:** Ken Barnes, Wayne Whitby

3. **ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING:**

The Minutes were accepted from meeting held on 2nd October 2018.

Moved: Di Williams

Seconded: Peter Lawler seconded but wasn't at prior meeting so acceptance will be held over to the December meeting.

4. **BUSINESS ARISING:**

- a) **Riverina Murray Marketing and Trails Campaign & Destination NSW Road Trips Campaign**

Ritchie, GM of DRM gave an overview of the \$10K for marketing campaigns and trails for the regions.

He discussed a co-operative \$100K grant that Destination NSW will match and talked about the existing Destination NSW Road Trips Campaign.

Discussion was held about the best alignment to the programs for the shire, either Murray or Riverina.

For Balranald it was agreed that Mungo and Yanga are key drawcards with Euston and Lake Benenee more aligned with the Murray as their drawcards.

The output of the grant will be via Digital print.

The Trails & Roadtrips campaign is a \$2M NSW Gov. funded project. The Visit NSW website displays the Classic Drives, including one from Wentworth, Balranald, Mungo and on to Wagga Wagga. Any edits or updates will be happily accepted by Ritchie who will forward us links for the website.

Two tourism promoters with a large social media following are scheduled to travel to the area.

"Trip in a Van" has been funded to visit the area in December. The Committee explained the timing of heading out this way in December would not be a good idea

given the temperatures at that time of the year. The best time to come this way is Autumn.

“Aquabumps” are scheduled to travel to Mungo.

b) Fence at back of Discovery Centre – Shire to provide options as fence not working

Dianne has had no feedback from Patsy regarding what bush tucker trees would be best suitable and has offered to do this research herself.

Linda voiced her concern at the state of the grass and the necessity to protect it.

Michael indicated that he will follow up on the garden redesign. He also stated that the depot has some horse drawn scrapers and other equipment that could provide monuments which would stop cars parking on the grass and provide protection.

Action: Michael will review suitability and safety of equipment

c) Sale of Westland Motors Building (Friends of the Southern Cross)

Iain, Dianne and Wayne meet with FOSC committee on 8th October at 2.30pm.

Concern was raised about the loss of tenure on the premises with the committee agreeing that it would be detrimental to Balranald to lose this important tourist attraction. It was noted that they do have a 6 year lease with a 6 year option to extend and it was not a financially viable property for sale. Michael indicated that one of their committee members, a solicitor, is comfortable that they have a water tight contract.

d) Erect a sign on Swing Bridge

Vivienne has ordered a plaque for the swing bridge and Michael indicated that he has applied for funding for a second swing bridge.

e) Historic Bridges – Waugorah Road

The timber will be inspected this week. Council will provide equipment to collect. There is no cost for the timber.

Suggestions were for it to be used for either furniture, which the men’s shed could build or a wharf.

Action: Gavin to provide a report on the value and quantity of the wood so decisions around its use can be agreed.

f) Frog at Library

Vivienne reported that the frog has been moved to a more prominent location outside the library.

g) Monthly Tourism Statistics

Vivienne advised that the Facebook sites are growing. Discover Balranald & Surrounds has 10.5K members. She has only today received admin rights to Discover Balranald & Surrounds FB site and will amalgamate Balranald Discovery Centre FB site into Discover Balranald & Surrounds. Sales are steady and are mostly based around frogs and Robinvale Oil.

Regarding the receipt of statistics around visitors, Michael suggested Metrics identifying demographics and source of departure can be gathered from Telstra.

Action: Di & Mon will provide a list of Birds to grow the interest in bird watching in the area. Peter Moreton will be contacted for input as he is an active bird watcher.

h) DPI Letter re Fish Restocking/Have we had a reply to our letter – Ken B

Committee were wondering if there was a response to the DPI letter. Some of the committee advised that there had been a response that had previously been tabled.

Action: Vivienne will follow up and send a copy of the letter to the Chairman for redistribution.

i) Community Forum Follow Up

Gavin is working through the information gathered from the community to present to council.

He noted that valuable contacts and ideas were gathered and will be used for ongoing strategic development, and that he is looking at Grant funding to link to identified areas, with tourism as a major factor.

j) Balranald Nature Reserve

Ken advised that the nature reserve would suit walk, run or ride options, however it needs a flattening of the levee and grading back of the lignum.

Di indicated that the lignum is a fire hazard. Discussion were held regarding sourcing water from the OEH vs. agistment to keep the growth down. No decision was made as to the best approach although fencing would be an issue for agistment. Discussion was held around the value of gazetting of the land as this will provide funding and/or water.

Action: Ken will take Michael for a visit to the area.

k) Project Templates

It was agreed that the A3 document used at the forum will be loaded to the website for use by the Tourism Committee.

Asked that a library of projects and grants be loaded on the website.

Action: Gavin to upload the A3 form.

5. NEW BUSINESS

a. 5 Rivers Festival

Iain commented that it was a great success with Simone suggesting data collection would be useful. She also recommended the Echuca River Boat weekend, held in February, as a source of inspiration for our event.

b. Is there a Tourism Committee Budget and, if so do we have a project for it?

Previously the GM advised that there is not a Tourism Committee budget but there is a budget for Tourism Activities, Tourism Advertising, and Tourism Promotion within Council budget.

Discussions were held around the need for funding via the funds from the donation boxes. It was agreed that this wouldn't be a good idea given the then need for treasurer and proper account keeping within the committee.

Michael suggested a small membership fee be paid by all tour operators and business providers to contribute to a Tourism Fund. Currently the tourist centre is providing and promoting these businesses at no cost.

Ken suggested the need for a Chamber of Commerce. Michael stated that funding is available from State Gov. for a Chamber of Commerce.

The general agreement was that it was not worth the effort for the committee to have funding when considering the fiscal requirements.

c. Christmas Lights at Swing Bridge

It was noted that Christmas lights were placed at the swing bridge last year and the same will occur this year.

d. Recommend projects to council to be attended to prior to street beatification

PL Funding is set at \$10K each for Euston & Balranald

6. MATTERS WITHOUT NOTICE

None

MEETING CLOSED AT 7:08 pm

NEXT MEETING: 4th December 2018