

**REPORT OF THE BALRANALD SHIRE COUNCIL TOURISM COMMITTEE
MEETING HELD AT THE BALRANALD SHIRE COUNCIL CHAMBERS ON
TUESDAY 1ST MARCH 2016 COMMENCING AT 5.00PM**

- 1. PRESENT:** Cr Ken Barnes (Chairman), Elizabeth White (Director Corporate & Community Development), Connie Mallet (Tourism Coordinator), Peter Lawler, Wayne Whitby, Ken Spinks, Jo Pedler, German Ugarte, Ian Field, Di Williams, Sue O'Halloran, Martin Kendall
- 2. APOLOGIES:** Cr Leigh Byron (Mayor), Cr Steve O'Halloran, Cr Jeff Mannix, Aaron Drenovski, John Stevenson, Myrtle Matarazzo, Simone Carmichael, Dinitee Haskard, Bronwyn Brougham, Linda Nelson, Ema Serevi, Dylan Walsh, Jo Gorman,
- 3. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES**

The following items were carried over to next meeting to discuss with and receive an update from John Stevenson who was an apology for this meeting:

- **Maintenance/Improvement of the Ben Scott Memorial Bird Trail**
- **Maintenance/Improvement of the Old Gaol & Protection of the writing on Walls & Wintong School**
- **Mungo Road Closure Sign**

4. TOURISM ROLLING ACTION PLAN

Aside from the items from the previous minutes which are also in the Action Plan, the following items were also discussed:

- **Protection/Replacement of the Market of the Southern Cross Landing**
According to a number of committee members, this has now been completed.
– To receive final report from John Stevenson
- **New Website & Videos:**
The Tourism Coordinator reported that the new website & corporate videos are on track for a March release as scheduled
- **Balranald Business Online Project – Grant Application under the Energise Enterprise Fund:**
The Tourism Coordinator reported that a grant application has been submitted under the Murray-Darling Basin Economic Diversification Program – Energise Enterprise Fund for a \$25,000 Grant (unmatched).

The Grant is to support the proposed “Balranald Business Online” project which aims at delivering the following:

- To develop a website for selected businesses (20) who have an impact on the tourism & visitor economy within the Balranald Shire that currently do not have a website. All websites must be mobile friendly, have SEO capabilities and Google Analytics capabilities.
- To develop a central “Balranald Business Online” website that is managed by Tourism Coordinator. This website will feature the businesses in their respective categories and will also feature packages, specials, promotions etc.
- This central “Balranald Business Online” website will link to the following:
 - To the individual business’ websites
 - To the individual business’ social media pages
 - The Balranald Shire tourism website (Discover Balranald & Surrounds currently being developed)
 - The Balranald Shire tourism social media pages
 - Other tourism industry related websites including Inland NSW Travel In website
- To develop a virtual tour video for selected businesses (14) that will be visible on Google Search Results, Google Maps and Google+ and will give potential visitors a better sense of the business. The virtual tours can also be embed on the new websites and social media to attract potential visitors
- To train and educate all new website users how to easily maintain and manage their websites to keep them fresh and attractive to potential users
- To educate participants in all aspects of Social Media and Digital media including how to develop a Facebook Business Page and how to use their Facebook page for effective marketing and promotional activities (This workshop will be offered all businesses within the Shire)
- To educate participants on how to optimise their website presence. This workshop will focus on elements such as Google My Business, Google+, Google Maps and Search Engine Optimisation (this workshop will be offered to all businesses that have a website)

5. NEW BUSINESS ARISING

- **The Tourism Committee’s Discretionary \$5000 Fund:** The Director of Corporate & Community Development, Elizabeth White explained that the allocated \$5000 in the annual budget is at the discretion of the Committee on what this money is spent on. She also pointed out that this amount could be rolled over and accumulated with future years’ allocation for a bigger project. **It was decided that recommendations/ideas be put forward at next meeting for discussion**

- **Inland NSW & Outback NSW (Activities):** The Tourism Coordinator provided an update in reference to the following:
 - After a series of phone conferences and discussions with Inland NSW, Tourism Coordinator is now part of the Inland Destination Management Group which means we are now involved in the strategic planning of the Inland brand and marketing activities
 - Tourism Coordinator recently made a presentation to Inland's Outback NSW Destination Management Group re Balranald Shire's strategic value within the Outback NSW branding and positioning. This was well received by both Inland and the Outback NSW group. The presentation was very well received.
 - Balranald Shire is now part of the Outback NSW Destination Management Group which is focused on developing and promoting the Outback NSW brand and the LGA's that fall (and participating) within that region. We have committed to a campaign that will be promoting and driving visitors to the Outback region and to the participating LGA's
 - Balranald Shire in collaboration with Hay Shire will take a lead in the Outback NSW brand development and will be positioning ourselves as the "Gateway to Outback NSW" and being vital in driving traffic to the region and northern part of the state.
- **Actions Planned for 2016 against Tourism Strategy Plan:** The Tourism Coordinator handed out the proposed 2016/17 actions against OBJECTIVES 3 & 4 of the **Tourism Strategy Plan**. Members were asked to study them and make any further proposed actions before the next meeting. The proposed 2016/17 actions against OBJECTIVE 1 & 2 were handed out at the February meeting.

Committee members now have the full set of OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES & proposed ACTIONS for 2016/17 – Actions implemented will form part of the Rolling Action Plan

- **Bus Tour to visit the Memorial Bird Trail:** German Ugarte suggested that a bus tour be planned for the April meeting to visit the Bird Trail as part of the committee's assessment of the trail and proposed actions. We are to meet at 4.00pm for the tour.

6. CLOSURE:

The meeting closed at 6.00pm

- 7. NEXT MEETING: Tuesday 5th April, 2016 - Commencing at 4.00pm for the bus tour of the Memorial Bird trail**