

Shoalhaven Economic Growth & Advocacy Group

Meeting Date: Wednesday, 15 March, 2023
Location: Jervis Bay Rooms, City Administrative Centre, Bridge Road, Nowra
Time: 4.00pm

Please note: Council's Code of Meeting Practice permits the electronic recording and broadcast of the proceedings of meetings of the Council which are open to the public. Your attendance at this meeting is taken as consent to the possibility that your image and/or voice may be recorded and broadcast to the public.

Agenda

1. **Apologies**
2. **Confirmation of Minutes**
 - Shoalhaven Economic Growth & Advocacy Group - 23 November 2022 1
3. **Declarations of Interest**
4. **Presentations**
 - EG23.1 Update on City Futures
Verbal update to be provided by Carey McIntyre – Director City Futures
 - EG23.2 Update on Nowra Riverfront Action Taskforce (NRAT)
Verbal update to be provided by Carey McIntyre - Director City Futures.
5. **Reports**
 - EG23.3 Community Led Strategic Plans 6
 - EG23.4 Advocacy and Growth - Staff Update 11
 - EG23.5 Defence Industry in the Shoalhaven - Update 19
 - EG23.6 Update on Advocacy 22
 - EG23.7 Action Update 42
6. **General Business**

Membership

Mayor

All Councillors - maximum of 3 voting (1 from each ward) to be determined at each meeting

Ms Anna Finch – Human Resources

Ms Brenda Sambrook – Tourism

Ms Holly Pastor – Education

Mr Iain Chalmers – Human Resources and Small Business

Mr John Lamont – Manufacturing

Ms Kaye Morris – Education –

Ms Michelle Bishop – Tourism

Mr Robert Crow – Tourism

Ms Sandra Gray – Small Business Operator

Quorum: Half + 1

Note: Any non-voting Councillor in attendance at any of the above Committees may act as an alternate voting member in circumstances where achievement of a quorum is required.

Role and Purpose

- Inform the development, implementation, and review of council economic growth strategies
- Providing advice and make recommendations to Council on matters relating to business and economic growth in the Shoalhaven.
- Provide advice and recommendations on key advocacy opportunities to support business growth in the region

Delegated Authorities

- Make recommendations on actions and priorities
- Provide feedback on economic growth key issues or growth opportunities
- Appoint suitable representatives to fill casual vacancies
- Research contemporary methodologies to achieve advocacy, business growth and economic development.
- Inform and recommend policy for business growth
- Partner and liaise with other Council Advisory Groups on key issues as required

MINUTES OF THE SHOALHAVEN ECONOMIC GROWTH & ADVOCACY GROUP

Meeting Date: Wednesday, 23 November 2022
Location: Jervis Bay Rooms, City Administrative Centre, Bridge Road, Nowra
Time: 4.00pm

The following members were present:

Mr John Lamont – Manufacturing - Chairperson
Clr Matthew Norris – Voting Councillor ward 1 (Remotely)
Clr John Kotlash – Voting Councillor ward 2 (Remotely) – Left 5:19pm, Returned 5:40pm
Clr Patricia White - Voting Councillor ward 3
Clr Mark Kitchener
Clr Tonia Gray (Remotely) – Arrived at 4:12pm
Ms Anna Finch - Human resources
Ms Brenda Sambrook - Tourism
Ms Holly Pastor - Education
Mr John Lamont - Manufacturing
Ms Michelle Bishop - Tourism
Ms Sandra Gray - Small business operator
Mr Jared Brown – Aboriginal Business Sector

Others present:

Ms Jemma Tribe - President - Shoalhaven Business Chamber (Remotely) – Left at 5:28pm
Ms Tania Goodman - President - Shoalhaven Professional Business Association
Mr Carey McIntyre – Director of City Futures – Left 5:08pm, Returned 5:37pm
Ms Coralie Bell – Tourism & Economic Development Manager
Ms Kristy Mayhew - Tourism Marketing Specialist
Mr Ryan Schulter - Senior Economic Development Officer
Mr Jim Fraser - Manager - Corporate Performance & Reporting
Ms Brooke Aldous – Governance Coordinator

Note: Clr White assumed the Chair until the election of a new Chairperson.

Apologies / Leave of Absence

Apologies were received from Clr Copley, Iain Chalmers, Peter Masterson, Kaye Morris and Laurie Koster.

Declarations of Interest

Nil

PRESENTATIONS

EG22.1 City Futures Update

HPERM Ref:
D22/459637

Carey McIntyre, Director, City Futures provided an update on;

- His vision for City Futures
- Opportunities for partnership with SEGA

Ms Michelle Bishop suggested that clearer expectations need to be set by Council if a community chooses to pursue a community led strategic plan for their own CCB.

Ms Brenda Sambrook raised a concern that the views of the whole community are not always being represented by their own CCB.

EG22.2 Presentation - Governance - Brief Induction

HPERM Ref:
D22/459771

Ms Brooke Aldous – Governance Coordinator – provided a brief induction on the following:

- Code of Conduct
- Declaration of Interest
- Code of Meeting Practice
- Delegations

EG22.3 Corporate Performance & Reporting Presentation - Jim Fraser

HPERM Ref:
D22/463186

Mr Jim Fraser - Manager - Corporate Performance & Reporting – presented to the committee regarding Integrated Planning & Reporting within Council.

The Group questioned where the community led strategic plans sit in terms of their relationship to Council's Community Strategic Plan, and what input they have.

Staff advised that they would take this question on notice and report back to the Group regarding the current status of the community led strategic plans within Council, and how they are being utilised, at the next meeting.

Note: Carey McIntyre – Director City Futures, left the meeting, the time being 5:08pm.

REPORTS

EG22.5 Shoalhaven Advocacy

HPERM Ref:
D22/459882

Ms Coralie Bell advised members that they can send through project suggestions to her by the end of the week.

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That the Shoalhaven Growth and Advocacy Group (SEGA)

1. Receive the report for information.
2. Suggest projects to be considered for inclusion in future editions.

RESOLVED (John Lamont / Brenda Sambrook)

That the Shoalhaven Growth and Advocacy Group (SEGA)

1. Receive the report for information.
2. Suggest projects to be considered for inclusion in future editions.

CARRIED

EG22.6 Project Update: Nowra Riverfront Activation Taskforce (NRAT)

**HPERM Ref:
D22/462393**

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That the Shoalhaven Economic, Growth and Advocacy Group receive the report for information

RESOLVED (Sandra Gray / Clr White)

That the Shoalhaven Economic, Growth and Advocacy Group receive the report for information.

CARRIED

EG22.7 Advocacy and Growth - Staff Update

**HPERM Ref:
D22/463126**

Note: Clr Kotlash left the meeting, the time being 5:19pm

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That the Shoalhaven Economic Growth and Advocacy Group receive this report for their information.

RESOLVED (John Lamont / Brenda Sambrook)

That the Shoalhaven Economic Growth and Advocacy Group receive this report for their information.

CARRIED

EG22.4 Election of Chairperson and Notification of Council Resolution

**HPERM Ref:
D22/430172**

Ms Coralie Bell – Tourism Manager, assumed the Chair and asked the members present if there were any nominations for the role of Chairperson.

Mr John Lamont was nominated for the position of Chairperson and Mr Jared Brown for the position of Deputy Chairperson. There were no further nominations received.

Mr John Lamont was declared as Chairperson and assumed the Chair for the remainder of the meeting.

Recommendation

That the Committee:

1. Receive the report regarding Council Resolution – Re-establishment for information.
2. Elect (insert name) as Chairperson and (insert name) as Deputy Chairperson for the period to September 2023, noting that the appointment will be reaffirmed by Council.
3. Determine the meeting commencement time to be (insert time) for future quarterly meetings as per the Council Resolution.

RECOMMENDATION (Clr White / Michelle Bishop)

That the Committee:

1. Receive the report regarding Council Resolution – Re-establishment for information.
2. Elect John Lamont as Chairperson and Jared Brown as Deputy Chairperson for the period to September 2023, noting that the appointment will be reaffirmed by Council.
3. Determine the meeting commencement time to be 4.00pm for future quarterly meetings as per the Council Resolution.

CARRIED

EG22.8 Open Discussion - Economic Growth**HPERM Ref:
D22/464538**

Note: Ms Jemma Tribe left the meeting, the time being 5:28pm

Note: Mr Carey McIntyre re-joined the meeting, the time being 5:37pm

Note: Clr Kotlash re-joined the meeting, the time being 5:40pm

The Group entered into a discussion to identify strengths, threats and opportunities regarding the regional economy. The following are some of the comments and feedback received:

Strengths:

- Growth in indigenous owned businesses
- Connection to Sydney

Opportunities:

- Increase the capacity of employers to employ and retain aboriginal employees
- Revitalization of the Nowra CBD
- Active transport to Nowra CBD – bike paths
- Growth in the education sector – provide more access to all three levels of education

Threats:

- Changing Industrial Relations (IR) reforms for small businesses
- Compliance requirements for small businesses
- Skills shortages
- Natural disasters and the impact on infrastructure

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That the Shoalhaven Economic Growth and Advocacy Group receive this report and attachments for their information and participate in an open discussion about the strengths and opportunities for the regional economy.

RESOLVED (By consent)

That the Shoalhaven Economic Growth and Advocacy Group receive this report and attachments for their information and note the comments of the open discussion about the strengths and opportunities for the regional economy.

CARRIED

GENERAL BUSINESS

- The Shoalhaven Economic Growth and Advocacy Group congratulated Mr John Lamont on his election to the position of Chairperson.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded, the time being 5:53pm.

Mr John Lamont
CHAIRPERSON

EG23.3 Community Led Strategic Plans

HPERM Ref: D23/1175

Department: Corporate Performance & Reporting
Approver: Stephen Dunshea, Chief Executive Officer

Reason for Report

To provide background on the current status of community led strategic plans and how they are being utilised in Council's integrated planning and reporting framework.

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That the Shoalhaven Economic Growth and Advocacy Group note the update on community led strategic plans and how they are being utilised in Council's integrated planning and reporting framework.

Options

1. Receive this report for information

Implications: The SEGA group will be provided with an update on community led strategic plans and how they are utilised by Council.

2. Request additional information

Implications: Staff will provide additional information during the meeting if possible, or at a later time after further investigation.

Background

Community led planning is a community engagement and strategic planning technique where the community undertake a discussion and consultation with their own community and develop a plan. Community led planning is popular in the UK where regional councils utilise community networks to develop plans for their own communities. The technique has also been used in New Zealand and to a lesser degree in Victoria, Australia.

Shoalhaven City Council is one of a few councils that recognises and supports this type of process and unique in the NSW Council group classification (regional town/city) with such an active Community Consultative Body (CCB) network. CCBs are resident representative groups that are endorsed by Council as the representative group for residents and ratepayers in a given geographic area with a common interest.

Several Shoalhaven communities have undertaken various forms of community led planning, which has resulted in the development of strategic plans for particular towns and villages. Each plan has been carried out in a different way and contains different themes, actions and focus areas. Most have used a consultant or other external facilitator to assist in the community engagement process and development of the plan. All plans have demonstrated that detailed community engagement has been undertaken. Not all plans have had complete community agreement, but most of the community have supported the outcome of the final plans.

Community Led Strategic Plans (CLSPs) that have been developed and recognised by Council include:

- **Shoalhaven Heads Community Strategic Plan:** The first CLSP in the LGA. Created by the community with the assistance of a consultant (Locale). This plan was endorsed by Council in April 2013 and received an allocation of \$80,000 for implementation. The focus of this plan is on infrastructure, tourism, planning, community development, streetscape, heritage and the riverfront. Council staff provided some support to the implementation working group organised through the Shoalhaven Heads CCB. An updated version was created in 2018.
- **Berry Community Strategic Plan:** This CLSP was created by the community with the assistance of a consultant (Locale). The plan was created as a result of the bypass and received joint funding from both the RMS and Council. Endorsed by Council in November 2016, the plan is being implemented by the community through working committees of the Berry Forum. Technical advice has been sought from staff within Council in relation to specific council related projects. No specific funding has been provided for implementation. Some funding that was remaining from the development process was reallocated to projects within the plan.
- **Conjola District Strategic Action Plan 2014-2030:** This CLSP was created through research undertaken by Griffith University in conjunction with Council. The researchers assisted the community through the provision of a framework and assistance with workshops to develop a draft plan which was then exhibited to the community. The CCB took carriage of the process once the University was no longer involved. This plan focuses on community resilience particularly in emergency management and climate adaptation. Several actions in the plan may not be supported by Council, however the plan sets a good framework for actions the community can achieve/advocate for. The implementation of this plan is being carried out by the Conjola Community Association (CCB) working groups. This plan was formally recognised by Council in November 2017.
- **Sussex Inlet & District Strategic Action Plan 2015-2030:** This CLSP was created by the community with the support of Griffith University and Council. The process involved the Sussex Inlet CCB and representatives from many of the other community groups and service providers within the Sussex Inlet area and surrounds. The plan sets out actions that the community can implement and provides guidance for Council in some areas. This plan is being implemented by a working party consisting of representatives of the CCB and other community groups. This plan was formally recognised by Council in November 2017. A revised version was issued in December 2019.
- **Bay & Basin Community Led Strategic Plan:** This CLSP was created by the community with the support of Bay & Basin Community Financial Services Board (Sanctuary Point Bendigo Community Bank) with Council funding and assistance from a consultant (Locale). The Project Reference Group involved representation from all interested CCBs. The plan was accepted by Council in September 2021. Council staff are currently in conversation with the implementation committee on collaboration opportunities.
- **Red Head Villages Masterplan (in progress):** In July 2021, Council endorsed a contribution towards the development of a community driven masterplan for the villages of Manyana, Bendalong, North Bendalong, Cunjurong Point and Berringer Lake. The plan is under development and being led by the Red Head Villages Association CCB with the assistance of a consultant (Locale).
- **Community Led Adaptation and Resilience Strategy for Shoalhaven (in progress):** This strategy was developed by community (Shoalhaven Community Resilience Network Working Group) facilitated by Griffith University. The project was

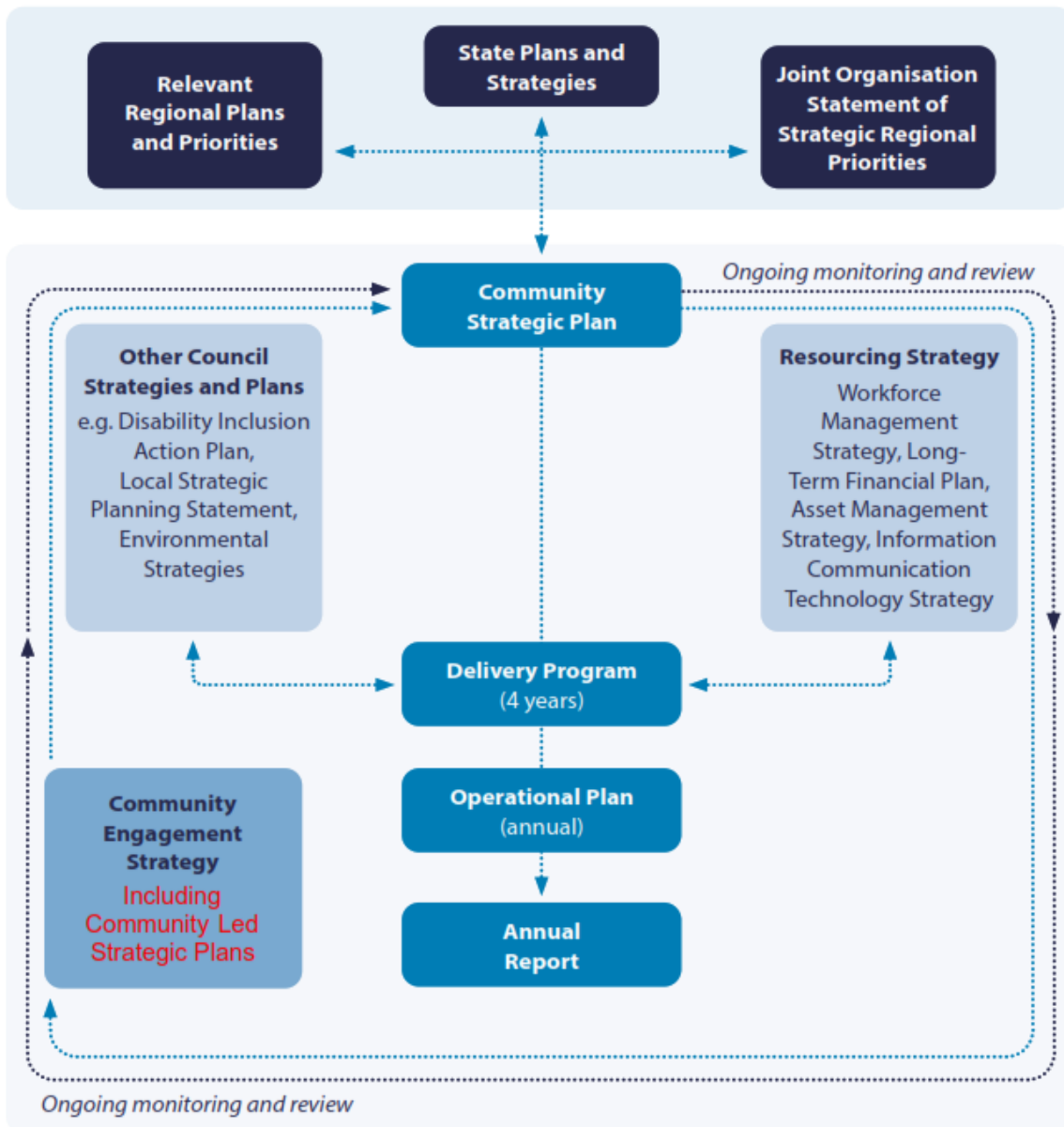
part of the Recovery Into Resilience Project - a joint grant from Federal and State Governments. The strategy is due to be reported to Council in early 2023.

Role within Council's Strategic Planning Framework

Community led planning can be an excellent community engagement process and encourages and motivates communities to be active, inclusive and participate in activities within their neighbourhoods. However, to be successful it is important that the expectations of both the community and Council are clear before the use of this engagement method is adopted more broadly across the City.

Community led strategic plans currently fit into Council's overall Community Engagement Strategy and form part of Council's engagement with our community. The plans provide an important insight into individual community priorities and future directions. Most of the existing CLSPs are in implementation stage with many actions already completed.

These plans are included alongside other feedback and are considered when developing priorities, objectives and activities for the suite of Council's Integrated Planning & Reporting documents. Figure 1 below shows how these plans fit into the community engagement cycle of Council's planning process.



(Figure 1): Integrated Planning and Reporting Framework

EG23.3

Utilisation within Council planning

Council reviews existing Community Led Strategic Plans when developing Council’s own strategic documents. Most recently, an assessment was undertaken on the alignment of the CLSP priorities as part of update of the [Community Strategic Plan 2032](#) and development of Council’s Delivery Program 2022-26. A copy of this assessment can be found in the [CSP Community Engagement report](#).

Guidance on future community led plan development

The following should be noted by community groups wishing to develop their own plans:

- The plans are an excellent community engagement process and tool to help communities to take ownership of their towns and villages.

-
- The plans provide an opportunity for communities to focus on their own future directions and to clearly articulate their needs.
 - The plans provide a great opportunity to advocate for the needs of communities and for grant funding opportunities.
 - That the implementation of the plan needs to be driven by the community.
 - Implementation of the plan and any actions contained within the plans need to be considered as part of Council's own plan development.
 - Individual staff members may be identified for particular issues or actions and provide input into these as required, for existing and adopted Council projects.
 - The actions included in the plan may not necessarily be supported by Council.

Council does not currently have the resources to actively participate in the development of CLSPs or implement the actions contained within plans. Council staff will continue to provide support to CCBs through the provision of advice, examples, contacts, grant opportunities and template suggestions. Council staff should not sit on the working party or be actively involved in the planning process as it needs to be community led.

Advice from Council staff should be provided at the commencement of the planning project, a review of the draft undertaken and during the delivery of the plan to Council by the community. Council has commenced investigations into developing a community led planning framework to assist communities and also establish clear expectations and outcomes of such processes.

Council has generally encouraged the development of such plans and has supported the community (in-kind) with development. The plans provide the community with direction and a "plan of action". They are an important instrument for seeking grants, advocacy and developing community projects. Council continues to encourage the development of these plans especially given the evidence of positive outcomes for the community.

EG23.4 Advocacy and Growth - Staff Update

HPERM Ref: D23/48963

Department: Tourism
Approver: Carey McIntyre, Director - City Futures

Attachments: 1. Tourism Recovery Action Plan 2022-2023 (under separate cover) [⇒](#)
2. Post Event Completion Report - Financial Year 2021/22 (under separate cover) [⇒](#)

Reason for Report

The purpose of this report is to provide the Shoalhaven Economic Growth and Advocacy (SEGA) group with an update on key projects in the City Futures Directorate.

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That the Shoalhaven Economic Growth and Advocacy Group receive this report for their information.

Options

1. Receive this report for information.

Implications: The SEGA group will be provided with a high-level overview of key priorities and projects.

2. Request additional information.

Implications: Staff will provide additional information during the meeting if possible, or at a later time after further investigation.

Growth Update

Council staff have participated or provided feedback towards the following:

- Meetings Council have attended and contributed to:
 - Illawarra South Coast Local Jobs and Skills Taskforce
 - Regional Economic Development Managers Working Group meetings
 - South Pacific Offshore Wind Project
 - Workforce Australia Providers introductions meetings
 - Australian Regional Tourism Board meetings
 - Nowra Riverfront Action Taskforce
 - Origin Energy, proposed Shoalhaven Power Station Expansion, Kangaroo Valley
 - Vincentia Shopping Village reactivation project discussions
 - Shoalhaven Careers Advisors Network (SCAN)
 - Shoalhaven Business Chamber – Business After Hours

- Shoalhaven Professional Business Association meetings and events
- Shoalhaven Defence and Industry Group (SDIG) meetings and events
- Shoalhaven CEO Business Forum
- Illawarra Shoalhaven Defence Industry Development Strategy Working Group
- Telstra – Blackspots and connectivity in the Shoalhaven
- UOW Industry 4.0 Hub tour
- Australian Taxation Office – eInvoicing rollout and benefits for business
- FlowPower – Proposed Shoalhaven Solar Farm
- TfNSW – Nowra Bypass
- Liquor and Gaming NSW – Introduction to Hospitality Concierge
- Centre of Excellence collaborations
- Strategy Reviews
 - The review of the [Regional Economic Development Strategy](#) including workshops and feedback sessions
 - [The 6 Cities Strategy](#)
 - The implementation of the Shoalhaven Community Wellbeing Plan
 - Finalisation of the Advocacy Guide for 2023
 - Site visits for the development of a Harbour Activation Strategy – NSW Government
 - Workshops for the development of an economic profile of the South Nowra Employment Precinct – NSW Government
 - Part of the working group for the preparation of the Illawarra Shoalhaven Defence Industry Development Strategy
 - Tourism Recovery Action Plan - **Attachment 1** is the updated version of the Tourism Recovery Action Plan with status updates on key actions.
- Defence and Manufacturing Sector Development
 - Shoalhaven Defence Industry and Manufacturing Workforce Round Table
 - Shoalhaven Defence Industry Group (SDIG), member of the steering Committee
 - Regional Defence Industry opportunities working group, cross government
 - Manufacturing Sector working groups and school's visit
- Industrial Land
 - EOI recently open for Flinders Stage 10 – Closing 21 February 2023
 - Ongoing development of Flinders stage 11 and AATP stage 5
 - DPE - Economic Analysis of South Nowra Employment Precinct
- Flood Support

- Farming and Agriculture Dairy Sector Support
- Oyster Lease support cross agency support
- Kangaroo Valley recovery
- Other Council Committees
 - Motor Sports Working Group – 6 February 2023

Council Resolutions

CL23.17 Notice of Motion - Proposed Offshore Wind Farm At the Ordinary Meeting on 23 January 2023, Council noted community concerns regarding this proposal and resolved to request a Councillor briefing. View a copy of the [agenda online](#), and the meeting minutes [here](#). Watch the recorded meeting [here](#).

Advocacy

- Tourism Talk After Hours
 - Co-hosting an after-hours event with Tourism Australia, Shoalhaven Business Chamber and Huskisson Chamber of Commerce on March 21 at Jervis Bay Brewing Co.
 - Special guests: including Dominic Mehling from Tourism Australia will give an update on international tourism trends and tips; Coralie Bell will give an update on Tourism and Economic Development at Council; Jemma Tribe at Shoalhaven Business Chamber; and Danny Payne from Huskisson Chamber of Commerce will bring all the local business news and opportunities.
 - To RSVP, email ashlea.seveque@shoalhaven.nsw.gov.au or RSVP [here](#).

Tourism Marketing Snapshot

- Shoalhaven ranked #21 of the most loved destinations around the world according to the [Tourism Sentiment Score®](#). For the second year, destinations around the world have been ranked to uncover those that are most loved. These Leading Places are the 100 most loved destinations according to consumer sentiment – what people really feel. Being named in the rankings means Shoalhaven has offered positive experiences and instilled the kind of happiness that visitors must talk about, measured across billions of conversations online throughout 2022.
- Year to date September 2022 figures* show a record total estimated expenditure of \$1.3 billion. A record number of visitor nights of \$6.35 million is 21% up year on year. This equates to around 3.5 nights length of stay. However, summer holidays accommodation bookings were down up to 40% on previous years (according to Localis Data Company). These results show a mixed lens of recovery, with cost of living and market competition affecting the industry.
- The new [Visitor Guide](#) and campaign was launched in December 2022. 80,000 copies have been distributed to local operators, NSW Visitor Centres, with 5,000 to

be displayed in Sydney venues during World Pride in March and 10,000 tipped-on to the May/June newsstand edition of Australian Geographic.

- Top-level results from off-peak campaigns 2022:
 - FeelNSW co-operative South Coast Campaign (9 Aug – 18 Sep) yielded 22.5 million ad impressions, 6.3 million video views, and 39,000 link clicks. Ad studies showed 70% of those who saw the campaign are more likely to visit and 33% now believing the South Coast is a good place to visit in cooler months.
 - FeelNSW Shoalhaven Food & Wine Campaign (21 Jun – 15 Aug) which featured food and drink itineraries delivered 6.6 million ad impressions, and an average read across articles of 4:30 where the average on visitnsw.com is 2:15.
 - Awarded Silver in the Destination Marketing category at the NSW Tourism Awards for Wine & Whales Campaign.
- The key marketing campaign for 2023, Wellness, launched in February 2023. Extensive product development was undertaken to discover new and collate existing product into eight categories on the shoalhaven.com/wellness landing page: Retreat; Flow; First Nations; Indulge; Nourish; Rewild; Create; Attend. 12 journalist famils, paid digital and social activity; advertising partnerships; and a partnership with [Well Traveller](http://Well_Traveller) for promotion and product development are underway this Autumn, generating leads direct to industry.
- Digital Marketing Update:
 - 2022 YOY there was 413,000 total users of shoalhaven.com, 99% are new users. This is down 10% year on year due to travel deterrents such as natural disasters
 - Social media followers on Instagram 40,000 and 55,000 on Facebook, TikTok channel was created to explore and engage with younger users
 - Shoalhaven paid search terms delivered 17 million impressions across google search, up 254% year on year.
 - There are 9406 consumer monthly newsletter subscribers and a 30% open rate.
 - 66% of our total web users are viewing content on mobile devices.

*Tourism Research Australia Shoalhaven and Jervis Bay Monitor year to Date September 2022.

Events

- Event Update General
 - Between Sept-December event approvals returned to pre-covid levels with 45 events occurring on Council owned and managed land. It was great to see Christmas and New Year's events return over the summer period.

- While approvals were up over summer, we are still seeing short booking periods, and higher costs for insurance and supplies. This continues to be an ongoing challenge for organiser going forward.
- The Events Team is currently in the final stages launching a Sustainable Event Toolkit which is designed to be shared with event owners across the region. Its purpose is to provide a clear outline of how events of all sizes can operate sustainably.
- Event Support Program
 - The event Support Program is designed to drive visitors to the Shoalhaven outside of peak season.
 - Round 2 of the [Tourism Event Support Program](#) 2023 closed on February 20. The Events Team in collaboration with the Event Support Panel are currently in the process of assessing new applications.
 - From September – December 14 supported events went ahead with a total Return On Investment (ROI) of \$11,741,000.
 - Events included the Bay Games (returned after 2 years), The Gin Flight Festival (new event), The South Coast Food and Wine Festival (returned after 2 years), NSW Masters Waterpolo (new event) and the Sand and Sea Festival.
 - **Attachment 2** is a review of the 2021/22 Event Support Program. This includes an overview of all events supported throughout the financial year. Noting covid restricted events from occurring between June - October.
- Kangaroo Valley Recovery
 - Following the March 2022 Floods which heavily impacted Kangaroo Valley, an event support program (75% funded by State Government) was launched with the intention to drive foot traffic back into The Valley and support both businesses and community.
 - To date, 11 of the 13 events have successfully gone ahead.
 - The Tourism Team have received great feedback around the value of the grants and impact the events had following the floods.
 - Council also contracted the Kangaroo Valley Chamber of Business & Tourism to deliver marketing activities for the town with the road closures.

Grants Updates – Business Focus

- The Stronger Communities Programme
 - The Stronger Communities Programme supports the Australian Government's commitment to deliver social benefits in communities across Australia. Round 8 of the program, will provide \$22.7 million to fund small capital projects in each of the 151 federal electorates.
 - The program intends to encourage and support participation in local projects, improve local community participation and contribute to vibrant communities. For this round, grant funding will be up to 100% of eligible project costs. In consultation with their community, each local MP must identify potential applicants and projects in their electorate and invite them to apply for a grant. Invited applications will be assessed against the program's eligibility criteria through a closed non-competitive process.
 - Each electorate has total funding of up to \$150,000 that can be allocated to successful applications. A maximum of 20 projects will be funded in each

electorate. Eligible projects include upgrades to men’s sheds, community centres, scout halls, bike paths, streetscapes, skate parks, sporting facilities. Projects must be completed by 31.12.2023.

- Grant guidelines and additional program information can be found [here](#)
- Critical Producer Grant – NSW Government Rural Assistance Authority
 - Applications Close 30 June 2023
 - Grants Between \$30,000 and \$100,000
 - The NSW and Australian governments are committed to providing ongoing support for communities impacted by severe weather and flooding that occurred from February 2022 onwards (AGRN 1012), announcing the \$100 million Critical Producer Grant.
 - The Critical Producer Grant provides funding to help impacted primary producers and primary production enterprises to rebuild and recover in the medium to longer term. Funding supports the following industries - agriculture, horticulture, aquaculture, and forestry industries.
 - Grant guidelines and additional program information can be found [here](#)
- Regional Skills Relocation Grant – Department of Regional NSW
 - Applications Close 15 December 2023
 - Grants Up to \$12,500
 - The Regional Skills Relocation Grant aims to support economic growth in regional NSW by supporting businesses and organisations to find and attract skilled workers to live and work in regional NSW. Includes filling regional job vacancies, increasing the strength, diversity and size of regional economies. Eligible industries are key industries that drive growth in regional economies and are typically categorised as ‘engine industries,’ ‘emerging engine industries’, and enabling industries. Examples of eligible industries include:
 - agribusiness and forestry
 - resources and mining
 - tourism
 - health and aged care
 - freight and logistics
 - advanced manufacturing
 - renewable energy
 - technology-enabled primary industry
 - Grant guidelines and additional program information can be found [here](#)
- Export Market Development Grant – Australian Trade and Investment Commission
 - Round 3 Applications Close 14 April 2023
 - Grants between \$15,000 and \$36,600 depending on application Tier
 - Austrade’s Export Market Development Grants (EMDG) program helps Australian businesses grow their exports into international markets. These

- grants encourage small to medium enterprises to market and promote their goods and services into new markets.
- Grants are available in three stages (tiers). Each tier gives a different level of support based on the maturity of the SME and how far along their export journey they have gone. Grant agreements can be for one year or two years, with a possibility of extension subject to the availability of funds.
 - Grant guidelines and additional program information can be found [here](#)
- Return to Work Pathways Program – Women NSW
 - Applications 11 April 2023, 11.59 pm
 - Grants From \$100,000 to \$250,000
 - The aim of the Return-to-Work Pathways Program is to reduce barriers for women wanting to enter or re-enter the workforce. The program will address the needs of women experiencing complex and persistent barriers to employment.
 - It will fund a variety of bespoke and tailored projects, to provide wraparound supports including training, mentoring and pathways to employment. Projects will be targeted to focus communities, responding to their specific needs, life stages and circumstances.
 - Applicants must be a legally constituted Australian-based entity. This includes:
 - not-for-profit organisations, including community organisations
 - industry bodies and the private sector working in partnership with the community or government on projects directly supporting women and girls
 - local councils and shires, including regional organisations of councils and consortia of councils.
 - Grant guidelines and additional program information can be found [here](#)

Visitor Information Services

- After another busy school holidays, it was great to welcome back a higher return of international visitors to the area, predominantly Europe and the USA. Mobile visitor services were provided at White Sands Park Huskisson for a total of 11 days across December 2022 and January 2023. 65% of interactions were with visitors from Sydney and regional NSW, with most people (45%) staying 7+ days in the Shoalhaven. Anecdotally although a busy summer pre-bookings for accommodation and activities were down, however, we are still receiving lots of enquiries from the next wave of visitors.
- The team have been out delivering visitor guides to operators across the Shoalhaven and will be providing mobile visitor services at some upcoming local events.
- The next prioritised project will be the implementation of online sales for the merchandise sold at the centres.

Staff Updates

Updates to staff changes in Economic Development and Tourism

- **Greg Pullen** – Has now retired from his role as Economic Development Manager
- **David King** – Contract with Economic Development has now ended, the team would like to thank David for his assistance and support.
- **Emelie Einarsson** has returned from maternity leave and is currently job sharing the Visitors Centre Manager role with Lindsay Conway until the end of the 2023
- **Coralie Bell** - Continues to be in both the Tourism Manager and Economic Development Manager roles.

EG23.5 Defence Industry in the Shoalhaven - Update

HPERM Ref: D23/54306

Department: Economic Development

Approver: Carey McIntyre, Director - City Futures

Reason for Report

The purpose of this report is to update the Shoalhaven Economic Growth and Advocacy Group (SEGA) on the Defence Industry in the Shoalhaven, including the alliance and upcoming events of the Shoalhaven Defence and Industry Group (SDIG).

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That the Shoalhaven Economic Growth and Advocacy Group receive this report for their information.

Options

1. Receive this report for information.

Implications: The SEGA group will be provided with a high-level overview of the Defence industry in the Shoalhaven.

2. Request additional information.

Implications: Staff will provide additional information during the meeting if possible, or at a later time after further investigation.

Background

NSW is home to the largest number of defence bases and capabilities of any state or territory and is home to nearly 30% of Australia's Military and Defence civilian personnel. According to the *NSW Government's Defence and Industry Strategy 2017*, defence makes a substantial contribution to the NSW economy and plays a vital role in areas such as jobs growth, regional activation and industry investment.

The NSW Government recognises the significant contributions made by Defence and defence-related industries to the state in terms of attracting investment, economic growth and job creation.

The Defence Industry supports 1740 jobs in the Shoalhaven, or 4.2% of the total Shoalhaven workforce. The Gross Value Added (GVA) by the Defence Industry in the region is approximately \$960m. The Defence Industry has received 9.1% year-on-year growth from 2011 to 2020.

The SDIG is an alliance between the Shoalhaven Defence Industry, Shoalhaven City Council, Shoalhaven Business Chamber, and the NSW Government. The SDIG has a common goal to strengthen the Shoalhaven economy by securing additional defence contracts through individual businesses and joint venture alliances.

In late 2021 the NSW Government invited tenders for consortiums to form and gain access to financial resources to help build and grow the defence industrial base of NSW. The aim was to boost the State's commitment to sovereign defence industry capabilities with the launch of

a new \$1.23 million Regional Defence Networks Program aimed at making it easier for local businesses to expand and supply to the defence and aerospace industry.

Although the Shoalhaven has a natural aviation strength, there are many local businesses that interact with the Australian Defence Force (ADF) and Military in other nations that are not solely aviation related. This strength was presented as part of the tender process by the SDIG.

Following a competitive procurement process, four partner agencies were identified to deliver the Regional Defence Networks Program:

- Ai Group for the Western Sydney region
- Shoalhaven City Council (SDIG) for the Shoalhaven/Illawarra region
- Hunter Defence Cooperative for the Hunter region
- NSW Business Chamber for the Riverina-Murray region.

The SDIG are now in the process of delivering the Regional Defence Networks Program over 2022, 2023 and 2024.

SDIG and the Regional Defence Networks Program

The SDIG's network of defence contractors, government agencies and other related businesses are the group that administers the program and funding. A steering committee has been formed and a program of events has been created. The program operates over 3 years with a budget of \$257,950.

Events proposed under the program include:

- Annual Defence Industry Showcase
- Thought Leadership Events
- Defence Ready Training
- Capability Mapping
- Supply Chain Development
- Trade Show Expo
- Aboriginal Procurement
- Monthly meetings of SDIG

Services of the SDIG include assistance with key local introductions, site selection, decision support material, networking opportunities and advice on government regulations, policies and incentives.

Additional information, support and details of involvement can be found on the website <https://www.shoalhavendefence.com.au/>

Upcoming Events

- SDIG Lunch events occur monthly, with a guest speaker presenting at each event. The schedule is currently being finalised and guest speakers booked in. Upcoming dates of SDIG lunches include:
 - 16 March 2023
 - 20 April 2023

-
- 18 May 2023
 - 15 June 2023
 - 20 July 2023
- Avalon Air Show - Shoalhaven Defence Industry Group, Invest Wollongong, and i3Net were accepted to exhibit on the NSW Government stand at the 2023 Avalon Air Show from 28 February – 05 March 2023 in Geelong, Melbourne.

The Air Show is a global business event, attracting senior aerospace, aviation, space and defence industry, military and government decision-makers from around the world. It will give Australian and international industry, government and academia a platform for engagement via a premium industry exhibition, static aircraft display and corporate hospitality.

Other Partnerships

Illawarra Shoalhaven Defence Industry Development Strategy Working Group

Shoalhaven City Council is part of the working group to prepare a Defence Industry Development Strategy. The working group comprises of staff from State Government, Local Government, Chambers of Commerce, defence industry, and relevant organisations.

The Working Group is chaired by Business Illawarra and provides a platform for collaboration between government and industry in the development of strategy for the Illawarra-Shoalhaven.

The Strategy will be informed by *NSW Government's Defence and Industry Strategy 2017* and will provide a framework to guide existing activities supporting expansion of regional SME participation in the defence supply chain, attraction of defence prime contractors and identify new opportunities for business expansion and infrastructure needs.

EG23.6 Update on Advocacy

HPERM Ref: D23/61906

Department: Tourism

Approver: Carey McIntyre, Director - City Futures

Attachments: 1. Advocacy Document - January 2023 [↓](#)

Reason for Report

To update the Shoalhaven Growth and Advocacy Group on the Shoalhaven City Council Advocacy document.

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That the Shoalhaven Growth and Advocacy Group note the new updated Advocacy Document for information.

Options

1. As Above.

Implications: Council relies on this document as a key advocacy document regionally across all levels of government.

Background

Council, in partnership with the Shoalhaven Growth and Advocacy Group (SEGA), have created an Advocacy document to highlight key important projects for our city that require funding and advocacy across all levels of government.

Council updated this document in early 2023 and a copy is provided to the group for information.

See Attachment 1.



Advocacy Projects 2023



EG23.6 - Attachment 1

EG23.7 Action Update

HPERM Ref: D23/61850

Department: Tourism

Approver: Carey McIntyre, Director - City Futures

Attachments: 1. SEGA Action Table [↓](#)

Reason for Report

To provide the Shoalhaven Economic Growth & Advocacy Group with a progress report on outstanding actions.

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That Shoalhaven Economic Growth & Advocacy Group note the update to the Action Table and remove Item EG22.3 – now complete.

Options

1. As recommended.

Implications: The Action Table will be updated and the completed action removed.

2. Note the update to the Action Table and request more information.

Implications: Additional information as requested will be provided to the group at the next meeting.

Background

Council records an Action Table of actions requested by the group to track progress and update the group on their status. See Attachment 1.

