

MINUTES OF THE SHOALHAVEN ECONOMIC GROWTH & ADVOCACY GROUP

Meeting Date: Wednesday, 31 July 2024
Location: Jervis Bay Rooms, City Administrative Centre, Bridge Road, Nowra
Time: 4.00pm

The following members were present:

Mr Robert Crow - Tourism - Chairperson
Clr Patricia White - Voting Councillor Ward 3
Clr Matthew Norris - Voting Councillor Ward 1 (Remotely) – Joined 4:22pm
Ms Anna Finch - Human Resources (Remotely)
Ms Brenda Sambrook - Small Business Operator (Remotely)
Ms Holly Pastor - Education (Remotely)
Ms Michelle Bishop - Tourism
Ms Sandra Gray - Small Business Operator (Remotely)
Mr Iain Chalmers - Human Resources & Small Business

Others present:

Mr Paul Mitchell - Representative of Member for Gilmore (Remotely)
Mr Lou Matthews - Service NSW (Remotely)
Mr Matt Dell - Milton/Ulladulla Business Chamber (Remotely)
Mr Trent Hilaire - Shoalhaven Professional Business Association (Remotely)
Ms Kate Dezarnaulds - Berry Chamber of Commerce & Tourism (Remotely)
Mr Laurie Koster - Illawarra Shoalhaven Regional Defence Network (Remotely)
Mr James Vernon - Representative of Member for Kiama (Remotely)
Ms Kristy Mayhew - Tourism & Economic Development Manager
Mr Ryan Schulter - Senior Economic Development Officer

Note: The Chairperson Mr John Lamont, was an apology for the meeting, Mr Robert Crow agreed to Chair the meeting in his absence.

Apologies / Leave of Absence

Apologies was received from Clr Kotlash, Clr Boyd, John Lamont, Gareth Ward and Dianne Laver.

Confirmation of the Minutes

RESOLVED (By consent)

That the Minutes of the Shoalhaven Economic Growth & Advocacy Group held on Monday 27 May 2024 be confirmed.

CARRIED

Declaration of Interests

Nil

REPORTS

EG24.12 Advocacy and Growth - Staff Update

HPERM Ref:
D24/245655

The Group discussed the key insights from the Economy Data section of the report, particularly how transaction data in Shoalhaven showed a 13% drop in local spend and a 20% drop in visitor spend from November 2023 to Jan 2024 compared to the same period in the previous years.

Staff advised that VISA data is used to underpin the figures provided in the report.

The Group discussed possible factors that have contributed to the drop in spending and visitation, such as cost of living, weather events impacting outdoor tourism and road closures to Kangaroo Valley.

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

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

RESOLVED (By consent)

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

CARRIED

EG24.13 Framework for Strategic Plan - Economic Development & Tourism 2025 - 2030

HPERM Ref:
D24/278615

Ms Michelle Bishop suggested that it might be more expedient to propose a 10 year strategic plan with a 5 year review, so that it is not based on a political cycle of each new plan being adopted by a new Council.

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That the Shoalhaven Economic Growth and Advocacy Group (SEGA) receive this report and support the staff approach to development of the Economic Development and Tourism Strategy, including:

1. Merging the Destination Management Plan and the Economic Development Strategy into one strategic whole of economy growth strategy
2. Support the proposal of progressing the document by allocating staff time to completing this work within available resources, noting budget limitations.
3. Recognise the need for ongoing consultation with business as the project progresses and support in principle an industry working group to be created to assist with this project.
4. Support ongoing advocacy for funding to assist in the creation of this strategy.

RESOLVED (By consent)

That the Shoalhaven Economic Growth and Advocacy Group (SEGA) receive this report and support the staff approach to development of the Economic Development and Tourism Strategy, including:

1. Merging the Destination Management Plan and the Economic Development Strategy into one strategic whole of economy growth strategy

2. Support the proposal of progressing the document by allocating staff time to completing this work within available resources, noting budget limitations.
3. Recognise the need for ongoing consultation with business as the project progresses and support in principle an industry working group to be created to assist with this project.
4. Support ongoing advocacy for funding to assist in the creation of this strategy.

CARRIED

**EG24.14 Economic Development & Tourism - Marketing Activity
Stakeholder Engagement Plan - Financial Year 2024 / 25**

**HPERM Ref:
D24/278618**

Recommendation (Item to be determined under delegated authority)

That the Shoalhaven Economic Growth and Advocacy Group (SEGA) receive this report and support the proposed method for consultation of marketing activity for 2024/25 financial year.

RESOLVED (By consent)

That the Shoalhaven Economic Growth and Advocacy Group (SEGA) receive this report and support the proposed method for consultation of marketing activity for 2024/25 financial year.

CARRIED

GENERAL BUSINESS

General Updates

Ms Michelle Bishop advised that the NSW Tourism Association have taken back the Business/Tourism awards from Business NSW.

Ms Kate Dezarnaulds - Berry Chamber of Commerce & Tourism, advised that the Chamber is busy organising the inaugural Berry Good Awards and running successful promotions for the region.

Mr Lou Mathews - Service NSW, noted that due to budget cuts to the Service NSW Business Bureau that the Business Concierge position will not be replaced until at least the end of the year.

There being no further business, the meeting concluded, the time being 5:04pm.

Robert Crow
CHAIRPERSON