

**QUEANBEYAN BUSINESS COUNCIL
DRAFT MINUTES
TOURISM RETAIL SUB COMMITTEE MEETING
QUEANBEYAN VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE
WEDNESDAY, 23 JULY 2008 12.30 PM**

Present: Bill Baker, Col Maxwell, Jeremy Wyatt, Rod Studholme, Jan Browne, Peter Newham, Ian McGinn, Tracey Lamont, Allan Carpenter, Margaret Nicholls (QCC), Talei Emberson, Simon Mitchell-Taverner

Apologies: Steve Jamieson, Kate Shelton

1. **Welcome from Chair** – Bill Baker welcomed attendees In particular Tracey Lamont from the Kings Highway to Discovery Project, Margaret Nicholls (QCC) and Talei Emberson from Benedict House.
2. **Kings Highway to Discovery project** – Tracey Lamont from Braidwood and Villages Committee gave an in-depth preview of the website being developed to encourage tourism between Batemans Bay and Canberra. Ian McGinn represents Queanbeyan on the project committee. Funded by AusIndustry with a \$200,000 grant, the program aims to increase expenditure by travellers on the route. An extra \$20 spent per vehicle would translate into \$4 to \$6 million per annum. The new website will be child friendly to address “are we there yet?”. A special King’s Secrets section will include quizzes and games for children. Research indicates that 84% of prospective travellers will pre-plan their trip via the internet, hence the highly informative nature of the project’s web site. The website will be launched in January outside Queanbeyan VIC using a bus that will then travel the route making individual launch stops at the Centres along the way – Bungendore, Braidwood and Nelligen before arriving at Batemans Bay. Ongoing funding for the website will be sourced from advertisers – gold \$700, Silver \$300 and Bronze \$100 per annum. Several key advertising spots have already been sold since the 14 July sign-up date. The website, once launched in January, will be called: www.kingshwytodiscovery.com.au .
3. **Capital Country** – Ian McGinn reported that Capital Country’s representation at the Melbourne and Brisbane Caravan Shows had been successful and was a good venue for last year’s Queanbeyan Supplement produced by QBC through Canberra Times.
4. **Matters arising Minutes of Meeting 18 June:** Minutes adopted JB/RS
 - a. **Queanbeyan Conferencing Issues** - Allan Carpenter advised that he had invited Queanbeyan Conference Centre staff to meet with him at his motel, however had met with no success. Margaret Nicholls offered to meet with him and facilitate appropriate QCC staff to attend.

5. **Cittaslow** – Talei Emberson spoke on behalf of Kate Shelton who had been delayed unexpectedly. Cittaslow (as featured in QBC’s Queanbeyan Age Column Friday, 18 July) is a movement started in Italy and expanding rapidly through Europe. Goolwa (SA) and Katoomba are the first Australian (and first non-European) cities to be accredited. Kate Shelton had reported on significant changes in Katoomba since their accreditation, particularly in retail and civic attitudes and customer service which made it a “much more pleasurable” place to visit. Accreditation criteria are very specific – towns must be under 50,000 population and the program is linked to the “slow food” movement. Margaret Nicholls suggested that Ms Shelton contact Beate Jansen at QCC to alert consultants for the current CBD Masterplan of Cittaslow.

Resolved that this committee take this on board for future consideration.

ACTION: SMT

6. **Main Streets Improvement Grant** - Bill Baker and Margaret Nicholls advised that CBD LIFT Committee was considering alternative ways to use Main Streets Improvement Grant funds that had accumulated over the years. Funds could be available, subject to consideration by CBD LIFT Committee, to encourage an innovative way of enlivening the main streets (Monaro and Crawford), Agreed that retailers should be involved. Discussion included association with ‘Queanbeyan in Bloom’ festival in November, suggesting a special ‘Sale Day’ on Melbourne Cup Day (last year a public holiday in Canberra).

Resolved that main streets retailers be invited to an evening meeting (5.30 or 6 pm start) be held in the next few weeks. Peter Newham offered meeting space at Riverside Plaza.

ACTION: SMT/ PN – Mrs Nicholls to raise at the next CBD LIFT Meeting.

7. **External Neon Sign at VIC – Farrer Place** – This sign is unreliable and considered ugly by some. It is operated by a dedicated DOS computer which takes up space in the Admin office.

Resolved that this be further considered at the next Meeting together with suggestion of updated Queanbeyan promotional DVD.

ACTION: SMT

8. **VIC six month report to QCC (SMT)** – Bill Baker advised that a response to Council’s letter requesting changes to reporting criteria was almost complete subject to input from VIC staff. The response will be delivered to Council early next week.

ACTION: SMT/BB.

- 9. Queanbeyan/ Canberra Accommodation Statistics** – ABS Figures provided by Canberra Tourism Services for the March 2008 quarter show a significant decline over the previous year. Guest arrivals in both Queanbeyan and Canberra were down 13% in January. 6% in February and 3% in March (1% in Canberra).

Comparative guest nights showed Queanbeyan down an average of 5% over the three months, whilst Canberra showed a decline of 10%. Considered that this reflected Queanbeyan's reliance on construction workers. Allan Carpenter suggested the January/ February decline was largely due to significant loss of business from Queensland and Northern NSW due to the floods.

- 10. Membership renewals-** Simon Mitchell-Taverner advised that Membership renewals were being received having been sent out in June.
- 11. Canberra Times Supplement** - Simon Mitchell-Taverner advised the Supplement is being distributed by the VIC distribution contractors.
- 12. General Meeting 5 August – Meet the Mayoral Candidates** – Bill Baker urged a good representation from Members at this function to be held at Queanbeyan Leagues Club starting at 5 pm. With a new Mayor certain to be elected and a potentially different Council make-up, the election on 13 September will be significant for the City. He requested that Member Issues be sent to Simon Mitchell-Taverner for transmission to Candidates by Monday, 28 July.

ACTION: ALL

8. General Business –

- a. NSW State Office Block** – Simon Mitchell-Taverner advised that 11 NSW Departments have now located at the Centre.

Meeting Closed 2.15 pm

Next Committee Meeting – Wednesday, 20 August, 12.30 pm at VIC

Next General Meeting – Tuesday, 5 August at 4 pm at Queanbeyan Leagues Club

Next Executive Meeting – Tuesday, 26 August, at 12.30 pm – venue tba.