

**Yarriambiack Tourism
Advisory Committee of Council
Minutes**

Meeting date: Monday 6/11/2023

Time: 6:00pm

Location: Yarriambiack Shire Council Chambers

Attendees: Cr Graeme Massey (YSC), Cr Kylie Zanker (YSC), Sarah Collins (YSC), Tom Huf (YSC), Adrian Tyler (Rupanyup), Barbara Moore (Beulah), Joe Collins (Woomelang), Jenny Stephens (Hopetoun), Margaret Flemming (Murtoa), David Ward (Warracknabeal), Cr Chris Lehmann (YSC), Cr Tom Hamilton (YSC)

1) WELCOME: Councillor Graeme Massey (Chairperson)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

'I would like to acknowledge that this meeting is being held on the traditional lands of the Wotjobaluk, Jaadwa, Jadawadjali, Wergaia and Jupagulk people, and I pay respects to their Elders, both past, present and emerging'.

2) APOLOGIES:

Chris Niewand (Minyip), Tony Caccaviello (YSC), Tammy Smith (YSC)

RESOLUTION

That the apologies are accepted as written.

Moved: Adrian Tyler

Seconded: David Ward

Carried

3) MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING:

RESOLUTION

That the minutes of the Yarriambiack Tourism Advisory Committee of Council meeting held on 7th August 2023, as circulated be taken as read and confirmed.

Moved: Joe Collins

Seconded: Barb Moore

Carried

4) BUSINESS ARISING FROM MINUTES:

- **Yarriambiack Tourism Facebook page admins to be removed** – Content to be direct messaged to FB page, or emailed to YSC's Communication Consultant, Community and Economic Development Officer or Manager Community Strengthening & Engagement.
- **Digital Brochures** – As presented in Agenda Item 8. *Yarriambiack Tourism Information Update*

5) TOURISM STRATEGY UPDATE

Prepared by: Sarah Collins, Manager Community Strengthening & Engagement

Presented by: Sarah Collins

BACKGROUND:

At the previous meeting YSC presented the draft Action Plan as part of the Yarriambiack Shire Council Tourism Strategy 2023-27 to group and gathered feedback. Since that meeting, the collated feedback was utilitse to develop the most recent version of the document which was presented to the committee.

DISCUSSION:

The new action plan and road map was presented to the group with changes highlighted.

Next steps for the tourism plan were confirmed with the group which includes:

- Updated Action Plan to be presented at Council Forum November 8th 2023
- Will be released for Community Feedback for 28 days following Forum
- Will be presented to Council for formal adoption at the December Council meeting December 13th 2023.

RESOLUTION

- Advisory Committee noted this report as tabled.
- Advisory Committee members to circulate Tourism strategy to their stakeholders for feedback during the community feedback period.

Moved: Joe Collins

Seconded: Jenny Stephens

Carried

6) VISITOR ECONOMY PARTNERSHIPS (VEP) UPDATE

Prepared by: Tammy Smith, Chief Executive Officer & Sarah Collins, Manager Community Strengthening & Engagement

Presented by: Sarah Collins

BACKGROUND:

An update on the rollout of the Visitor Economic Partnership (VEP) changes currently underway across Victoria. The VEPs have been developed to improve communication and support between Victoria state government, and Regional Tourism areas (formally known as Regional Tourism Boards)

Locally, this directly affects Grampians Tourism (GT) and Wimmera Mallee Tourism (WMT).

DISCUSSION:

The state government is committing funding to establish Visitor Economy Partnerships (VEP), where six or more Council's become a VEP (removing RTB's).

The anticipated structure of the VEP was discussed, noting that these details are yet to be confirmed.

Discussion took place around the reasoning behind the move to VEPs and Yarriambiack Shire's place and obligations in the new structure, which was noted as having not been confirmed.

An update was provided to the committee noting that GT & WMT have partnered for a Visitor Servicing Fund application that will build capability in the sector and ensure a better visitor experience by delivering the following:

- New processes on how inspiration can be used in information delivery across all LGA regions with engaging content featuring Product, People and Place.
- Clear roles and responsibilities for visitor servicing staff with content creation, industry support and promotion of the VIP project to visitors.
- Visitors accessing information 24/7 resulting in inspiration to stay longer, disperse to more areas and businesses resulting in an increase in total visitor spend.
- Three off grid multi-functional self-sustaining digital kiosks located throughout the Grampians Peak Trial.
- An App that includes both regions categorised by product and experience to inspire additional journeys, extend stays, and increase spend and dispersal. The project includes online maps and personalised itineraries that encourage cross promotion of all LGA areas.
- A QR code web-based visitor inspiration tool (linked to the new VIP app) to promote local content of what is open and available.

The outcome of the application is yet to be received.

RESOLUTION:

- Advisory Committee noted this report as tabled.
- Advisory Committee members to advocate for VEP to assist with effective structure and implementation.
- **Additional Motion from Committee:** Yarriambiack Shire Council to find budget, if necessary, to match funding required to establish a YSC CEO seat on the Grampians Tourism VEP board after the proposed two-year VEP establishment funding has been exhausted.

Moved: Joe Collins

Seconded: David Ward

Carried

7) SEYMOUR RAIL HERITAGE CENTRE PARTNERSHIP UPDATE

Prepared by: Sarah Collins, Manager Community Strengthening & Engagement

Presented by: Sarah Collins

BACKGROUND:

Seymour Rail Heritage Centre (SRHC) began in 1983 and dedicated themselves to preserving their fleet of heritage rollingstock. Since then, they have developed touring packages, allowing their passengers to relive the golden age of travel and now have a larger team of volunteers and staff. SRHC identified the allure of the Silo Art Trail as an attraction that could develop into a tour product that would bring people from VIC Metro areas out into the country to marvel at the stunning Outdoor Art Gallery.

DISCUSSION:

Since the success of their first overnight trip in May 2022, which saw passengers travel to Beulah viewing the Silo art along the way, they then returned October 2023 for an extended three-night stay and travelling up the rarely travelled Hopetoun line and aligning with the Murtoa Big Weekend event. Once again, a successful trip has provided YSC with the opportunity to further develop the tour product with SRHC.

Discussion took place around how YSC builds on their current partnership with SRHC and creates tour products that provide benefits to further YSC tourism businesses and community groups. Discussions took place over lessons learnt from 2023 and start planning the 2024 trip, the main discussion and feedback points included:

- Linking it to a multi-day event is a great way to keep the train in region longer than an overnight trip. There is so much going on the weekend of Murtoa's Big Weekend, is there an option for the train to take people to multiple towns that have activities scheduled?
- By knowing a date of travel a year in advance, it allows time for businesses and community groups to plan an offering, product development with SRHC, marketing, and a longer booking window for Melbourne passengers. Trend shows that the shuttle (Murtoa- Hopeton) are known for last minute bookings.
- To be explored - ways for the train to visit Woomelang. Woomelang are on the same standard gage line and have a very high standard and recently renovated station.
- To be explored - possibility of multiple trips to YSC and visit different locations to spread the benefits to other townships in YSC.
- To be explored - the possibility to schedule a train visit in off-peak times so that businesses can benefit from the train passengers in otherwise quiet months.
- How can we keep the train in region longer when we need accommodation for guests. Are there trains that have accommodation on board? Glamping? BYO Tent?

RESOLUTION:

- Advisory Committee noted this report as tabled.
- Advisory Committee members to inform their stakeholders of the 2024 trip to promote local-led initiatives that will enhance visitor experience.

8) YARRIAMBIACK TOURISM INFORMATION UPDATE

Prepared by: Tom Huf, Community & Economic Development Officer

Presented by: Tom Huf

DISCUSSION:

An update was provided on the rollout of the new online tourism information including the utilisation of the business directory on Council's website, and the draft marketing collateral aimed at directing visitors to the online information when in the Shire. Research was conducted

RESOLUTION

- Advisory Committee members to provide further feedback on the branding document
- Council staff to proceed with the utilisation of the business directory as a dynamic method of providing up to date tourist information
- Advisory group members to advocate for the use of the business directory upon the completion of the online platform
- **Additional Motion from Committee:** Yarriambiack Shire Council to add digital brochures onto YSC website ASAP before printed stock has run out so that information is still available to visitors.

Moved: Joe Collins

Seconded: Barb Moore

Carried

9) GENERAL BUSINESS

- Discussion were held around the potential impact of water allocation usage by mining in the region and their potential impact on recreation allocation of water to lakes, weirs pools

Actions Arising			
Date	Action	Comments	Status/ Assigned (open/closed)
06.11.2023	YSC to take back administrative controls of Yarriambiack Tourism FB Page.	Members past and present, still have access to the message inbox and are receiving notifications and are posting. These permissions will be reclaimed by YSC.	Open – YSC to work with Kat Colbert to remove all administrators from the page.
06.11.2023	YSC to meet with SRHC regarding the 2024 train visit.	YSC to present questions and points raised by committee members.	Open – Sarah to collate feedback from committee members and ask at the next SRHC meeting.
06.11.2023	Committee to provide feedback on draft Branding Document that was presented during meeting.	Feedback to be submitted to Tom Huf by 20 th November 2023 so that project can continue.	Open – Committee members to provide feedback.
06.11.2023	Digital Brochure PDFs to be uploaded to YSC webpage.	It is important that these brochures are available to visitors before printed brochures run out.	Open – Tom to research how to add these PDF brochures onto the website while to project is ongoing. Can be updated when appropriate.

MEETING CLOSED: 8:27pm

NEXT MEETING: Monday 5th February 2024, 6pm