

## AMENDED ITEM



**Item No:** 5.6  
**Title:** Notice of Motion - A Tourism gift or wasted opportunity?  
**Department:** Councillor

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14 September 2020 Ordinary Council Meeting

Reference: F2020/00039 - D14177009  
Author: Bruce McLachlan, Councillor  
Jilly Pilon, Councillor  
Greg Best, Councillor

Councillors McLachlan, Pilon and Best have given notice that at the Ordinary Council Meeting to be held on 14 September they will move the following motion:

- 1** *That Council now recognise the never before opportunity the current interstate and overseas travel restrictions has presented Council, with the opportunity to reset the Central Coast, as a tourism destination.*
- 2** *That Council ensures this opportunity is not squandered, and that adequate promotion of the Central Coast as a Regional destination is undertaken, especially now that Councils previous 800k Tourism budget, is now done in house.*
- 3** *That Council recognise first impressions are important, and that gate way entries with untidy, litter strewn, overgrown road side verges, and graffiti ridden public areas do not create a positive reputation as a destination.*
- 4** *That many of these gateway entries are NSW State owned assets, and Council via the Chief Executive Officer, write to local State MPs asking for these areas of concern be addressed.*
- 5** *That Council recognises overflowing bins in our beaches and reserves are a common sight at holiday periods, and that Council via the CEO, ensure that adequate resources are made available, to cater for this increased demand.*
- 6** *That Council recognise this 2020 year's summer influx of tourism may well be record, and that Council via the CEO, ensure adequate resources be made available in the current budget for staff to pro-actively prepare, for the predicted extra pressure on our public amenities.*

**Councillors Note**

Covid 19 travel restrictions to popular Australian destinations such as Qld and Bali, has now given local Tourism the opportunity for many first time, and previous visitors returning to the Central Coast.

What promotion has been done to capitalise on this unique circumstance, now that Council is no longer out sourcing its @ 800k Tourism promotional budget, or has this money just been returned to general revenue, to help the current financial trading losses?

We may well see 2020 visitation, especially day visitation, return to the Central Coast glory days of yesteryear. Are we as a Region taking steps to capitalise on this. Are we prepared, given added Covid precautions are required?

There has been few positives come from Covid 19, and 2020 as a year has been extraordinarily challenging, however domestic tourism may be the one benefit we can as a Region, going forward, take advantage of, and reset our tourism promotions.

**Chief Executive Officer Response**

The Chief Executive Officer considers that this Notice of Motion has legal, strategic, financial or policy implications which should be taken into consideration by the meeting. As a result, the Chief Executive Officer has provided a report in relation to the Notice of Motion. This report is provided as Attachment 1.

**Attachments**

- 1 CEO Response - Notice of Motion - A Tourism gift or wasted opportunity?

D14184391

**Title:** CEO Response - Notice of Motion - A Tourism gift or wasted opportunity?

**Department:** Roads Transport Drainage and Waste

14 September 2020 Ordinary Council Meeting

Reference: F2020/00039 - D14184391

Author: Boris Bolgoff, Director Roads Transport Drainage and Waste  
Phil Cantillon, Acting Director Connected Communities

Executive: Andrew Roach, Acting Director, Environment and Planning



## Summary

This report provides a response to Item 5.6 - Notice of Motion – A Tourism gift or wasted opportunity?

## Motion:

- 1 That Council now recognise the never before opportunity the current interstate and overseas travel restrictions has presented Council, with the opportunity to reset the Central Coast, as a tourism destination.**
- 2 That Council ensures this opportunity is not squandered, and that adequate promotion of the Central Coast as a Regional destination is undertaken, especially now that Councils previous 800k Tourism budget, is now done in house.**
- 3 That Council recognise first impressions are important, and that gate way entries with untidy, litter strewn, overgrown road side verges, and graffiti ridden public areas do not create a positive reputation as a destination.**
- 4 That many of these gateway entries are NSW State owned assets, and Council via the Chief Executive Officer, write to local State MPs asking for these areas of concern be addressed.**
- 5 That Council recognises overflowing bins in our beaches and reserves are a common sight at holiday periods, and that Council via the Chief Executive Officer, ensure that adequate resources are made available, to cater for this increased demand.**
- 6 That Council recognise this 2020 year's summer influx of tourism may well be record, and that Council via the Chief Executive Officer, ensure adequate resources be made available in the current budget for staff to pro-actively prepare, for the predicted extra pressure on our public amenities.**

**Staff Comments:**

Regional travel brings economic opportunities for the Central Coast, to help support in the recovery from the COVID-19 impacts to the Tourism industry. Regional tourism will provide economic benefit to local jobs and businesses, however does present significant risk given the unique pandemic circumstances and potential for any further COVID-19 outbreaks. Ensuring that visitors, local business employees and our local communities feel, and are, safe is an important balance and a public health requirement.

Council is closely following the advice of the State and Federal Government regarding the management of COVID-19 and will continue to do so. The Central Coast has COVID-safe measures in place and is welcoming visitors who are committed to their own safety and that of the Central Coast community. COVID-19 safe plans do place restrictions on the number of people gathering, requires social distancing, and additional resourcing for businesses to adhere to the required compliance of the public health orders.

However due to the temporary closure of international travel and border restrictions, there indeed has never been a better time for regional travel and tourism in a safe manner. The Australian Hotels Association have advised that for the Central Coast all weekend accommodation in the lead up to Christmas, as well as all accommodation over the Christmas period, is currently very near or at capacity.

**Strategic Approach to Tourism Attraction**

Central Coast Council has a Tourism Opportunity Plan 2019-2024 (TOP) that provides strategic direction to guide tourism and the opportunities it creates for the Central Coast. The TOP recognises the strengths of the region and seeks greater efforts to capitalise on these for the sustainability of tourism for the Central Coast economy. The key challenges and opportunities have been identified and consideration given to the current tourism market, consumer research and product review for the Central Coast; alongside global tourism trends, tourism-sector specific research and market behaviours. Opportunities for future tourism capital investment and product development are identified. Consultation was undertaken to develop this TOP, including with business owners, regional and community organisations and Central Coast Council employees. The TOP also draws on Central Coast Council key strategies and plans, including the strategic priorities for economic development and those in the Central Coast Destination Management Plan 2018-2021.

The allocated \$800,000 tourism management budget comprises of staff costs, digital and creative marketing programs, media buy and tourism industry services.

**Tourism Attraction Campaigns/Action**

Council's Marketing and Tourism team are rolling out a number of large scale, high impact campaigns and initiatives over the coming months to harness the opportunity at hand for the Central Coast, particularly focused on:

- Targeted Campaign: in market in Sydney and surrounding areas is the 'Have A Little Adventure' campaign, which was launched on 15 August and will run until 16 October 2020. The campaign's total estimated reach is 4+ million (Out of home advertising on billboards 3+ million, TV - 600,000 estimated views and digital advertising reach 250,000). This campaign was developed by The Affinity Partnership prior to their contract ending on 30 June 2020 with matching investment allocated by the local Tourism industry.
- Destination Brand Campaign: The Central Coast's new destination brand is now in market, with Phase 1 of the national rollout launching in July via a paid content campaign across a range of publications including Sitchu, Hunter Hunter, Concrete Playground and TimeOut. The out of home advertising campaign will launch across the Central Coast region on 14 September and run until 18 January 2021, to drive brand ownership amongst residents and leverage the high volume of visitors in region during this time. Phase 2 of the national rollout will commence from November 2020 with a paid content and influencer campaign, developed in conjunction with Destination NSW.
- Public Relations: Tourism and destination brand activities will continue as an "always on" initiative, effectively driven through digital marketing via social media channels. The efforts continue to be a highly valuable activity for our region, with recent dedicated articles in national publications including Vogue and Vogue Living, a dedicated episode on Landline featuring Pearls of Australia, a dedicated Today Show episode in partnership with Destination NSW (300,000 viewer reach) which was at no cost to Council other than internal resource. The region has also secured an upcoming dedicated episode on Better Homes and Gardens featuring a diverse range of tourism operators including Grace Springs Farm, Pearls of Australia and Distillery Botanica/Bar Botanica.
- To drive visitation beyond 2020, Council has committed budget to significant buy ins on two upcoming Destination New South Wales campaigns, with planning currently underway.
  - The 'Now's The Time To Love NSW' Campaign Media and Editorial Partnership will roll out from late Summer to drive visitation across the traditionally slower Autumn and Winter seasons.
  - Destination NSW and Newcastle Airport cooperative marketing campaign rolling out in early 2021 pending COVID situation in interstate markets.

Council is also focused on driving local spend amongst residents and business. The Marketing and Tourism, Communications and Economic Development teams are currently working together to activate a "Shop Local" campaign as a follow on to the "Love Local" campaign launched during COVID restrictions, to drive local spend amongst residents. Currently 556 Central Coast businesses have signed up and pledged to spend a combined total of \$28.23million locally across the year. The three-fold economic impact (multiplier effect) is \$84.69 million for the year.

**Gateway Entries to the Central Coast, Litter Collection and Amenities**

In relation to 'gateway entries' to the Central Coast, road verges and the like, Council manages litter and vegetation along road verges with a particular focus on high priority selected roadsides and entry areas, including, but not limited to, the Pacific Highway from Gwandalan to Ourimbah, Central Coast Highway from Doyalson to West Gosford, Wyong Road, Sparks Road, Terrigal Drive and Avoca Drive. The current resource allocation allows for one visit every six to eight weeks for tasks including litter collection, mowing and vegetation maintenance.

There are a number of road verges, including State roads (freeway access points and the like) that fall within the remit of Transport for NSW (TfNSW). Council Chief Executive Officer and Director Roads Transport Drainage and Waste meet with representatives from TfNSW on a quarterly basis. The matter of vegetation maintenance around State Roads at specific entry points has been raised formally in this meeting. A letter on this issue to TfNSW can be arranged on the matter.

In relation to litter collection, waste and bins at parks and reserves, Council's Open Space Team provides litter collection and maintenance services for these locations, including general maintenance and cleaning of public BBQ's and other such activities. During peak holiday periods there are increased litter collection regimes at all high usage parks 7 days a week.

In relation to public amenities, Council's current service for the cleaning of public toilets ranges from daily to three times a week by Council staff and various contract cleaners.

**Waste Collection**

Although public litter bins on occasions can overflow and be detrimental to the visitor's experience, the frequency this occurs is relatively low and is usually caused by genuinely unforeseen events such as a large family gathering or party in a park, or sometimes as a result of general waste being placed in the bins by businesses/residents.

During last summer Council serviced approximately 2,500 public waste bins, which were emptied over 10,500 times per week. During the same period, we received and attended only eight reported cases of overflowing bins. Each instance of reported overflow was attended to either the same day as reported or at the latest, the following day. It is also worth noting that in most instances, there were other waste bins nearby the overflowing bin that had capacity and were not being utilised.

Council staff and its collection contractor, Cleanaway Pty Ltd, continually monitor the service levels across our public place litter infrastructure and adapt the services where issues occur and/or efficiencies can be made. Our ability to readily adapt was fully tested at the start of our 2020 winter service schedule, when the normal reduction in service was reversed within one week of implementation, due to increased patronage from warm weather and the reduction in COVID-19 restrictions during April.

As warmer weather approaches, we have already planned and brought forward some of our increased summer service schedules, as we project a larger than normal increase in local visitor numbers due to restrictions on interstate and international travel. Council staff will continue to closely monitor patronage and adapt the public waste services as required throughout this unique and unknown period.

### **Opportunity to Increase Levels of Service**

The services mentioned above, including roadside litter collection/maintenance, toilet cleaning and the like are budgeted in a similar manner to previous years based on historical needs and requirements. Any increase in service and demand will need additional budget and resourcing.

### **Link to Community Strategic Plan**

Theme 1: Belonging

#### **Goal B: Creativity connection and local identity**

B4: Activate spaces and places to complement activity around town centres, foreshores, lakes and green spaces for families, community and visitors.