

**REPORT TITLE: 7.7 GENERAL MANAGER'S DIRECTORATE: MONTHLY REPORT FOR MAY 2022**

**ECM INDEXES:**

**Subject Index: CORPORATE MANAGEMENT: Reporting**

**Customer Index: NIL**

**Property Index: NIL**

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**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this report is to provide information on the progress made within the General Manager's Directorate for the month of May 2022.

**RECOMMENDATION**

*That Council notes the information contained within this report.*

**REPORT**

**(a) Background**

The General Manager's Directorate is currently responsible for the following key functions:

- Economic Development;
- Media and Communications;
- Executive Services;
- Councillor Services;

**(b) Discussion**

This report details all the major projects and activities that were undertaken in the General Manager's Directorate for the month of May 2022.

The following projects/activities were undertaken within each department of the General Manager's Directorate:

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

- The Highlands Hub co-working space fit out has recommenced and is tracking well for a new target opening date of 1 September 2022. The **Community and Business Engagement Officer (CBEO)** and **Manager of Economic Development (MED)** are the project managers. Council is now awaiting the outcome of a further grant application for the re-design and upgrade of the electricity to enable additional capacity and heating to be installed;
- The Highlands Hub digital platform had to be migrated at short notice to a new production server as Localised (the platform developer) wound down the company. Council will need to re-build the platform into the Glen Innes Highlands website at a later date;
- The Skywalk Geotourism visitor experience design, production and delivery has been procured to deliver hyperlocal mapping technology with audio and **Augmented Reality (AR)**. A partnership with Naveze, Production Group and Cutting Edge industry innovators and leaders will deliver 22 audio stories, 360 degree drone footage with AR integrated into a hyper-local mapping platform;
- REMPLAN completed the analysis and report on local economic leakage which is presented to Council in a separate report to this meeting;
- The MED and **Tourism and Events Officer (TEO)** attended the **Destination Management Plan (DMP)** workshop in Armidale hosted by **Destination Marketing Store (DMS)** who were engaged to deliver this project for Destination Country and Outback NSW. The MED subsequently provided existing plans and priorities to be included in the regional DMP;
- A Councillor workshop was conducted on 11 May 2022 by the MED on Geotourism and the Housing Assessment and Draft Housing Strategy. The latter is re-presented to Council in a separate report to this meeting;
- The **Powerhouse Museum (PM) Expression of Interest (EOI)** to purchase or lease the Essential Energy Building was submitted by the deadline of 12 May 2022;
- The MED presented to the **General Managers Advisory Group (GMAC)** on Geotourism and the **Tourism Itinerary and Packages Platform (TIPP)** on 16 May 2022;
- The MED and the TEO attended the Local Government NSW Destination and Visitor Economy conference in Orange, cementing confidence in our DMP and the TIPP which can achieve more than the featured Orange360 [www.orange360.com.au](http://www.orange360.com.au) destination management platform. A report to Council is planned for July 2022 to consider investing in the TIPP;
- The MED proposed to the **Bushfire Local Economic Recovery Fund (BLER)** that the **New England Rail Trail (NERT)** funding deed and activity schedule be adjusted to enable **Public Works Advisory (PWA)** to commence prior to the next key activities of the Act of Parliament and the Construction licencing agreement with **Transport for NSW (TfNSW)**;

- The Minerama **Annual General Meeting (AGM)** did not return a committee – another AGM is scheduled for 1 June 2022. The MED provided an alternative operating model approach for the section 355 Committee to be disbanded and for Council to take responsibility for the event with the former committee members assisting as volunteers – a very similar approach taken by **Australian Celtic Festival (ACF)** when the festival became too complex and cumbersome for a volunteer committee;
- The **Glen Innes Highlands (GIH)** brand guideline update project progressed with the **Marketing Assistant (MA)** appointing KEO to deliver the project on Thursday, 19 May 2022;
- The GIH ad features in the winter edition of the Granite Belt Magazine;
- The MA continued to work with the **New England High Country (NEHC)** tourism group, appointing an agency to manage maintenance of the NEHC website, and delivering the NEHC Brand and Soundtrails campaign report (**Annexure B**) to Walcha Council to aid in the grant acquittal report for the Soundtrails project;
- Council’s grant application under Destination NSW’s Flagship Event Fund of the 2022 Regional Event Fund in support of marketing initiatives for Minerama was successful for the 2023 event;
- The MA distributed the ACF visitor survey via ACF and GIH channels on Thursday, 30 May 2022, to assist with the event debrief.
- The **Visitor Information Centre (VIC)** saw a decline in visitor numbers, 1,268 (with April numbers high due to the ACF), however, still an increase from the past quarter (average monthly visitors for the past quarter was 1,029). Sales were strong for May, remaining above the monthly sales target \$10,884.76 (monthly target \$9,920); and
- The total approved grant applications year-to-date is \$14,101,465 (**Annexure A**).

**MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT**

The number of ‘Page Likes’ on the Glen Innes Severn Council Facebook page as at the end of May 2022 were 2,191. There were 43 posts during May.

The most popular posts for the month are provided in the table below:

<b>The Most Popular Facebook Posts for May 2022:</b>	<b>Reach</b>	<b>Post Engagement</b>
Trees down due to storms	22,271	1,707
Plastic bags banned from next week	3,058	434
What cannot be recycled	2,454	222

It is noted that posts with the **highest % of engagement** (which indicates public interest) were posts and pictorials on the weather affecting roadworks, roadside dumping of rubbish and the “want to buy a bridge” post.

**Media activity of interest:**

- Budget newsletter completed and distributed; budget and long term planning – media;

- Large number of public exhibitions;
- Three (3) social media/media campaigns – roadworks (delays and size of problem due to ongoing weather), recycling, dumping of rubbish;
- Water meter maintenance/reading; going cashless; Family Fun Day; road closures; Federal election; community event assistance; s.355 committees; infrastructure customer service; plastics bans;
- Assist LC-SS with posters and newsletter; and
- Review/contribute to various policy/strategy documents.

### **Live Streaming of Council Meetings**

Council is Live Streaming monthly Council meetings and statistics are being received from InterStream on the number of views. For the May 26, 2022 Ordinary Council Meeting, there were a total of 22 live views and 37 archive views.

### **EXECUTIVE SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

The General Manager attended the following meetings / events during the month of May 2022:

- Community Safety Precinct Committee Meeting – New England Police District in Inverell on Wednesday, 4 May 2022;
- Local Government Professionals NSW Board Meeting in Sydney on Thursday, 5 May 2022;
- Local Government Professionals NSW Strategic Planning Day in Sydney on Friday, 6 May 2022;
- General Managers' Advisory Committee Meeting in Inverell on Monday, 16 May 2022;
- Local Government Awards Dinner in Sydney on Thursday, 26 May 2022;
- Country Mayors Association Meeting in Sydney on Friday, 27 May 2022; and
- New England Joint Organisation Meeting in Armidale on Monday, 30 May 2022.

### **COUNCILLOR SERVICES DEPARTMENT**

The following services have been provided to the Councillors during May 2022:

- Travel and accommodation bookings for the Country Mayor's Association Meeting to be held in Sydney on 27 May 2022;
- Travel and accommodation bookings for the 2022 National General Assembly to be held in Canberra from Saturday, 18 June 2022 until Wednesday, 22 June 2022; and
- Extension of invitations to Councillors to multiple events via calendar appointments (including celebrations, official openings and announcements from Members of Parliament).

**(c) Options**

Nil.

**IMPLICATIONS TO BE ADDRESSED**

**(a) Financial**

Nil.

**(b) Governance/Policy**

Nil.

**(c) Legislative/Statutory**

Nil.

**(d) Risk**

Nil.

**(e) Social**

Nil.

**(f) Environmental**

Nil.

**(g) Economic**

Nil.

**(h) Asset Management**

Nil.

**CONSULTATION**

**(a) External**

Nil.

**(b) Internal**

The Manager of Economic Development and the Media and Communications Officer provided information contained in this report for their respective areas.

**LINK/S TO THE DELIVERY PROGRAM/OPERATIONAL PLAN (DPOP)**

The statistical information contained within this report demonstrates the work carried out by staff in achieving the strategic objectives and delivery actions as outlined in Council's Community Strategic Plan 2017/2027, Delivery Program 2017/2021 and Operational Plan and Budget for the 2020/2021 Financial Year.

**CONCLUSION**

The information provided in this report is a summary up of everything that has occurred in the General Manager's Directorate for the month of May 2022.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Annexure A Grants and Funding  
Annexure B NEHC Brand and Soundtrails Campaign Report