

## Item 13.3 Growth & Strategy Activities

**Reporting:** Growth & Strategy Manager – Helen Thomas

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### **SUMMARY:**

The purpose of this report is to inform Council of the Growth & Strategy activities for January 2022.

### **DISCUSSION:**

#### **Tourism**

##### Visitor Survey

Collection of data for the King Island Visitor Survey recommenced at the beginning of January. Running on a rolling 8-day basis, every passenger of a scheduled flight departing King Island is invited to complete the survey. Analysis of this data, compared to the five years of data collected to March 2020, will assist current and potential tourism operators and other stakeholders in making informed decisions about investment in and support of King Island.

##### Interstate visitors return

As reported in December 2021, reopening the interstate borders had a positive effective on forward bookings for the Island's tourism operators with a real feeling in the industry that the worst was behind us. An outbreak of COVID over the New Year led to an unfortunate statement from Tasmanian Public Health advising that unnecessary travel to King Island be avoided. The impact on tourism operators was instant and severe, with a number of individual businesses reporting lost income in the tens of thousands of dollars within a few days of the statement.

Forward bookings had recovered somewhat by the end of January, but January and February bookings were still far below those in place pre-Christmas. Council and KITI are lobbying state government for a support package specific to King Island, noting that the Public Health advice to avoid travel was not issued for any other community within Tasmania that reported COVID outbreaks.

At the time of writing, Premier Gutwein had just announced that the State Government underwrite of the Hobart <> King Island flights would be extended to the end of December 2022 and that a King Island-specific tourism support package would be announced in the coming days.

##### Opening the Gate

Opening the Gate is a new initiative to help farmers, food producers and existing agritourism businesses to explore and embrace new agritourism opportunities to diversify, value add and connect with visitors. The project team are building on the success of *Regionality's* Agritourism Business Development Program, Australia's longest running and successful capacity building and business mentoring program. It delivers a range of



support for new participants to agritourism, as well as existing agritourism businesses throughout Tasmania.

The project team will be visiting King Island in the week of 4 April to raise awareness of the opportunity and invite existing and potential agritourism operators to register for a week of intensive masterclasses in mid-May. Council will be working with our Regional Tourism Organisation, West by North West, to contact agricultural and tourism businesses and encourage them to participate.

## **Economic Development**

### Regional Jobs Hub

The first ordinary meeting of the West North West Regional Jobs Hub Board was held in the third week of January and is already planning its work to increase participation in employment, education and training on the West and North West Coasts and King Island. The group is really passionate about our mission. A Program Manager has been appointed and is getting out into the region to listen to what stakeholders need, joining the dots between existing services, programs and organisations. Plans for a visit to King Island in the coming weeks are being discussed, with the expectation that key stakeholders will be invited to attend group and individual meetings within the next couple of months.

### Regional Connectivity Grants Program

Council have been in regular communication with Telstra, State Government and our Federal Parliament representative regarding progress of the \$9.6M King Island Telecommunications Transformation Project. During January, Council was advised that grant deeds with the Federal and State Governments were approaching finalisation, with a hope that these will be fully executed by the end of February. Advice from Telstra is that the project will commence soon after the grant deeds are in place, and will be completed within 2 years from that date.

### King Island Hub

A project brief and outline of planned milestones has been submitted to the grant administrators at the Community Development Grants Program office. This has been processed through the team and submitted to the Deputy Prime Minister's Office for final approval. Once that approval is formally provided, a draft grant deed will be issued to Council for execution.



## Community Development

### Safeguarding Volunteering

Late January saw the delivery of training by Volunteering Tas on the process of co-design in projects developing strategies and action plans. Co-design is a framework / model that engages people who are either impacted by or have direct experience with an issue alongside professionals/technical experts to design a solution. The training was very valuable and aided by the involvement of the Community Development team from Break O'Day Council who are also conducting the Safeguarding Volunteering project in their municipality this year.

A representative from Volunteering Tas will be on the Island in early February to provide some information on the Safeguarding Volunteering project and encourage interested community members to express an interest in being part of the team that will co-design a King Island Volunteer Strategy. A follow-up visit in early March will include the initial meeting of the Co-Design Team.

### Strategy for Older Tasmanians 2023-29

The Tasmanian Council on the Aging (COTA) have been engaged by State Government to conduct community consultation around an Active Aging Strategy for the state. They want to hear how you stay Healthy, Engaged and Resilient as you age. As part of this they have developed a short survey to reach as many Tasmanians as possible, alongside holding in person events and activities with community partners across the state.

Initial plans included a visit to King Island to coincide with the King Island Show. Since the unfortunate postponement of that event, COTA's visit to King Island has also been delayed. Information on how King Island residents, organisations and other stakeholders can participate in this ongoing consultation and access the short survey noted above will be shared through Council's Facebook page and website and other media as appropriate. A visit to the Island is anticipated for April or May of this year for face-to-face consultation.

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

The activities detailed above are included within approved operational budgets, except where indicated otherwise.

### **Recommendation:**

**That Council receive and note the Growth & Strategy Manager Activities Report for January 2022.**



Moved Cr D McFie  
Cr T Clemons

That Council receive and note the Growth & Strategy Manager Activities Report for January 2022.

**CARRIED unanimously**

27/22

Mayor J Arnold

Advised that she had raised a formal complaint to Michael Patterson on Telstra services on the island.

The response received, suggested that everyone moves to Satellite NBN. The formal response will be put on Council's Website.

Cr T Clemons

Will the visitor survey results be presented in these reports?

Growth & Strategy Manager

Yes, this could be reported on a quarterly basis.

