



BUSINESS PAPER

19 July 2016

Attachments for information

- **Item 9.4 - Investigation into Locations for a Visitor Information Centre McCann Park Options (Revised – July 2016)**

NOTICE TO ALL COUNCILLORS

REPORT ON VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE LOCATIONS

The report in the July Council Business Paper regarding VIC locations was prepared based on my interpretation of the resolution carried by council at the Extraordinary Meeting held on 5th April 2016 and which was subsequently adopted as a true record at the April Ordinary meeting of council. The resolution, reproduced below, in my opinion clearly indicates that the general manager is to identify and cost other options for VIC services **to be provided from McCann Park.**

04042016 RESOLVED on the motion of Cr Hampton seconded Cr Monaghan that Council defer a decision on the site for delivering VIC services to the public until the July 2016 meeting and in the interim the General Manager identify and cost other options for VIC services to be provided from McCann Park.

However, the Mayor has a different interpretation which is that the general manager was to report on all possible options for a VIC including the previous Expressions of Interest, Cafe Peckish, McCann Park and the Library. I also understand that Councillor Hampton has now indicated that this was the intent of her motion.

As I have indicated in my report to the July council meeting, apart from the mayor the only councillor to have any discussions with me on this matter was councillor Lord.

Consequently, in the interest of maintaining harmony and providing the councillors with as much information as possible on this issue I have reproduced extracts from some of my earlier reports on this subject. In respect to the EOI's I have deleted the amounts being offered as they still constitute information of a confidential nature. I have however provided a separate page with those amounts but only for the information of councillors.

I will be contacting each of the three (3) applicants prior to the meeting to ensure that they are all still interested in running the VIC as per their EOI.

Splatter Gallery and Art Studio - This EOI involves the VIC operating from the existing Gallery and Studio at 192 Main Street and the proprietor, Claire Cummins, becoming the manager of the VIC. The EOI covers all of the criteria that were identified as being necessary for the successful operation of a VIC from the premises of a local business.

Gary and Caroline Shaw - This EOI involves the VIC operating from within the existing building at 146 Main Street and the owners, Gary and Caroline Shaw becoming the managers of the VIC. The EOI covers all of the criteria that were identified as being necessary for the successful operation of a VIC from the premises of a local business.

Council may have concerns about access to public conveniences but given the statistics from the VIC since operating in the Library there are few visitors that are specifically looking for toilet facilities.

West Wyalong Services & Citizens Club – This EOI involves the VIC operating from the existing Club premises in Monash Street.

The three (3) EOI's do not take into account any initial fit out costs which could range anywhere from \$50,000.00 to \$150,000.00.

The other options available to council for the location of a VIC include McCann Park and the Library.

McCann Park – Cafe Peckish – Discussions with Kurrajong Waratah reveal that while they believe that co-locating a VIC next to Cafe Peckish has many benefits they are not interested in managing or operating a VIC. Consequently, if council was to choose this location there would be immediate capital costs involved in the extension and fit out of the existing cafe facilities estimated at **\$495,000.00** with an annual cost of **\$180,000.00**

Bland Shire Library – Councillors will be well aware that the current VIC has been operating from the Library for over the past 5 years on a 5 ½ day week basis and more recently from October 2015 on a 7 day per week basis.

The estimated costs of retaining the VIC within the Library are as follows:

A contribution to the annual cleaning, maintenance and utilities = **\$5,000.00 p.a.**

Staffing costs for 2 FTE on weekends = **\$50,000.00 p.a.**

Contribution to staffing costs throughout the week = **\$15,000.00**

The fit out is significantly less because of the limited space = **\$50,000.00**

Initial first 12 months = \$120,000.00

Annual Running Costs - \$70,000.00