



RECORD OF NTIG MONTHLY MEETING

Held: Thursday, 1 August 2019 – 7.30am -9am

Venue: Travelodge Newcastle

Chairperson: Kent Warren

Minutes: Amy De Lore

ATTENDEES: Stewart Ford (Fordtronic Investments), Fiona Okpalogu (Rydges Newcastle), Greg Frame (Frame Promotional Products), Jake Sondaar (Rydges), Amy De Lore (Hunter Business Chamber), Renee Cross (Best Western Plus Apollo International), Rob Fahey (Holiday Inn Express Newcastle), Brooke Palamo (Holiday Inn Express Newcastle), Chelsea Smailes (Holiday Inn Express), Elyss Larkham (Oakvale Wildlife Park), Debra Mackenzie (Quality Hotel Noahs on the Beach), Matthew Kent (Rydges Newcastle), Kate Jeffery (City of Newcastle), Kent Warren (Novotel Newcastle), Gwendalyn Burt (Hunter Business Chamber), Greg Frame (Frame Promotions). Dennis Parker (Luxlift Airport Transport).

APOLOGIES: Jim Garis, Colin Law,

- **MEETING OPEN**

Meeting commenced 8.07am

- **REGIONAL TOURISM AWARDS**

Kent congratulated Noah's and HBC on successful event. Had good feedback. Great to see we can put on an event like that at short notice and have it well-supported. Intending to have discussions with HBC and Will Creedon about hosting another event towards the end of the year. Looking for a high-profile guest speaker such as Bob East (Tourism Australia) or Tourism Minister Stuart Ayres.

Kent said events like this will help put Newcastle and the Hunter in the sights of leading national tourism stakeholders, and members get the benefit of hearing from them.

- **HOTEL DEMAND**

Kent reported that occupancy in the CBD had increased by 2.7% to 75% according to STR (Hotel data warehouse) year over year figures for July. This was a good result given the extra hotels coming into the market.

- **HBC ALLIANCE**

Kent reported that he had met with Bob Hawes and Amy De Lore from HBC to formalise the arrangement for Hunter Business Chamber to provide administrative support. Bob is preparing a service agreement to set out the T&Cs.

Kent said alignment with HBC would give NTIG extra capacity in areas like networking, advocacy and events.

Gwendalyn Burt, a Business Solutions Executive from HBC, explained that becoming aligned with HBC gives NTIG members access to some of the benefits of a HBC membership, including some advice line calls. HBC will put together and outline of what members can access through the alliance and distribute it to the mailing list.

- **COUNCIL BUSINESS RATES LEVY**

Kent discussed opportunities to fund activities to support tourism through the Council's new program of contestable funding from business levies. EOIs have been called for the first allocation under this new system, with applications closing on August 9.

Kent spoke about the need to work more closely with Council to understand and be aware of opportunities and to be able to provide input into policies and strategies such as the new Destination Management Plan.

Kent recently met with Kathleen Hyland, who has oversight of tourism and events and discussed opportunities for businesses to leverage off the Council's planned new website and other opportunities to have input.

- **AUCKLAND FLIGHTS**

Kent welcomed the announcement of direct seasonal flights to Auckland for the next three years.

- **SUPERCARS**

General discussion about Supercars. Members noted that there is less hype this year; accommodation bookings are tracking OK but there is some concern that local people are less interested – the 'novelty' may have worn off. Further discussion about planned activities outside of the precinct. Kate Jeffery from Council said Council would have an activation plan.

The meeting decided to invite a Council representative to address the next meeting about Supercars opportunities and activation plans.

- **CRUISE TERMINAL**

Question was asked about the status of negotiations over the cruise terminal. Kent said the working party had not met since the last NTIG meeting. Discussion is continuing at that level around how the region can demonstrate that a cruise industry is sustainable. Home porting is potentially more lucrative for the region and would create more opportunity but we have to establish that there is demand from the cruise lines. The Port is not actively seeking expansion of the cruise schedule.

- **AIRPORT RUNWAY UPGRADE**

Amy De Lore provided an update on expansion plans in and around the Airport. An announcement by the State Government of a Special Activation Precinct at Williamstown is expected soon. As an SAP, Williamstown will be targeted for infrastructure investment and approvals processes will be expedited. A business case is also under way for the runway upgrade and HBC provided input into that process.

- **MEETING CLOSE**

Kent thanked Travelodge for hosting and closed the meeting at 8.55am

- **NEXT MEETING**

5 September, Novotel

Committee Members Contact Information

FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	ROLE	EMAIL	PHONE
Kent	Warren	Chairman	kent.warren@accor.com	0429 202 028
Stewart	Ford	Secretary/ Public Officer	stewart.fordtronic@gmail.com	0414 685 094
Colin	Law	Treasurer	colin.law@cba.com.au	0406 991 502
Tegan	Hughes	Committee	tegan.hughes@keolisdowner.com.au	0400 262 085
Jim	Garis	Committee	jim@garis.com.au	0414 526 487
Paul	O'Rourke	Committee	paul.orourke@ncyc.net.au	0413 416 521
Fiona	Okpalogu	Committee	fiona_okpalogu@evt.com	0402 180 790