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# RECORD OF NTIG MONTHLY MEETING

**Held:** Thursday, 3 October – 7.30am -9am

**Venue:** Noah's on the Beach

**Chairperson**: Fiona Okpalogu

**Minutes:** Sue Elvers

**ATTENDEES:** Stewart Ford (Fordtronic Investments), Fiona Okpalogu (Rydges Newcastle), Gwendalyn Burt (Hunter Business Chamber), Anita Monticone (City of Newcastle), Hannah Davis (Pineapple Pedals Bike Tours), Jake Reff (Noah's on the Beach), Cassie Beatty (Best Western Apollo International), Debera MacKenzie (Noah's), Moira Kemmis (Newcastle Herald), Meraj Kham (Newcastle Herald), Robin Lee (BWP Apollo International Hotel), Mel Turner (Moonshadow TQC Cruises), Melissa Archer (The Business Club), Elyss Larkham (Oakvale Wildlife Park), Ashleigh Martin ( Holiday Inn Express), Chelsea Smaites (Holiday Inn Express), Matthew Kent ( Rydges Newcastle), Jim Garis (NTIG), Kate Jeffery (City of Newcastle), Colin Law (NTIG).

**APOLOGIES:** Kent Warren, Dennis Parker

- **MEETING OPEN**

Meeting commenced 7.45am.

- **PRESENTATION – ANITA MONTICONE, DESTINATION MARKETING OFFICER, CITY OF NEWCASTLE**

Anita provided members with an update on a number of Council tourism matters and initiatives. Key points to come out of the presentation were as follows.

1. City Guide launched last week and was well received, need reprint already. Will do more just before Super Cars and Anita asked members to send through feedback.
2. Thank you to everyone who attended the Destination Management Planning Workshops. Two Industrial Workshops and two Internal Workshops were held. A good turnout at both and Anita also requested any feedback would be appreciated. The first draft of the Business Plan will be available in November.

3. The Super Car forum was held in September and the Newcastle Programme will be rolled out in the next couple of weeks.
4. Delegation has just returned from New Zealand. A delegate from Port Stephens Council, the Airport, Hunter Wine and Food Association and Anita from Newcastle City Council. Attended a two day seminar with Flight Centre. The purpose of the visit was to development relationships with House of Travel, Flight Centre etc
5. Monopoly is being launched 10am Thursday 10th October at Nobbys Beach.

- **PRESENTATION – KATE BENNETT, NEWCASTLE AIRPORT**

1. Main priority is the Newcastle to Auckland seasonal service. The Airport has signed a three year contract with Virgin Australia to run from November to February but the intention is to extend the flights until they become a year round service.
2. Last year saw 60% VFR travellers and a similar trend is showing this year and on average are staying 17 nights in the region.
3. Last year saw 40% of New Zealand holiday makers visiting the Hunter Region for the first time.
4. Last year the split was 70% outbound and 30% inbound and so far this year it is showing 80% outbound and 20% inbound. This year will concentrate on a $50,000 targeted campaign for inbound travel to increase the percentages.
5. Ticket sales are up 100% on last year. Working closely with Flight Centre, House of Travel and Destination Sydney Surrounds North on promotion.
6. Runway update – the Airport is working hard to obtain a Code E Status which allows large planes to land and will change the Airport by allow longer flights eg to America. Defence is upgrading the runway at the end of 2020. There is only a small window of opportunity to establish this, if the Airport misses the boat it is another 15 years.

- **PRESENTATION – MELISSA ARCHER, BUSINESS ADVISOR, THE BUSINESS CENTRE**

1. Provides business support through Government Funding, both State and Government Funding. The Business Centre has 12 Business Advisors with backgrounds in Accounting, Marketing and HR etc so can offer a range of different support to businesses.
2. Identify gaps in businesses,
   - Marketing Plan
   - Develop Business Plan
   - Building On line presence
   - Build Relationships
3. Business Connect is a State Government Funded Programme is the main resource the Business Centre use. It entitles businesses to four sessions that are completely subsidised. I the business wishes to continue after the four sessions they can get an additional 6 hours for $120, which is also very heavily subsided.
4. Also use the Niece Programme and Start House which is for businesses that are starting out.
5. Offer support to those businesses affected during the Super Car period.

- **GENERAL BUSINESS**

  Hannah Davis mentioned she is a new tourism business and has just got approval to operate from the Station. Her business is called Pineapple Pedals and the operate 10-2 and 3-7.

  Meeting closed at 8.50am.

## NEXT MEETING

7th November, Holiday Inn Express Newcastle, 514 King Street Newcastle NSW 2302

***Committee Members Contact Information***

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