

INQUIRY INTO TOURISM IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Organisation: Gloucester Shire Council

Date received: 29/06/2013

Gloucester Shire Council is pleased to make the following submission to the Inquiry into tourism in local communities.

1. The NSW Visitor Economy Taskforce report, released in August 2012, recommended that we should be addressing the Visitor Economy rather than using the term tourism. This report is nearly 200 pages long, has 48 recommendations and 171 proposed actions. The General Purpose Standing Committee No 3 has made no reference to that document. ROI is often difficult to quantify as the Visitor Economy is measured in different ways, and the benefits are not always tangible.
2. Value of the Visitor Economy to regional, rural & coastal communities is huge in terms of improved infrastructure which is also beneficial to the community, and bringing outside dollars into the community. As a result of the Tourism Research Australia (TRA) statistics being continually questioned within our community, we will be undertaking our own research on the financial benefits.
3. The Visitor economy impacts on Local Government Areas:
 - a) Infrastructure services provision and asset management – maybe public/private partnerships could be investigated in more detail where relevant.
 - b) Social impacts. The Visitor Economy provides social benefits in terms of longer opening hours of shops, greater variety of eating places, more employment opportunities, continued improvement of parks, gardens, road networks and the opportunity of greater exposure to different cultures.
 - c) Unregulated tourism – Gloucester is an area where visitors can participate in unregulated activities quite readily, e.g. kayaking, camping (Bretti, Gloryvale & Copeland). For that reason we are perceived as a family friendly, cost effective destination. Whilst having accredited tourism operations within the area is recognised as highly desirable, it is also advantageous for our visitors to have a choice in terms of what they can afford to do.
 - d) Employment opportunities – A labour intensive industry with the capacity for rapid up skilling means that there are many employment opportunities within Gloucester.
 - e) Utilisation of special rate variations to support local tourism initiatives – Whilst there are clear benefits for Councils to impose rate variations, this could negatively impact on our ability to collect membership dollars within the VIC and ultimately our ability to market Gloucester as a destination.
 - f) A Destination Management Plan has been developed which addresses many of the issues raised within this inquiry. A copy of this plan is attached.

Thank you for the opportunity to have input to the inquiry.

Regards,

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General Manager

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