

**PRESENT**

**Members:**

Councillor Rob Turner (Chair)  
Beric Henderson (Community Representative)  
Chris Denny (Community Representative)  
Debbie Sommers (Community Representative)  
Marie Van Gend (Community Representative)  
Skye Petho (Community Representative)  
Stacey Morgan (Community Representative)  
Willhemina Wahlin (Community Representative)

**Other Attendees:**

Acting Director Strategy and Growth (Liesa Davies)  
Acting Group Manager Economic and Cultural Development (Amanda Hatton)  
Destination and Cultural Development Manager (Jane Ellis)  
Cultural Development Officer (Georgina Perri)  
Glasshouse Venue Manager (Pam Milne)

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The meeting opened at 8:02am.

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**01 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**

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The Acknowledgement of Country was delivered.

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**02 APOLOGIES**

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**CONSENSUS:**

That the apologies from Councillor Geoff Hawkins, Brian Barker and Wendy Haynes be accepted.

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### **03 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

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**CONSENSUS:**

That the Minutes of the Cultural Steering Group Meeting held on 7 October 2020 be confirmed.

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### **04 DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST**

There were no disclosures of interest presented.

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### **05 BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES**

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**CONSENSUS:**

That the Business Arising Schedule be noted with the following additional information:

- Item 09 - Draft Public Art Master Plan and the identification of priority sites and locations for future public artworks be discussed in General Business.
- A discussion on a Creative Hub, including requirements and management/operational model, will be tabled at a future meeting.
- A discussion on Port Macquarie Historic Courthouse Curtilage will be tabled at a future meeting.

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### **06 ARTWALK 2020**

The Acting Group Manager Economic and Cultural Development presented an overview on feedback received to date on the recent Artwalk 2020 event. The event, although presented differently due to COVID-19 restrictions, was considered a success by participating artists and visitors with over 100 venues participating in the Longest Footpath Gallery, 44 satellite events held and three Artists Markets taking place over the week-long event in Port Macquarie, Wauchope and the Camden Haven.

Whilst the one-night Artwalk event in Port Macquarie was unable to be held this year, comments from participants were that the longer event format allowed both participants and visitors the opportunity to take their time experiencing all the offerings across the region. Artists also commented that the longer format allowed for cross-discipline networking opportunities and interactions.

Cultural Steering Group members were asked to provide their feedback on the 2020 programming and approach and made the following comments:

- The week-long event allowed visitors to make their way around the event and the region, at their leisure.

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- Young children were inspired to create their own Artwalk installation at home.
  - The much loved one-night event was missed, but satellite events added a lot of value to the event.
  - CSU students participated in Lake Innes shopping precinct activations which was convenient as adjacent to the university.
  - Local business owners were positive about increased foot traffic during the event, but the full week was fatiguing for some and for their featured artists.
  - The October long weekend was good timing for visitors and a 3 - 4 day event would better sustain event momentum.

A full event debrief will be provided to the group at the December 2020 Cultural Steering Group meeting.

#### CONSENSUS:

That the Cultural Steering Group:

1. Note the COVID-safe ArtWalk 2020 was delivered successfully across the region between 1 - 8 October 2020.
2. Note a full event debrief report will be provided to the Group at the 2 December 2020 meeting.

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## **07 BICENTENARY WORKING GROUP UPDATE**

The Acting Group Manager Economic and Cultural Development provided an update on the Bicentenary Working Group's (BWG) planning for the 2021 Bicentenary celebrations.

At the BWG's September 2020 meeting, guest facilitator Rhonda Radley worked with the group in developing a culturally inclusive Vision for the week-long event. Discussions within the group unearthed the concept of 'walking this place together' as the overarching vision statement to aid the event programming and framework.

The current event program of COVID-safe activities to be held from the 10 - 18 April 2021 was outlined, consisting of a range of Council and Community coordinated events and offerings, along with discussion on other Bicentenary celebrations that will be delivered outside of the event period in celebration of the Bicentenary year.

It was noted that the centre piece of the program will be the launch of 'Lumiere' (working title), a 10-minute light and sound production of the history of Port Macquarie, to be projected on the Historic Courthouse building each evening. Other activities include an aquatics program on the Hastings River, a community art exhibition at the Glasshouse reflecting 'our place', creation of a digital education resource developed with local educators, development of local trails for food, wine, art and culture, the launch of the Wauchope Bicentenary Riverside Sculptural Trail, and the commission of a culturally appropriate public artwork for Town Green West. In addition, two applications were approved for funding through the PMHC Bicentenary Extra-Ordinary Grants Program for satellite events.

Further to the above, Council will soon call for additional community events to register for the Bicentenary program via an Expression of Interest process.

The group agreed that the diverse event program required broad communication and engagement to allow for successful participation, and encouraged Council to incorporate the local Aboriginal language of the Birpai people in the program and event promotion.

**CONSENSUS:**

That the Cultural Steering Group note:

1. The Bicentenary Working Group update on planning to mark the Port Macquarie-Hastings Bicentenary 2021.
  2. That an update report on the Event planning will be provided to the Ordinary meeting of Council on 18 November 2020.
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**08 PERFORMING ARTS DISCUSSION**

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The Acting Director Strategy and Growth lead a discussion around support and activations for the performing arts sector in forming COVID-19 recovery initiatives, including an alignment with findings and goals from the Cultural Economy Project.

It was noted that Glasshouse fees and charges have reduced to increase community hire and that a range of events and programming are to take place in the coming months. Planning is ongoing within Council's Events team for further Council and non-Council owned events that support performing artists which include an online Christmas performance production, a music event to be held by a local event owner in December and start-up events under Council's Event Sponsorship Program. Additionally, the Destination and Cultural Development team were planning delivery of a range of COVID-19 recovery programs for the local creative community.

The group were invited to provide some insights into what the needs may be for the revitalised future of the Performing Arts Sector in our region, with feedback being:

- A review of what local restrictions may be hindering nightlife and the local live music scene.
- A lack of accessible, affordable performance and rehearsal spaces for 'grassroots' emerging artists to gain live performance experience.
- Investigate performance opportunities at the CSU campus. Perhaps a lunchtime program or a 'Battle of the Bands' event.
- Opportunities were needed for cross-genre networking in the local performing arts scene.
- Investigate funding opportunities available for the creation and development of works by local commercial producers.

Marie van Gend also commented that there are a number of community choirs who are eager to rehearse and perform in venues in a COVID safe way across the entire region but the availability of venues has presented challenges.

**CONSENSUS:**

That the Cultural Steering Group:

1. Note the alignment of goals and strategies within the Cultural Economy Project that will
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- support the future growth of the performing arts sector;
2. Note current and future Council supported or led initiatives to support the revitalisation of the performing arts sector in the region.

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## **09 CULTURAL STEERING GROUP MEETING DATES FOR 2021**

The group agreed that when possible and safe to do so, meeting face to face in the new year was desirable. For the remainder of the year, meetings would remain virtual with a transition to face to face meetings in the new year.

In 2021, meetings will now take place on the last Wednesday of the month.

### **CONSENSUS:**

That the Cultural Steering Group members accept the proposed dates for the 2021 Cultural Steering Group meetings.

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## **10 GENERAL BUSINESS**

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### **10.01 PUBLIC ART - MASTER PLAN PRIORITY LOCATIONS**

Chris Denny commenced a discussion on the identification of future locations for public art across the region. Discussion was held around Development Contributions for public art and around which particular approach should be taken by Council when prioritising particular public art sites for inclusion in the Public Art Master Plan.

The group agreed that the selection of priority sites and the development of the draft Public Art Master Plan was a complex topic and required further discussions and deliberations by the Group at a future meeting.

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### **10.02 COUNCIL CULTURAL GRANTS RECENTLY AWARDED**

Georgina Perri, Cultural Development Officer, reported on Council's Community Grants program. Recently reviewed, the Community Grants program now included a Cultural Grants stream. Three applications were successful in the first funding round and the Group will be kept up to date on the projects as they progress.

The meeting closed at 9:32am.