

11.3 McLaren Vale And Fleurieu Visitors Centre Update

Update on Task Force investigations of scenarios for the future of the McLaren Vale and Fleurieu Visitors Centre.

This is an update on a previously reported project, concept or issue.

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Attachments: 1 (7 pages – Project Brief)

1 Executive Summary

1.1 Topic

Update on Task Force investigations of scenarios for the future of the McLaren Vale and Fleurieu Visitors Centre (MV&FVC).

1.2 Context

At the Special Council Meeting of 18 April 2007 Council resolved in confidence as follows:

That the Task Force continue to investigate scenarios and bring back a report to Council considering the following:

- The option for Council purchasing the subject land;
- Establishing the position of the South Australian Tourism Commission on visitor servicing and the role of the Fleurieu Visitors Centre;
- A comparative risk/benefit of any options; and
- Costings of the various scenarios.

The Task Force comprises representatives of Council (Brian Hales and Councillor David Arbon) and McLaren Vale Grape Wine and Tourism Association (MVGW&TA – Andrew Francis and Toby Bekkers) and Chaired by Allen Bolaffi (Partner UHY Haines Norton and member of Southern Adelaide Economic Development Board) and was established with the following tasks:

- Review of the use of the MV&FVC building and associated land; and
- Review of potential collaboration between MVGW&TA and Council.

1.3 Suggested Outcome

That Council receive and note the progress in the Task Force's investigations into scenarios for the future of the MV&FVC.

2 Recommendation(s)

1. That

a. under the provisions of Section 90(2) of the Local Government Act 1999 an order be made that the public be excluded from attendance at the meeting in order to consider in confidence this item.

b. the Council is satisfied that it is necessary that the public be excluded to enable the Council to consider the report at the meeting on the following grounds:

(b) information the disclosure of which -

(i) could reasonably be expected to confer a commercial advantage on a person with whom the council is conducting, or proposing to conduct, business, or to prejudice the commercial position of the council; and

(ii) would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest;

(d) commercial information of a confidential nature (not being a trade secret) the disclosure of which -

(i) could reasonably be expected to prejudice the commercial position of the person who supplied the information, or to confer a commercial advantage on a third party; and

(ii) would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest;

c. That accordingly, on this basis the principle that meetings of the Council should be conducted in a place open to the public has been outweighed by the need to keep the information or discussion confidential.

2. That Council receive and note the progress in the Task Force's investigations into scenarios for the future of the McLaren Vale & Fleurieu Visitors Centre.

3. That an order be made under the provisions of Section 91(7) and (9) of the Local Government Act 1999 that the abovementioned document (or part of such document) including the minutes and

the report of the Council relating to discussion of the subject matter of that document, having been dealt with on a confidential basis under Section 90 of the Act, should be kept confidential on the grounds of information contained in 90(3)(b), 90(3)(d) until the future of the McLaren Vale and Fleurieu Visitors Centre is resolved to the satisfaction of Council and the McLaren Vale Grape Wine and Tourism Association.

Key Factors

3 Discussion

Since the Council meeting the following actions have been taken:

- Discussions with the Fleurieu Food and Wine Industry Association (FFWIA) to determine their capacity to establish a Food and Wine Centre at the MV&FVC which would include the provision of visitor servicing in accordance with national visitor centre accreditation standards;
- Discussions with South Australian Tourism Commission (SATC) regarding:
 - Their view of Council owning the MV&FVC assets; and
 - Their capacity to assist Council in upgrading the assets.

SATC has received the proposition of Council ownership positively to the extent that they have committed \$250,000 for capital upgrade. This confirms the importance of the Centre in the provision of visitor servicing in the State.

- The preparation of a project brief by staff with the objective of determining the feasibility of Council purchasing the MV&FVC based on the provision of visitor servicing, food and wine centre and complementary services (primarily arts and culture). Refer attachment 1.
- The appointment of Rob Williamson, FPD Savills to undertake the feasibility study.
- Specification that the deliverables from the MV&FVC are:
 - Visitor information services in line with SATC requirements and national accreditation;
 - Destination marketing;
 - Integration of all regional product covering the whole of the City of Onkaparinga including coastal assets;
 - Food, wine, cultural experience as a product in its own right;

- Extension of the Fleurieu Peninsula Food Group objectives ie industry development, branding, capacity building;
- Sound governance; and
- Financially sustainable.

Preliminary findings of Rob Williamson

- Visitor servicing is the primary service upon which all other services should be based and developed.
- Food and wine is not the primary product in destination marketing to the region but it is recognised as one of the most significant (in a range of many).
- FFWIA, with its main charter being the development of food and wine experiences and industry development, is not considered to be the preferred governance model by which to operate the MV&FVC.
- A suggested governance model is the establishment of a subsidiary under the Local Government Act to utilise both industry and Council strengths.
- Council is the best placed organisation in the region to deliver visitor servicing based on that function having the capacity to embrace the entire Council area equitably.
- The Centre is a community asset which would provide a number of functions:
 - Visitor servicing;
 - Visitor experience;
 - Industry development; and
 - Community use.
- Preliminary estimates indicate that, should Council purchase the Centre, its annual financial commitment for operating is likely to be in the order of \$120,000.

It is proposed to present the Task Force deliberations to a Special Council meeting scheduled for 22 October 2007.