



15. Strategy & Governance Recommendation Report

Report Number	15.3 – Late Report
Subject	New Service Delivery Model - Visitor Information Centres
Author of report	David Beaton
People consulted	
Strategic Plan	2.3 Tourism – to have a vibrant and growing tourism industry 2.3.4 Advocate for, and provide, high quality infrastructure to support our local tourism industry. 4.3.1 Identify opportunities and initiatives to improve our communication and engagement with the community. 5.1.6 Encourage innovation, continuous improvement and efficiency. 5.1.9 Undertake organisational structure reviews to ensure we have the capacity to meet current and future demands.
Other document reference	
File Reference	
Financial implications	Cost saving of \$150,000
Risk/Asset Management	
Attachments	Nil
Expected outcomes:	
Economic	
Social	Increased level of service to the community
Environmental	
Recommendation	
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. That the late report entitled ‘New Service Delivery Model - Visitor Information Centres’ be received.2. That the Chief Executive Officer be authorised to trial the joint service model of operating the Visitor Information from the town libraries seven days per week from 1st April 2019.3. That salary savings be authorised to be invested in increased signage, training and tourism service improvements until the end of June 2019.	





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REPORT

The two managers of the Loxton Visitor Information Centre (VIC) are both retiring this month and the Waikerie VIC manager is contracted until the end of March at this stage. This represents an opportunity to review the way the service is delivered and increase the levels of service overall to the community, while still achieving efficiencies. My proposal is to move the visitor information service to the public library outlets in both Waikerie and Loxton. The increased use of digital information from apps including Trip Advisor and Google and Facebook has changed the reliance by visitors on the need for VIC's for explanations and awareness of local tourism product. The libraries are open 5 1/2 days per week.

This would mean that the Loxton outlet would close and move approximately 120 metres to the Library and the facility of Library/VIC would be open 7 days a week, giving residents greater access to the library. The Loxton library surrounds have been remodeled to include a bus parking bay that could become a short stay park for longer vehicles at other times; it has public toilets in the same building complex as the library.

The Waikerie VIC is currently in the Waikerie Civic Centre, in the space between the office and the library and would move 10 metres to the library. The Waikerie Library/VIC would also be open 7 days a week giving residents greater access to the library facilities. The Waikerie Civic Centre has great access for caravans and RV Parking.

Pros

- Increase the availability of the library service to seven days a week
- Still providing a visitor information service in the towns
- Reduced overall staff numbers
- Reduced cost to deliver tourism services
- Acceptance of the concept by library staff; many who have in depth knowledge of the districts and the region

Cons

- Need to train and upskill staff especially in the library service
- Need to provide increased signage for location and opening hours
- Time needed to settle the new service model before a review and evaluation of it meeting the objective goals.