

Minutes

Benalla Art Gallery Committee

Date: Tuesday 16 November 2021

Time: 5pm

Venue: Civic Centre (Council Meeting Room)
13 Mair Street, Benalla

and via Zoom

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Minutes

Chair	Barbara Alexander	
Committee	Cr Danny Claridge	Council representative
	Cr Peter Davis	Council representative
	Tim Abdallah	General member
	Brad Hearn	Friends of Benalla Art Gallery representative
	Winsome McCaughey	General member
	Bess Nolan-Cook	CEO Tourism North East
	Anna Parle	General member
	Fiona Stephens	General member
	Alice Tallis	General member
 In Attendance	 Eric Nash	 Director Benalla Art Gallery
	Adam Saddler	Manager Economic Development and Environmental Sustainability

The meeting commenced at 5 pm

Apologies

Apologies were received from Bess Nolan-Cook and Winsome McCaughey.

Cr Danny Claridge / Cr Peter Davis

That the apologies be accepted.

Carried

DISCUSSION

- The Committee Chair welcomed all, Acknowledgement of Country.
- The Committee Chair discussed an additional Agenda Item for the night’s meeting, being the Gallery Redevelopment and matters related, to be a standing item on the Agenda moving forward.

Disclosures of conflict of interest

There were no disclosures of Conflict of Interest presented to the meeting in any items on this Agenda.

Confirmation of the Minutes of the previous meeting

Anna Parle / Alice Tallis

That the minutes of the meeting of the Benalla Art Gallery Committee held on 14 September 2021 be confirmed.

Carried

DISCUSSION

- Brad Hearn noted he had not received the papers for the meeting. Taken on notice and to be investigated.

Business

1. Director’s report – November 2021

SF/1742

Eric Nash – Director, Benalla Art Gallery

The Director provided an update on the operations of the Benalla Art Gallery since the previous meeting and a report of progress against the Benalla Art Gallery Strategic Plan.

Brad Hearn / Cr Peter Davis

That the report be noted.

Carried

2. Exhibition schedule 2022

SF/1742

Eric Nash – Director, Benalla Art Gallery

The Director presented the 2022 exhibition schedule.

Cr Danny Claridge / Fiona Stephens

That the report be noted.

Carried

3. Funding Report: Community Heritage Grant

SF/1742

Eric Nash – Director, Benalla Art Gallery

The Director presented details of a successful grant application.

<p>Anna Parle / Alice Tallis</p> <p>That the report be noted.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Carried</p>

4. Benalla Art Gallery 2020/2021 Year in Review

SF/1742

Eric Nash – Director, Benalla Art Gallery

The Director presented key outcomes for the Benalla Art Gallery from the financial year 2020/2021.

<p>Fiona Stephens / Alice Tallis</p> <p>That the report be noted.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Carried</p>

5. Friends of Benalla Art Gallery

SF/1742

Brad Hearn – Present, Friends of Benalla Art Gallery

The President, Friends of Benalla Art Gallery provided an update on the activity of the Friends of Benalla Art Gallery since the previous meeting.

<p>Anna Parle / Fiona Stephens</p> <p>That the report be noted.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Carried</p>

6. Benalla Art Gallery Acquisition Trust Fund

SF/1742

Winsome McCaughey – Chair, Benalla Art Gallery Acquisition Trust

The Committee Chair called for any queries related to the Trust report to be forwarded by email in lieu of the Chair being able to report in person. All attendees noted they had read and understood contents of the report.

Cr Peter Davis / Anna Parle

That the report be noted.

Carried

7. Benalla Art Gallery Redevelopment

SF/1742

Adam Saddler – Manager Economic Development and Sustainability

Adam Saddler provided a verbal report on progress of the redevelopment project:

- Design and Construct Tender for the dedicated offsite Collection store is public and has been shared throughout networks. As it is still open there is no confirmed result from the tender as yet.
- A second tender will be released in the coming weeks for architectural services; seeking an architect with heritage experience to produce detailed drawing of work that can be completed at the Gallery as part of Phase 1 of the redevelopment using the remainder of the \$3 million funding and in line with the grant objectives; and also to produce concept drawings for the aspirational redevelopment of the Gallery informed by the Feasibility Study and Business Case which would then make the project ‘shovel ready’.
- Spoke to Regional Tourism Investment Fund recently announced. Following discussion with Francine Stacey of State Government, this current round of the Fund is not an avenue for aspirational redevelopment of the Benalla Art Gallery, with the detail contained in agreed concept drawings for the full redevelopment being required for the project to be shovel ready. The current round was discussed as closing by February, and timeline does not match the tender window and anticipated workflow for that piece of work

Cr Danny Claridge / Brad Hearn

That the verbal report be noted.

Carried

DISCUSSION

- The Committee Chair advised she had represented the Committee at the Benalla Art Gallery Redevelopment Working Group Initiation Meeting on 29 October. Meeting chaired by project lead Adrian Gasperoni, Manager Assets and

- Infrastructure, and also participating Adam Saddler, Manager Economic Development and Sustainability; Eric Nash, Director Benalla Art Gallery; Cr Peter Davis; Cr Danny Claridge; Emma Harvey, Senior Project Officer - Infrastructure Delivery | Creative Victoria; and Francine Stacey, Economic Development Coordinator, Regional Development Victoria
- Fiona Stephens enquired if additional members of the Committee could participate in future Redevelopment Working Group meetings? The Committee Chair advised that was not possible, as confirmed by Dom; the Committee can approach the Chair with queries or input, and if wishing to seek direct involvement in the Working Group are welcome to enquire with Dom
- Several members of the Committee requested clarification of timeline and necessary dispersal of funds from current \$3m grant. Barbara Alexander requested this information be circulated; Adam Saddler discussed providing regular, written redevelopment project updates for the Committee from this point forward
- In relation to the forthcoming tender for architectural services, given the project will not be sufficiently advanced in order to apply for the Regional Tourism Investment Fund, Anna Parle requested if the tender could be left in market for longer than the indicative pre-Christmas closing? Based on experience with tenders from State Government background, advice is the longer period in the market would provide better chance of an optimal outcome, assuming possible with probity and procurement restrictions.
- In relation to inability to apply for next round of Regional Tourism Investment Fund, Alice Tallis queried if we are reinventing the wheel, noting Committee's understanding Powell & Glenn had undertaken significant engagement with Heritage Victoria in development of 2016 plans. Cr Davis queried if we had anything from Heritage Victoria in terms of possible footprint. Cr Claridge pointed to heritage advice received by Dom in early 2021, provided at April Committee meeting, which outlined current heritage interpretation would not be supportive of the Powell & Glenn concept. An excerpt of that Heritage feedback is below:

"In undertaking a preliminary review of the draft plans prepared by Powell & Glenn in 2016 and the alternative concept options prepared by Kennedy Nolan architects in 2020, it is Heritage Victoria's preference that the latter form the basis of a more thorough and investigative design process, noting that it is highly unlikely that the Executive Director would support the construction of a large extension as proposed by Powell & Glenn which would overwhelm and dominate the heritage place and obscure key site lines. Heritage Victoria support the benefits identified within the Kennedy Nolan Architects concept plans, particularly in new built form being visually recessive to the heritage place, in maintaining view-lines from the road bridge, opposite banks of Lake Benalla and from within the Botanic Gardens, and in maintaining the original point of entry and utilizing existing fabric for gallery/exhibition space. Put succinctly, it is Heritage Victoria's view that a scheme which proposed a single story detached pavilion/s with visual and physical separation from the heritage building (rather than a large multi story addition), would be more acceptable in maintaining the cultural heritage significance of the place, primarily being the integrity of the current built form, an understanding of the

place ‘in the round’ and maintaining the current setting and context.”

- Alice Tallis queried if the Council had taken a position as to a preferred option outlined in the Feasibility Study and Business Plan, as was requested when committee presented the document to Council in early 2021. Cr Claridge advised a preferred option from the Feasibility Study hadn't been determined, however the Council had affirmed its commitment to pursuing funds to enable the redevelopment through its inclusion in the Council Plan (Mayor's Foreword) and within a list of Unfunded Major Projects within the long term financial plan – noted as a \$7 million project.
- Brad Hearn enquired if the Redevelopment Update could be shared with Friends of Benalla Art Gallery. Cr Claridge responded the Benalla Art Gallery Committee Meetings are public and observers can sit in.
- Alice Tallis expressed a frustration at the lack of insight into the Redevelopment progress from the Committee meeting, and a general sentiment that Committee members, being volunteers with skills, experience, passion or the Gallery and who have historically contributed a lot, are being pushed aside. The Committee Chair expressed that she was sorry Alice felt that way, and that the sentiment would be noted in the Minutes.
- The Committee Chair thanked all Committee members for their attendance and contribution throughout the year, hopefully for a new year full of vigour.

Date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting of the Art Gallery Committee is to be confirmed. A schedule for 2022 will be circulated.

The meeting concluded at 6.25pm