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1 Introduction

1.1 Executive Summary

The Tenterfield Visitor Information Centre (VIC) offers an important community service, providing information on things to see and do, where to stay, shop and eat to visitors to the Shire. The reception visitors receive at the Centre contributes to their overall experience, and will often shape their perceptions of the town and region. Therefore, it is important visitors receive a friendly welcome and exceptional customer service.

The Tenterfield VIC changed management on the 1st August 2015, with the Tenterfield Shire Council taking on the operation of the Centre. Tenterfield Shire Council employs a Tourism Officer, who is in charge of the operation of the Centre and the strategic marketing of the region and casual Tourism Information Assistants who assist with the day to day operations. The Centre is predominantly manned by volunteers.

The key objectives of the Centre is to provide quality and efficient customer service with knowledgeable and friendly staff and volunteers, and to create a wide awareness of Tenterfield and the region.

Visitor Feedback and statistics are to be collected to ensure these objectives are being successfully carried out.

1.2 Background

The Tenterfield Visitor Information Centre was built on the current site (157 Rouse Street) in 1989, and was jointly funded by the Tenterfield Shire Council, a State Government grant and the local tourist association. The centre received a grant in 1999 to upgrade to a Gateway Tourist Information Centre, and the current centre was officially opened in 2001.

Prior July 2013, the Visitor Information Centre was operated by the Tenterfield and District Visitors Association, and supported by funding from Council for staff costs, marketing and promotion, cleaning, internet, security and part utility charges.

In 2013, Council resolved to commence a new tourism model, with the introduction of a Tourism Officer, appointed by Council to focus on strategic marketing and promotion of the Tenterfield Shire. For the past two years, a licence agreement has been in place whereby Council and the Local Tourist Association have worked in partnership to promote tourism throughout the Shire and across the region. In June 2015, Council resolved to renew the license agreement for one year, and from 2016/2017 to undertake the day to day running of the Centre. Following this resolution, the Tenterfield and District Visitors Association declined to sign a further 12 month agreement.

Consequently, Council resolved at an Extraordinary Council meeting on 8 July 2015 that Council undertakes the running of the Tenterfield Visitor Information Centre from 1st August 2015.
2 Mission, Vision and Corporate Values

2.1 Mission
The mission of the Tenterfield Visitor Information Centre:

To represent the tourism industry in the district, to provide information for visitors to the region, to encourage engagement from local residents and to ensure a positive and enjoyable experience for all visitors.

The Tenterfield Visitor Information Centre supports the mission of the Tenterfield Shire Council: “Quality Nature, Quality Heritage and Quality Lifestyle”

2.2 Vision
- To provide quality and accurate information on accommodation, attractions, shopping, dining, events and businesses and services in the Tenterfield Shire.
- To provide information on surrounding areas to visitors and local residents.
- To support marketing initiatives promoting Tenterfield and the region.
- To encourage visitors to extend their stay and/or return to the region.
- To promote a sense of pride in our area through volunteers and local businesses.
- To work cooperatively with regional Visitor Information Centres, businesses and Councils.
- To promote local produce, artwork and crafts, as well as unique souvenirs through the Visitor Information Centre gift shop.

2.3 Corporate Values
The following corporate values express how Council wishes to conduct themselves as an organisation, and reflect the manner in which Council desires to engage with its community. They provide a reference point for all staff and volunteers. The five corporate values are I CARE:

1. **Integrity**
   - ensuring openness and honesty in all activities

2. **Community focus**
   - delivering prompt courteous and helpful service

3. **Accountability**
   - accepting responsibility for providing quality services and information

4. **Respect**
   - treating people with courtesy, dignity and fairness regardless of personal feelings about the person or issue

5. **Excellence**
   - being recognised for providing services and programs that aim for best practice
3 Situational Analysis

3.1 Tenterfield Shire Profile

Tenterfield Shire is located a comfortable two hour drive from Brisbane and the Gold Coast (3.5 hours to Tenterfield township), and is the gateway to the New England High Country and north west New South Wales from the north, and south east Queensland from the south.

The township of Tenterfield is surrounded by the villages of Drake, Jennings, Legume, Liston, Torrington and Urbenville, and the localities of Mingoola and Bolivia, each with their own unique attributes and attractions. Spanning the Great Dividing Range, the Shire covers an area of 7,333 square kilometres including mountains and rural landscapes.
History
Tenterfield Shire was first inhabited by two language groups – the Bunjalung, whose territory covers the eastern region from Yamba to Tweed Heads and east to Tenterfield; and Jukembal, whose territory straddles the Great Dividing Range from near Glen Innes to Stanthorpe.

Australian explorer Allan Cunningham approached nearest the site of present day Tenterfield in 1827. The first legal title was granted for Tenterfield Station in 1842, and the township was gazetted in 1851, making it one of the oldest towns in the New England.

Known as the 'Birthplace of our Nation’, Sir Henry Parkes delivered his famous Federation Speech in the Tenterfield School of Arts on 24th October 1889, which ultimately led to the Federation of all Australian States in 1901.

The Region
Set deep in the heart of Australian Heritage, Tenterfield is surrounded by bushland and is the perfect setting for an adventure. The district is home to amazing national parks, beautiful rivers, waterfalls and creeks, as well as historical sights, attractions and museums, wineries, local produce and great shopping.

The four seasons are one of the key attributes of the region, and Tenterfield is no exception, enjoying mild alpine summers, blazing red autumns with stunning tree-lined streets, sunny winter days followed by crisp winter nights and bright wildflower springs.

Visitor Information Centre
The Tenterfield Visitor Information Centre is an accredited level two visitor information centre. Located in the main street of Tenterfield (157 Rouse Street), the centre is open:

- Monday to Friday 9.00 am to 4.30 pm
- Saturday 9.00 am to 4.00 pm
- Sunday 10.00 am to 2.00 pm
3.2 Stakeholders

All visitors, businesses and local resident are considered important stakeholders in the Visitor Information Centre.

In relation to the direct running of the Centre, the following groups are considered critical:

- Councillors – decision making body
- Council staff – overseeing the operation of the Centre
- Volunteers – provide a critical service to the visitor experience
- Tourism operators – including accommodation, hospitality, retail and business
- Event organisers and committees
- Community organisations
- Ratepayers
- Residents of Tenterfield Shire

External to the Shire:

- Regional Tourism Organisations – New England High Country and Inland NSW Tourism
- Regional tourism operators
- Neighbouring and regional Local Governments
- Neighbouring and regional Visitor Information Centres
- State Tourism Organisations – Destination NSW and Tourism and Events Queensland
- National and International visitors to the Centre
3.3 Shire SWOT Analysis

The following analysis was developed from the Tenterfield & District Destination Management Plan adopted July 2014, and through a workshop with business operators and key stakeholders held in October 2015.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Country lifestyle, hospitality and village atmosphere</td>
<td>Lack of weekend trading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boutique shopping and streetscape</td>
<td>Low recognition of Tenterfield as a brand and destination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Parks, nature, scenery</td>
<td>VIC is single point of information dispersal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Climate &amp; four seasons</td>
<td>Lack of public transport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>History and heritage – historic buildings and museums</td>
<td>Lack of signage coming into town</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation &amp; sports – horse riding, golf, bowls, fishing, trekking, cycling, motor biking)</td>
<td>Lack of funding for destination marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proximity to Brisbane, south east QLD and northern NSW</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality road access - cross-section of two highways</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekend destination</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wine and local produce</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong &amp; cohesive community</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunities</th>
<th>Threats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cross-border communication &amp; partnerships</td>
<td>Lack of funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Targeted and cooperative marketing campaigns</td>
<td>Rapid development of technology – important to remain up to date into the future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater internet presence (website reach &amp; social media)</td>
<td>Loss of business and community support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business packages and itineraries</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater town and event signage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authentic story telling through businesses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heavy Vehicle Bypass – make Tenterfield a known destination</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nearby airports (Toowoomba, Armidale, Lismore)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Events</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raise profile of villages</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educate community and businesses about importance of tourism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing to school groups</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visiting friends and relatives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soft adventure tourism (fishing, golf, canoeing, mountain biking)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product development (including touring routes)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National and International Marketing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 3.4 Visitor Information Centre SWOT Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Strengths</strong></th>
<th><strong>Weaknesses</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Staff and Volunteers</strong> – multi-skilled staff; strong team; enthusiastic volunteers (willing to learn); collective knowledge of staff and volunteers</td>
<td>Low budget</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Product to market</strong> – natural attractions; historic attractions; connections to Sir Henry Parkes and Peter Allen; four seasons; new ‘Come up and Feel Alive’ Tenterfield Visitors Guide</td>
<td>New function for Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Location</strong> – Centre is on main street and major highway and is walking distance to town.</td>
<td>Outdated information and pamphlets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Building and Facilities</strong> – attractive building; large space; clean toilet facilities; good parking facilities (including disabled and caravan parking)</td>
<td>Large geographical area to cover and manage with small staff numbers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relationships and Partnerships</strong> – no membership fees (available to all businesses in the Shire); New England High Country; business and tourism community; villages; neighbouring Councils; neighbouring Visitor Information Centres</td>
<td>Starting with empty centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Technology</strong> – website (free listings for all businesses); Instagram</td>
<td>Website needs updating – uniform approach for all businesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Branding and Marketing</strong> – New England High Country Tenterfield Shire Council – Strong strategic direction; accountability; transparency</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Opportunities</strong></td>
<td><strong>Threats</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Volunteer Training</strong></td>
<td>Loss of volunteers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Souvenir Sales</strong> – local produce, local artwork, unique souvenirs</td>
<td>Loss of funding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Media</strong> – expanding current use</td>
<td>Loss of business support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Product development</strong> – brochures for trails and tours (fishing, horseriding, cycling, motorcycling, birdwatching); Itineraries</td>
<td>Loss of community support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Redevelopment of Centre</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Event Promotion</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rotating displays</strong> promoting businesses and events</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Free Wi-Fi</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Become a <strong>useful and welcoming</strong> centre for visitors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Visitor Information Centre

4.1 Current Performance

Due to the transfer of the Visitor Centre operations to Council on 1st August 2015, there is little historical data available to conduct statistical analysis at this time.

Visitor Statistics 2014/2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Visitor Numbers to the VIC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2014/2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>1586</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>1427</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>1800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>1893</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>1177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>1243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>1559</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>1109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>1690</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>1985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>1620</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>1612</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Information gathered to date has noted that visitors require general information on things to see and do in the area, most notably:

- National Parks
- Scenic Drives
- Museums
- Camping Grounds
- Directions

Maps, both local and regional, and the Tenterfield Visitors Guide are the most popular forms of collateral handed out at the Centre.

Based on research and visitor statistics, 50% of visitors to the region originate from Queensland, and 37% come from regional New South Wales. Visitors to the Centre mirror these statistics. The top three visitor origins are:

- Brisbane
- Northern Rivers (Lismore, Casino, Ballina NSW)
- South East Queensland

The top international visitor origins are:

- New Zealand
- Germany
- England/United Kingdom.
4.2 Products & Services

The key role of the Visitor Information Centre is to provide information to visitors and local residents on the Tenterfield Shire. This information comprises of things to see and do, where to stay, where to eat, where to shop and how to get somewhere, as well as what services are available. The official visitors guide for Tenterfield & District is the key source of this information, and is reviewed every two years.

Information readily available at the centre includes:

- Accommodation
- Attractions
- Dining
- Shopping
- History and Heritage
- Nature and National Parks
- Parks and Gardens
- Outdoor Activities
- Events
- Seasonal information
- Villages of Tenterfield Shire
- Town and Regional map
- Wineries
- Business and services
- Transport services
- Area maps
- Surrounding regions – information and maps
- Emergency Contact Details

Additional services provided include:

- Public toilets
- Parking
- Meeting room
- Accommodation enquiries and bookings on behalf of visitors
- Transport bookings (bus and train) on behalf of visitors
- Book exchange

Late 2015, the following products will be available for sale:

- Local produce
- Local artwork and jewellery
- Tenterfield souvenirs
4.3 Objectives & Strategies

The following objectives are key to the successful operation of the Tenterfield Visitor Information Centre.

**Objective 1: Visitor Information Centre Operations**

Operate the Tenterfield Visitor Information Centre to provide quality and efficient customer service with knowledgeable and friendly staff.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies/Actions</th>
<th>Performance Measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Operate the Centre in accordance with NSW Accredited Visitor Information Centre (AVIC) Network requirements</td>
<td>Level 2 Accreditation is maintained. Visitor numbers recorded and compared annually.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Visitor Information Centre is to be open 363 days of the year (closed Christmas Day and Good Friday) for a minimum of 43 hours per week.</td>
<td>Centre open to the public 7 days a week.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sufficient staff, volunteers and resources available to provide a prompt, professional, knowledgeable and customer friendly service to visitors and residents.</td>
<td>Volunteer training and support system in place. Telephone and email enquiries answered or followed up within 24 hours.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adequate information available within the Centre on attractions, accommodation and other businesses and services within the Tenterfield Shire and surrounding areas (New England North West, Northern Rivers, Granite Belt and North Coast). Adequate information available on local events and promotions.</td>
<td>Brochure management procedures in place. No cost for businesses to place information in Centre or on website. Up to date and free information readily available at the Centre for local district attractions, accommodation and businesses and services, as well as regional visitor information guides. Literature and other materials displayed attractively and kept tidy at all times. Special displays to coincide with local events.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide impartial and objective information to all visitors.</td>
<td>Information and referral service is provided for all operators in the Tenterfield Shire. Information and referral service is provided for all operators outside the Tenterfield Shire as provided by operators.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage use of Visitor Information Centre and its facilities by residents of Tenterfield Shire</td>
<td>Open Day at the Centre for all residents. Monitor media coverage and feedback received by Council. Involvement in community events where appropriate and relevant to the Centre.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Comence sales of souvenir products, including postcards, memorabilia and local produce. Stock good quality local products. Monitor sales and regularly review product popularity and new product potential.

Centre kept clean, tidy, well-lit and comfortable for visitors and staff. Become a useful and welcoming space for visitors and residents. Cleanliness/tidiness and comfort of facility monitored by staff and volunteers. Maintenance and repairs reported to Council within 24 hours. Develop space to include free WiFi, lounge area and book exchange.

Ensure signage is up to date. Monitor and review signage at the centre. Monitor and review directional signage leading to the centre. Ensure information is available after hours.

**Objective 2: Tourism Promotion**

Create a wide awareness of Tenterfield and the Visitor Information Centre within the Tenterfield Shire, surrounding regions of New England and Granite Belt and within key target markets, including northern NSW and south east QLD.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies/Actions</th>
<th>Performance Measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Maintain/redevelop the website for the Visitor Information Centre as a key source of information on the region.</td>
<td>Monitor and consistently update the Tenterfield Tourism website to reflect up to date information about the Centre, the region and the tourism businesses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop new product for Tenterfield &amp; District to encourage visitor dispersal and attract niche markets.</td>
<td>Develop touring routes and trails that package product together. Promote through Centre and website.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain a current and professional Visitors Guide for Tenterfield Shire.</td>
<td>Visitor Guide to be reviewed and published every 2 years (or as necessary)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create awareness of events and assist in events coordination and marketing.</td>
<td>Maintain calendar of events for promotion and to advise of potential clashes. Promote event through Centre.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Objective 3: Financial

Ensure that the required services are provided within the available budget and that regular reports are provided to Council.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies/Actions</th>
<th>Performance Measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monitor income and expenditure against annual budget as well as overall performance against the outlined performance measures.</td>
<td>Income and expenditure details recorded and compared on a year-to-date basis. Quarterly reporting to Council.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop and maintain alternative income streams for the Centre, to supplement Council contributions and to provide additional funding for marketing and promotions.</td>
<td>Achieve net income from sources other than Council budget allocation each year. Level of alternative income compared on a year-to-date basis.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Objective 4: Training and Development

Ensure that knowledge of the region is accurate and up to date, and that visitors who may not come to the Centre are still able to receive information required.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies/Actions</th>
<th>Performance Measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop volunteer and staff product knowledge to ensure excellent customer service and accurate information at the Centre.</td>
<td>Develop and implement familiarisation program. Conduct at least 6 familiarisation trips a year. Conduct at least 1 training session a year. Quarterly networking sessions to be held with volunteers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage business operators and staff to become ambassadors for the region.</td>
<td>Conduct at least 1 presentation evening a year for businesses and volunteers. Implement ambassador program.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.4 Marketing Plan

Limited marketing activities are planned for the 2015/2016 period, as the Tourism Marketing budget is required to offset the costs of the operations of the Visitor Information Centre.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marketing Activity</th>
<th>Budget ($)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New England High Country</td>
<td>5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Print Advertising – Off the Beaten Track</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jack Frost</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lismore Caravan &amp; Camping Show</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event Marketing</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product Development</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>$12,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.5 Measurement and Evaluation

Information monitored and collected through the visitor information centre includes:

- Visitor Numbers each day
- Origin of Visitors (postcode)
- Visitor Requests
- Website Statistics
- Social Media Statistics

This information is collated each month to record performance of the visitor information centre. A report will go the Council Meetings at least quarterly, to report on the progress and running of activities, against objectives and the budget.

This Business Plan will be reviewed in February 2016, as part of the quarterly reviews.

5. Budget

Due to the changeover in management occurring after the 2015/2016 Tenterfield Shire Council budget was set, the Tourism Marketing Budget is required to offset the costs of the running of the Visitor Information Centre during 2015/2016. Council resolved to allocate an additional $19,000 to assist with the change-over from the Association to Council.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expenditure</th>
<th>Budget ($)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Set-up expenditure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brochure Racks &amp; Furniture</td>
<td>4,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash Register &amp; Software</td>
<td>3,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual staff salaries</td>
<td>33,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accreditation</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electricity</td>
<td>6,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postage</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Printing and stationary</td>
<td>8,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Website</td>
<td>1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteer training</td>
<td>2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>2,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff training</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous (catering, meetings)</td>
<td>1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free Wi-Fi</td>
<td>1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism Promotion</td>
<td>12,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>77,700</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous (building, security, cleaning)</td>
<td>15,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depreciation</td>
<td>40,740</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism Officer salary (not incl. oncost)</td>
<td>57,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>$190,940</strong></td>
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6. Networking and Communication

6.1 Business Community

Council will continue to work closely with the business community and in particular the hospitality, tourism and accommodation operators.

Communication with businesses and organisations is vital, and will be conducted through:

- Email
- Monthly Tourism Newsletter
- Weekly Council Newsletter – Tenterfield in Touch
- Quarterly Council Communications
- Phone
- Media Releases

Biannual networking functions and/or workshops will be held with the business community, at least twice a year.

7. Staff and Volunteers

7.1 Volunteers

Volunteers are an integral part of the Visitor Information Centre, greeting visitors and providing assistance. Prospective volunteers must complete an application form and sign a copy of the position description, as well as having an informal interview with the Tourism Officer. They must also complete the Centre induction.

**Position Overview:**

To be ambassadors for the region, through welcoming visitors to the centre and providing them with accurate information on Tenterfield and district, as well as providing assistance with the day to day operations of the centre and enhancing the visitor experience of the region.

**Key Duties:**

- Welcome visitors – respond in a friendly, efficient and unbiased manner to all visitors into the centre
- Answer telephone enquiries – respond to all telephone enquiries in an efficient and courteous manner
- Ensure that knowledge and information provided is accurate and current
- Stock and monitor pamphlets and information
- Accurately record and collate visitation statistics to the centre on a daily basis
- Respond to requests for information by packaging and preparing for post
- Assist staff with mailouts and recording outgoing mail
- Attend regular volunteer familiarisation programs
- Attend volunteer training programs as required
- Carry out opening and closing procedures as required
- Follow Tenterfield Shire Council’s policies and procedures
Desirable skills and knowledge:

- Enthusiasm and a genuine desire to promote the region
- Knowledge of and/or willingness to learn about the local area
- Ability to communicate clearly, both in person and on the phone
- Excellent customer service skills
- A professional and friendly approach
- Neat and tidy appearance
- Computer skills preferred – Word, Excel, Internet and Email
- Basic office skills – use of telephone, photocopier etc.
- Ability to work as part of a team

Benefits of becoming a volunteer:

- Training, including familiarisation tours to accommodation and tourism operators in the area
- Increased awareness and knowledge of the tourism industry
- Opportunities to meet new people
- Acquisition of new and useful skills
- Learning more about your local area
- Satisfaction of doing something for the community
- Pleasant and fun working environment

7.2 Staff

Council currently has one (1) full time Tourism Officer, who is in charge of overseeing the operations of the Centre, as well as Strategic Marketing and promotion of the Shire and region.

Tourism Information Assistants (casual staff) are also appointed to assist with the day to day running of the Visitor Information Centre.

Tourism Officer Position Description

Position Overview

The position is responsible for the marketing of Tenterfield Shire as the premier destination and gateway into New South Wales from the North, and the gateway to the Northern Tablelands from the East. Marketing Tenterfield Shire as a destination for leisure, natural beauty, heritage and special events, and working with neighbouring Councils and regions to promote Tourism through strong partnerships.

Key Responsibilities

Tourism Marketing & Strategic Planning:

- Undertake strategic development of tourism related market opportunities
- Prepare, implement and provide progress reports on the Tourism Strategic Plan
- Promote and enhance Tenterfield Shire within the domestic and international marketplace
- Liaise with industry, local, state and federal governments in regard to promotional and cooperative funding opportunities
• Manage the efficient and timely production and distribution of destination brochures and promotional collateral and the development of the tourism website.

Visitor Information Centre:
• Set up and manage the operations of the Tenterfield Visitor Information Centre
• Manage volunteer attendance, training, rosters and recruitment
• Develop Business Plan and Operations Manual for the Centre
• Provide information on attractions in the Tenterfield Shire to visitors and locals
• Provide a high quality accredited Visitors Information Centre.

Tourism Information Assistants

Position Overview
As a Tourist Information Assistant, you will give information to visitors on accommodation, tourist attractions, heritage, businesses and local services and activities. The position also assists with overseeing the Volunteers, including rosters and general guidance. This job requires a person with a pleasant and friendly manner, and a good general knowledge of the local area. Excellent customer service skills and knowledge of local tourism are also essential.

Key Responsibilities
• Provides information on attractions in the Tenterfield Shire to visitors and locals;
• Assists with providing a high quality, accredited Visitors Information Centre;
• Assists with the overseeing of volunteers and ensure attendance as per scheduled shifts;
• Guides and provide instructions to volunteers as needed;
• Works in a team environment;
• Assists in developing a positive information environment at the centre in order to ensure visitors leave well informed;
• Researches information as needed;
• Stocks brochures and pamphlets and distribute the same;
• Assists with attending to correspondence, both incoming and outgoing;
• Greets visitors in person and responds to requests by email or by telephone, and answers questions and gives information on accommodation, historical sites, scenic areas, and other tourist attractions;
• Assists in providing a safe and healthy environment;
• Collects statistics and data as requested;
• Assists with Website and social media updates;
• General administrative duties;
• Cashier duties may be required;
• Attends training as provided;
• Ability to attend to work at short notice and any day of the week;
• Abide by Council’s Code of Conduct and other Policies relevant to this position;
• Other duties as specified by the Tourism Officer or the Senior Economic Development Officer, or other Council staff as delegated by the Tourism Officer.
7.3 Training and Development

Training and development for staff and volunteers will generally take place at the Centre, as arranged by the Tourism Officer, Senior Economic Development Officer, Council’s Work Health and Safety Officer or Council’s Organisational Development Manager.

The key areas involve gaining knowledge of the tourism attractions and tourism operators within the Shire and region. Familiarisation tours will also be arranged for a hands on experience, with at least six (6) tours to be organised annually.

Customer Service and Code of Conduct training will also be provided.

An Induction is to be conducted with all new staff and volunteers, and includes safety policies, training, customer complaints, risk management and roles and responsibilities.

8. Building and Maintenance

8.1 Security, Cleaning and Maintenance

Security
A security alarm is installed in the Centre, and this is provided and managed by Advanced Inland Security. All staff and volunteers who require a code will be issued a personal code.

Keys will be issued to staff and volunteers as required. A key register is kept by the Tourism Officer, and staff and volunteers must sign this when they receive a key.

Cleaning
Tenterfield Shire Council has employed a contractor to clean the Visitor Information Centre on a fortnightly basis. Any additional light cleaning will be undertaken by staff and volunteers as required.

Council’s Parks and Gardens staff manage the gardens at the Centre, as well as cleaning of the public amenities.

Maintenance
The Centre building is owned by the Tenterfield Shire Council, who is therefore responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of the centre. The schedule of required works is in Council’s Asset Management Plan for Buildings.

For urgent maintenance requirements, the Tenterfield Shire Council needs to be contacted.
8.2 Insurance
Tenterfield Shire Council holds the following relevant insurances:

- Property (building insurance)
- Workers Compensation (also covers Volunteers)
- Professional Indemnity (also covers Volunteers)
- Public Liability

Council’s WH&S Risk Officer is responsible for ensuring that all insurances are up to date and that staff and volunteers are provided with specific training in Work Health and Safety.

9. Supporting Documentation

9.1 Operations Manual
The Operations Manual for the Visitor Information Centre details the day to day tasks and duties for staff and volunteers.

- Operations Manual

9.2 Tenterfield & District Destination Management Plan
The Destination Management Plan sets out the strategic direction for tourism in the Tenterfield region for the 2014-2017 period.

- Tenterfield & District Destination Management Plan 2014-2017

9.3 Tenterfield Shire Council Operational Plan 2015/2016
This document describes the individual strategies and actions that will be undertaken over the year, and includes the budget and Statement of Council’s Revenue Policy.

- Tenterfield Shire One (1) Year Operational Plan 2015/2016

9.4 Tenterfield Shire Council Policies & Procedures

- Workforce Plan
- Work, Health and Safety Policy
- Volunteer Policy
- Council’s Code of Conduct