

# SHOP LOCAL PROMOTIONS REPORT TO EDAC

## SUMMARY

Council has been working in partnership with the Lithgow Business Association and individual businesses from Lithgow, Portland and Wallerawang to implement a number of shop local actions set out in Councils Economic Development Strategy and the Lithgow Business and Retail Study.

## COMMENTARY

The retail and service sector within the Lithgow LGA is a major source of local employment with the highest proportion of these jobs located within the Lithgow CBD. Council's Economic Development Strategy and the Business and Retail Strategy identified the need to deliver shop local programs and projects to support the ongoing vitality of this sector through a number of actions incorporating:

- Development of joint marketing opportunities
- Support for the development of local markets
- Promotion of events and activities through Council and local media outlets
- Encouragement of business excellence
- Development of the tourist industry

Council can demonstrate extensive leadership in the delivery of these actions through the following achievements:

### Major projects

#### Lithglo 12 and 13

A project focused on maximising the appeal of the Lithgow town centre to visitors and residents during the peak Christmas trading period. Key components include:

- Visual merchandising training for business operators supplemented by an annual Christmas shopfront window display competition
- Night time activation of Lithgow landmarks including Main St, Cook St Plaza, Railway Viaducts, Blast Furnace Park, Queen Elizabeth Park and Hoskins Church
- Implementation of programs of joint marketing including radio and print media advertising, street and shop banners, posters and flyers relating to maximise Christmas retail promotions by local businesses

#### Halloween 13

A project focused on creating and growing a unique "point of difference" Halloween experience for Lithgow within the Central West of NSW. Key components include:

- Visual merchandising training for business operators supplemented with a Halloween shopfront window display competition
- Night time activation of Lithgow Main St landmarks and public domain spaces
- Joint marketing of businesses located in Lithgow CBD as well as Portland and Wallerawang that included radio and print media advertising, street and shop banners, posters and flyers

- High rates of participation by local businesses. In 2013 over 60 businesses along Main St Lithgow participated creating shop window displays, dressing in costumes, marketing Halloween cuisine, participating in a street long “Trick or Treat Trail, providing in store entertainment, and offering special promotions
- The event drew thousands of visitors to Lithgow’s Main St with food and beverage shops reporting huge trading volumes and many other businesses reporting strong follow up enquiry and customer purchases.

#### Mother’s Day 2014

A project focussed on the implementation of a shop local campaign for Mother’s Day incorporating the following components:

- Joint marketing for businesses located in Lithgow CBD as well as Portland and Wallerawang that included radio and print media advertising, street posters and flyers.
- Creation of a Mother’s Day booklet printed and distributed to participating businesses for counter display as well as distribution to the community via an insert into the Lithgow Mercury
- High rates of participation by local businesses with over 60 inclusions in the Mother’s Day Promotional Booklet

#### Supporting the development of local markets

- Ongoing support is provided to emerging private operators to deliver high quality monthly local markets that promote primarily Lithgow based LGA artisan growers, producers and makers.
- The creation and delivery of the first night market held in Lithgow at Hoskins Church in December 2013 as part of the Lithglo 13 event designed to promote local artisan producers and makers as part of a unique event experience.

#### Developing Joint Marketing Opportunities

- Development of Council’s Lithgow Creatives webpage that supports and promotes a wide range of creative practitioner services available within the Lithgow LGA.
- Inclusion of a “pop up” gallery space to showcase Lithgow Creatives in a shared private sector premises located at the corner of Mort St and Eskbank St.
- Development of the downloadable Lithglo App that provides information about local businesses and services available to the local community and visitors.
- Incorporation of a Main St business promotional double page spread within the new Lithgow Visitors Guide.
- Delivery of joint marketing material associated with the Lithglo and Halloween events
- Development of Council’s Revitalising Lithgow Town Centre Facebook page as a tool to market business and tourism destinations

### Encouragement of Business Excellence

- During 2013/14 Council funded the implementation of an integrated program of business excellence training sessions including Visual Merchandising, Marketing, Business Planning and Social Media. These training sessions were very well attended and popular with business operators. A similar program is being prepared for delivery during 2014/15.
- Council will be partnering with the Lithgow Business Association to reintroduce an annual Business Awards event to recognise and reward exceptional business models across the Lithgow Local Government Area

### 2014 / 2015 Business Support Program

Council has also allocated funding of \$150,000 to implement a Business Support Program during 2014/15.

Key components of this program include:

- Halloween Event
- Branding and Marketing
- Business Awards
- Business Training and Development

Council is seeking an active partnership approach with the Lithgow Business Association to deliver the program to best meet the needs of the local business community.