

ERC Meeting - 15.10.20  
Meeting Notes



<b>In attendance</b>	<p><b>Jacqui Weatherill</b> - Stonnington CEO (Chair)</p> <p><b>Dan Nicholls</b> - Regional Development Australia - Melbourne Precincts and Suburbs</p> <p><b>Andy Simpson</b> - Director Bounce Audio</p> <p><b>Zelman Ainsworth</b> – CBRE Advisory &amp; Transaction Services   Investor Leasing</p>	<p><b>Andy Dinan</b> - MARS Gallery</p> <p><b>Nancy Collins</b> - Swinburne University</p> <p><b>Rowina Thomas</b> - Owner of Lyall Hotel &amp; Spa</p> <p><b>Natalie O’Brien</b> – Business &amp; Experience Strategist, Natalie O’Brien &amp; Co</p> <p><b>Justin O’Donnell</b> - CSPA President / Print Express</p> <p><b>Dr Katie Allen</b> – Federal Member for Higgins</p>
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**Staff** Stuart Draffin, Chris Balfour, Rick Kwasek, Eddy Boscariol, Andrew Carcelli, Cath Harrod, Alison Leach, Sean Ross, Elles Tielen

**Apologies** Michael Whitehead, Stef Dadon, Tommy McIntosh, Linda Mellors

**Date / Time** 9am – 15 October 2020

**Location** Virtual Meeting

Item	Topic	Who
1.	<p><b>Welcome &amp; Introductions</b></p> <p>New members and guests: Katie Allen – Federal Member for Higgins, Justin O’Donnell – CSPA President/Print Express, Natalie O’Brien - Business &amp; Experience Strategist, Natalie O’Brien &amp; Co, Rick Kwasek – Director Environment &amp; Infrastructure, Cath Harrod – Director COVID Response, Alison Leach - Manager Events, Arts &amp; Culture, Sean Ross - COVID Communications Coordinator</p> <p><b>Key Theme: Stimulating Stonnington’s Economy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do we (industry and Council) increase urban tourism and visitation?</li> <li>• Where should we focus our efforts: horizons - now, Christmas, summer and winter?</li> </ul>	Jacqui Weatherill

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What would it take to recover and be in a better position than what we were in pre COVID-19?</li> <li>• Engaging emerging and new business (i.e. creative, professional services, health businesses)</li> <li>• What is our (both industry and Council) role in job creation</li> </ul>	
2.	<p><b>Context Update - Federal Government Budget</b></p> <p>The budget was handed down last week, with a focus on temporary, targeted, proportionate spending. It aims to kickstart the economy without creating a large debt for future generations. Due to current interest rates, COVID-19 budget spending is similar to that of the GFC.</p> <p>A major focus of this budget is job creation, particularly for women and those under 32. Job Maker is incentivising employers to hire younger people (under 32), as this demographic was one of the hardest hit by COVID-19 lockdowns and changes. It was noted that the federal government has invested in vaccine programs (notably Astro-Zeneca) and global vaccine alliances.</p> <p>The budget also includes tax cuts and instant asset write-offs (with option to be carried back to last year). The budget is aiming to encourage spending, and particularly of interest is the overseas tourism dollar which will now ideally be spent in Australia.</p> <p>The federal government has been encouraging the Andrews government to open up. As Australians continue to come home from overseas and quarantine, elimination is not a viable strategy and so Australia must open up and manage the virus in different ways. This is in line with updated World Health Organisation advice which noted that the best strategy was 'test, trace, isolate, protect' rather than extended lockdowns.</p> <p><b>Discussion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It was noted that the arts and events sector was one of the hardest hit, having been effectively completely shut down by restrictions. Dr Allen has championed an enquiry into this sector and is pushing for increased funding into the arts and community sectors.</li> <li>• The question of the role of federal government in supporting businesses through opening up was raised. A COVID-19 Advisory Committee has been convened to discuss these matters and provide guidance to state governments in how they can best shape roadmaps out of recovery. This committee has been</li> </ul>	Dr Katie Allen

	<p>working on the definition of hotspots and how this may help in mitigating the effects of outbreaks on broader communities.</p>	
<p>3.</p>	<p><b>Urban Tourism Presentation</b></p> <p>Presentation of research conducted by Natalie O'Brien &amp; Co and Karl Flowers. The research noted the following key features and opportunities for Stonnington's urban tourism recovery phase.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The key market for Stonnington's tourism sector is the domestic and international 'Visiting Friends and Relatives' (VFR) market.</li> <li>• Typically a wealthy residential zone, Stonnington is not positioned as a traditional tourist destination</li> <li>• Shopping for pleasure is a key destination strength for Stonnington</li> <li>• Opportunities for Stonnington lie in acting as an alternative to the CBD, supporting major retail service industry and lobbying for longer-term international students (as a key driver of the VFR market).</li> <li>• People visiting family typically stay overnight (83%) and are more likely to spend on gifts and souvenirs while those visiting friends are more likely to spend on food and entertainment</li> <li>• Stonnington could take inspiration from successful initiatives such as virtual walking tours in the Faroe Islands and the 100,000 blooms in Bendigo</li> </ul> <p><b>Discussion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Focus on driving up the demand aspect of VFR tourism in the Stonnington area to facilitate the capacity of supply levels of hotels, restaurants, shopping and entertainment.</li> <li>• Potential for curation of urban tourism as part of a broader city experience, from informal 'café &gt; art gallery &gt; shop' experiences to a more formal curated experience</li> <li>• Idea of community local tourism, as trialled in Denmark, as a pivot away from traditional urban tourism and a way to live life like the locals do</li> <li>• Focus on decentralising events from one major location to a diffusion of multiple locations</li> <li>• The importance of activating local outdoor spaces appropriately for evening events as well as daytime locations</li> <li>• The idea of a central depository/reference/guide for all Stonnington businesses to be able to bring their ideas and promotions together. This would act as a database for local businesses and a guide for those coming to the area. Reference was made to a local version of 'Click for Vic'. The CSPA has</li> </ul>	<p>Natalie O'Brien</p>

	<p>already launched such a program and there is potential for this to link in with a broader Stonnington program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaboration with local residents on what kinds of events they want and giving residents an active voice in development of events</li> <li>• Focus on Stonnington having a 'louder voice' in communication and content creation</li> <li>• It was noted that Council would seek to have Karl Flowers present further data on intrastate and interstate visitors to Stonnington in a future ERC meeting</li> </ul>	
4.	<p><b>ERC and Council Response Initiatives</b></p> <p>Council extended an Expression of Interest to local businesses regarding outdoor dining initiatives, with over 250 responses received. Responses indicated that 72% of respondents were in favour of extended footpath trading and 55% in favour of roadside dining (using on-street car parking spaces). 24% of businesses were willing to share their unused footpath trading spaces with neighbouring businesses.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A short term road closure pilot program is being developed, with potential sites for weekend closures being Greville Street, Prahran (partial) and Beatty Avenue, Armadale.</li> <li>• Extended footpath trading permits are available for use of a neighbouring business' footpath space if the neighbouring business is vacant or gives consent for use. Applications are free of charge and footpath trading permit fee waivers have been extended until March 31, 2021. Council has received over 50 applications to date.</li> <li>• Roadside dining (using on-street car parking) would feature either Council supplying roadside barriers with attached dining surfaces or restaurants coming to Council with more elaborate proposals. Both options are being developed/considered and free permits and barriers would be provided by Council. The program would be trialled until March 31, 2021 and Council has received approximately 30 applications to date.</li> <li>• Open spaces: Council is focusing on drawing people away from larger parks into smaller, less frequented parks. Social circles and smarter furnishings in parks have been installed and Stonnington-based walks linking parks and shopping precincts have been developed. Prahran Square will play a key role in outdoor dining.</li> <li>• Parklets: Council is developing treated communal spaces for both recreational and business use, 'pause points' for residents and</li> </ul>	Sean Ross and Rick Kwasek

	<p>visitors to enjoy a coffee or takeaway meal or simply pause for a moment.</p> <p><b>Discussion:</b> Jacqui Weatherill raised the question of where our energy would be best placed in the short, medium and long term.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong focus on support local strategies</li> <li>• Marketing the idea of ‘wanting to do the thing you’re told you can’t do’ in encouraging regional visitors to come and visit Stonnington</li> <li>• The importance of ensuring that when hospitality is allowed to open up, Council is ready to provide the necessary support in the form of roadside barriers, permits and other support.</li> <li>• The CSPA has developed adjustable phases with different campaigns at the ready, in response to the short lead times given by State Government in easing of restrictions.</li> <li>• The idea of spontaneity in activating spaces and creating excitement in the VFR urban tourism market, utilising social media and word of mouth</li> <li>• Using hero destinations to create a buzz and leveraging hero destinations to cross-promote other surrounding businesses – ‘just around the corner’ idea</li> <li>• The potential of Prahran Market as a hero destination, night market or central activation point.</li> <li>• Creating a number of reasons for people to visit Stonnington, rather than just one, to encourage people to stay longer in Stonnington.</li> <li>• Inclusivity in open spaces and utilising open spaces in different ways, such as a Camberwell Market style ‘car-boot’ market</li> </ul>	
5.	<p><b>Thank you and close</b></p> <p>Farewell and thank you to Eddy Boscariol for his time and efforts at Stonnington</p> <p>Next meeting Thursday 29 October 2020, 9am to 11am</p>	Jacqui Weatherill