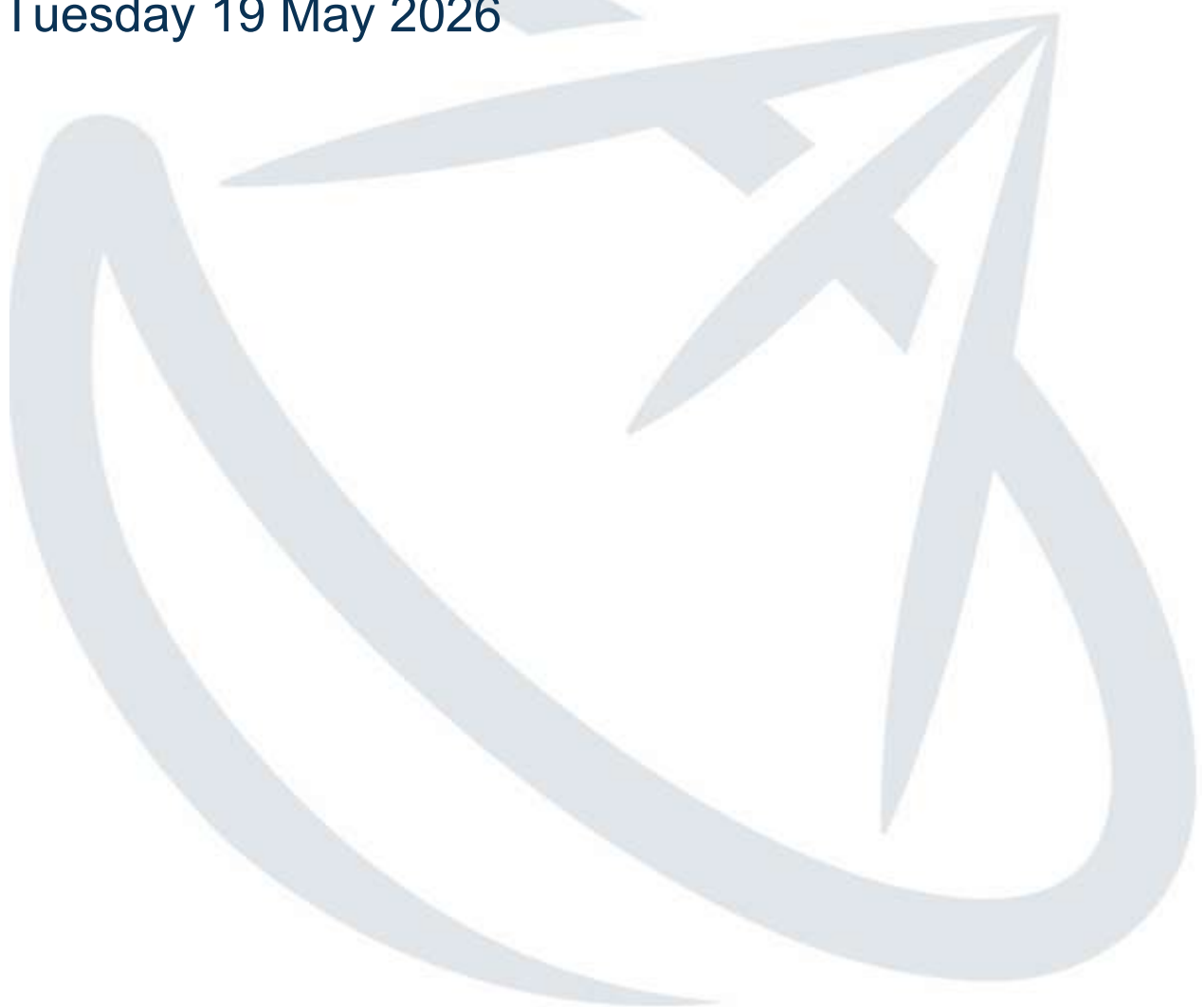


Economy, Destination and Events Advisory Committee

Minutes

Tuesday 19 May 2026



Minutes of the Economy, Destination and Events Advisory Committee
Held on Tuesday, 19 May 2026 at the
Cooke Park Pavilion, 17 Welcome Street, Parkes

Present:

Cr Neil Westcott	Mayor
Cr Marg Applebee	Deputy Mayor
Cr William Jayet	Councillor
Cr Glenn Wilson	Councillor

Mr Andrew Rice	Chair
Ms Kristy Berry	
Mr Peter Giles	
Ms Tracie Robertson	
Mrs Marty Sammut-Paul	

Council Officers in Attendance:

Mr Anthony McGrath	Director Customer, Corporate Services and Economy
Ms Lisa Moon	Tourism and Visitor Services Coordinator
Mr Hamish Ritchie	Economic Development Specialist
Mr Brendan Shipley	Manager Events and Tourism

NOTES

Cr [enter councillor name](#) attended via audio-visual link.

The meeting commenced at [enter time](#) and concluded at [enter time](#).

Order Of Business

1	OPENING OF MEETING	4
2	ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY.....	4
3	APOLOGIES	4
4	CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES	4
4.1	Minutes of the Economy, Destination and Events Advisory Committee held on 4 March 2026	4
5	DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS	5
6	LATE BUSINESS	5
7	OFFICERS' REPORTS.....	6
7.1	Local Economy Report.....	6
7.2	Local Tourism Report.....	6
7.3	Local Events Report.....	7
7.4	Offer of Engagement: Parkes Energy Recovery	7
7.5	Brightening Our Brand.....	8
7.6	Shop Parkes Facebook Page.....	9
7.7	CBD Vibrancy Strategy Initiatives.....	10
7.8	Economic Development Strategic Plan	11
8	REPORT OF CONFIDENTIAL RESOLUTIONS	12

1 OPENING OF MEETING

The Chairperson will declare the meeting open.

Meeting of Council committees are not recorded or streamed to the internet.

2 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Parkes Shire Council acknowledges the Wiradjuri People who are the Traditional Custodians of the Land. I would also like to pay respect to the Elders past, present and emerging of the Wiradjuri Nation and extend that respect to other Aboriginal peoples from other nations who are present.

3 APOLOGIES

In accordance with clauses 5.3, 5.4 and 5.5 of Council's Code of Meeting Practice, apologies must be received and accepted from absent Councillors and a leave of absence from the Council Meeting may be granted.

Cr Doug Pout	Councillor
Cr Joy Paddison	Councillor (alternate)
Ms Kelly Hendry	
Ms Treen Swift	
Mr Steve Lindsay	Deputy Chair

4 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

4.1 MINUTES OF THE ECONOMY, DESTINATION AND EVENTS ADVISORY COMMITTEE HELD ON 4 MARCH 2026

RECOMMENDATION

That the receive and confirm the Minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 4 March 2026 appended at *Annexure A*.

Confirmation of Previous Minutes

- Previous meeting Wednesday 4 March did not meet Quorum.
 - The minutes of the 18 November meeting were presented.
 - No amendments were received.
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- **Resolution:** The committee approved the minutes as a true and accurate record.
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5 DISCLOSURES OF INTERESTS

All Council Officials must disclose and manage any conflicts of interest they may have in matters being considered at the meeting.

Council's Code of Conduct deals with pecuniary and non-pecuniary conflicts of interest and political donations, and provides guidance on how these issues should be managed.

Council Officials must be familiar with Council's Code of Conduct and their obligations to disclose and manage any conflicts of interest that they may have in matters being considered at this Council Meeting.

Note: Council Officials who declare an Interest at the Meeting are also required to complete a Declaration of Interest form.

- Members confirmed that there were no changes to existing disclosures of interest.

Procedural Discussions

Resignation of member:

- Voluntary resignation of member Gregory Nash prior to meeting.
- Discussion on refilling of role.
- Decision made for council to look to backfill role to ensure increased representation across the community.

Chair Position

- The committee discussed succession planning for the Chair position.
- It was agreed that an election for a new Chair will be included as an action item for the next meeting.
- The role of Deputy Chair will be considered as part of a broader review of the Terms of Reference.
- 12 month cycle put forward as rotation period.

6 LATE BUSINESS

7 OFFICERS' REPORTS

7.1 LOCAL ECONOMY REPORT

RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee:

1. Note the update on current Economic Development activity, including progress on the CBD Vibrancy Strategy, Brightening Our Brand initiative, and related projects.

Housing Market Trends

- The committee discussed recent trends in property purchases, noting a high proportion of purchases by non-local investors.
- It was observed that many purchases appear to be investment-based rather than owner-occupied, which may influence local housing dynamics.
- Questions posed around whether set VISA types may be impacting anecdotal investment trends.

Business-to-Business Impacts

- Some committee members reported:
 - Reduced local procurement by certain businesses.
 - Increased sourcing of goods from metropolitan suppliers.
 - Challenges competing on price and procurement models.
- These factors were noted as contributing to declining local business turnover in some sectors.

Economic and Business Support Environment

- It was noted that **Regional Tech Hub funding is not continuing beyond the current financial year.**
- This follows earlier changes to other business support programs.
- The committee acknowledged a broader trend of **reduced government-funded advisory services**, which may impact regional businesses.

7.2 LOCAL TOURISM REPORT

RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee:

1. Note the updates provided in this report on current Tourism projects, visitor trends and strategic initiatives.

Key updates included:

- A new Visitor Guide is in development, with distribution planned across the region and visitor centres.
 - Tourism activity has been negatively impacted by fuel prices, with declines observed (estimated 40–60% in some segments).
 - Accreditation for the Visitor Information Centre is expected to be maintained.
-

7.3 LOCAL EVENTS REPORT**RECOMMENDATION**

That the Committee

1. Note the update on the events within the Parkes Shire.

Key updates included:

- Recent events included:
 - Light Up Parkes – reported as a strong success with high community engagement.
 - Henry Parkes Centre Open Day – well attended by local residents.
 - ANZAC Day commemorations – delivered successfully.
 - Planning for future events, including the Parkes Elvis Festival, is underway.
 - Progress was reported on the Henry Parkes Centre Master Plan, aiming to improve visitor experience and site functionality.
-

7.4 OFFER OF ENGAGEMENT: PARKES ENERGY RECOVERY**RECOMMENDATION**

That the Committee:

1. **Note** the engagement offers made by Parkes Energy Recovery to provide information to the Committee.
 2. **Note** that any engagement coordinated through EDEAC will be limited to matters within the Committee's remit of economy, destination and events.
-

3. **Acknowledge** that review or consideration of Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) documentation is outside the role and responsibilities of the Committee.
4. **Note** that Council officers will continue to engage with Parkes Energy Recovery in a procedural and transparent manner, consistent with Council resolutions and governance obligations.

Committee Position and Constraints

- The committee reviewed an offer of engagement from the project proponent.
- It was confirmed that:
 - The committee's role is advisory and does not extend to environmental assessment.
 - Engagement must remain within the Terms of Reference.
- A separate Council working group has been established to review aspects that fall outside the scope of the committee.

Community and Economic Impacts

- Discussion highlighted:
 - Perceived negative economic impacts arising from community debate and public messaging.
 - Concerns around:
 - Property transactions being affected.
 - Business confidence and reputation.
 - Broader community sentiment.

Engagement Approach

- It was agreed:
 - The committee will not request specific engagement at this time.
 - Future engagement may occur following release of relevant project documentation.
 - Any future session could likely take the form of subcommittees.

7.5 BRIGHTENING OUR BRAND

RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee:

1. Notes the progress of the Brightening Our Brand project and the upcoming public engagement phase; and
2. Notes the opportunity for Committee members to voluntarily support business-to-business engagement as part of the public engagement process and provide input during discussion on preferred approaches for Council to engage with interested members.

“Brightening Our Brand” Initiative

- An update was provided on the CBD branding and identity project.
- A formal community engagement process is being prepared.
- The committee indicated general support and:
 - Agreed that members may assist with business-to-business engagement when the campaign is released.

7.6 SHOP PARKES FACEBOOK PAGE

RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee:

1. Consider and provide a preferred position on the future management of the “Shop Parkes” social media page.
2. Note the operational, governance and resourcing implications associated with each option outlined in this report.
3. Endorse Council officers progressing the Committee’s preferred position, together with relevant officer commentary and contextual information, to an Ordinary Council Meeting for final determination.

Committee Discussion

- Strong support was expressed for:
 - Continued operation of the platform.
 - A broader, integrated approach to local business promotion and community communication.
- Key themes included:
 - The need to rebuild positive local sentiment and engagement.
 - Importance of coordinated communication across tourism, business, and community activities.
 - Recognition that the platform represents more than a social media page, acting as a connector across the local economy.

9.3 Resourcing Requirement

- It was acknowledged that:
 - Effective delivery would require additional dedicated resourcing.
 - Social media management should be treated as a strategic communication function.

9.4 Outcome

- **Committee Position:**
 - Council is encouraged to:
 - Invest in a resourced, integrated communication approach.
 - Consider funding (minimum 0.5 FTE, potentially more) to support delivery.
 - Align business promotion with tourism and broader economic development messaging.

7.7 CBD VIBRANCY STRATEGY INITIATIVES

RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee:

1. Note the overview of the 39 initiatives contained within the Draft CBD Vibrancy Strategy.
2. Provide high-level feedback identifying up to five initiatives they believe should be considered priority actions, including rationale for each.

Context

Members were asked to place a red dot indicating what initiatives they felt should be a priority. Each participant was given 5 dots. The results of this informed the discussion minuted.

Strategies which obtained more than 3 dots

03, 09, 11, 17, 21, 26, 37

CBD Vibrancy Strategy

- The committee noted progress on initiatives focused on:
 - Visual presentation
 - Activation of vacant spaces
 - Accessibility and attractiveness of the town centre

No further discussion required at this time.

7.8 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIC PLAN

RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee:

1. **Participate** in a facilitated discussion to identify broad strategic priority areas that should inform the future direction of the Strategy.
2. **Provide feedback** on the relative importance of different areas of focus, to guide the development of draft goals and outcomes for further consideration.

Economic Development Strategy

- Early-stage work on the **Economic Development Strategy** was noted.
- Members were invited to provide feedback outside the meeting.
- Emphasis was placed on identifying **practical, actionable initiatives** that deliver measurable outcomes.

Meeting Operations and Scheduling

- Discussion considered:
 - Flexibility of meeting times to align with Council schedules.
 - Challenges for business representatives if times change at short notice.
- General consensus:
 - Maintain consistent, predetermined meeting times where possible.
- Next scheduled meetings:
 - 18 August 2026
 - 17 November 2026

Committee Effectiveness and Future Direction

13.1 Reflections

- Members expressed a desire for:
 - Greater action-oriented outcomes.
 - Clearer follow-through between meetings.
 - Opportunities for more active participation and contribution.

13.2 Key Themes Identified

- Strengthening the voice of the committee in shaping outcomes.
- Improving communication between Council and the business community.
- Addressing community sentiment and reputation challenges affecting the local economy.

13.3 Opportunities

- Potential for:
 - Stronger engagement with business stakeholders.
 - More structured pathways for translating discussion into action.
 - Better coordination with other groups and initiatives.

Key Action Items

By Next Meeting

- Prepare and conduct election of a new Chair for next meeting.
- Review and prepare proposed update for Terms of Reference
- Prepare recommendation to Council on integrated communications and required resourcing
- Coordinate committee involvement in “Brightening Our Brand” engagement once launched

Ongoing

- Monitor release of Economic Impact Statement and coordinate optional proponent briefing
- Provide updates from Council Working Group relevant to committee discussions
- Investigate funding or grant opportunities to support communications and promotion function

8 REPORT OF CONFIDENTIAL RESOLUTIONS

In accordance with clauses 14.22 and 14.23 of Council's Code of Meeting Practice, resolutions passed during a meeting, or a part of a meeting that is closed to the public must be made public by the Chairperson as soon as practicable. Such resolutions must be recorded in the publicly available minutes of the meeting.
