

# Merimbula Chamber of Commerce Business Strategy 2020 and Beyond

This document is designed to form the strategy for the Chamber to support businesses in 2020 and beyond. It takes into account the effects the bush fires have had on our business community and looks at a strategy that will enable us to support them.

## Immediate

1. Employ contractor to provide Administrative and Support Services to the Chamber
2. Expedite opening of Princess Hwy on Victorian side using ANY resources available
3. Develop new website for Chamber including Gift Voucher options
4. Continue advocating for the \$5000 business package to be extended to business INDIRECTLY impacted
5. Source funding to cover
  - a. 1-year Full time position for a shire wide Event co-ordinator for major events and conferences
  - b. 1 Year full time position for a shire wide Business Recovery Co-Ordinator to deal specifically with the needs of business and provide direct support

# Support Services

Providing a range of support to business including Finance, Legal, Insurance, Grants and Mental Health.

## People responsible

- Kirsty Martin - Insurance advisor
- Jessica Porter - Bank Manager
- Michael Britten - Solicitor
- Denise Burdett - Grant writer
- Simone Elyes - Grant writer
- Julie Novotny - Admin assistant
- Nigel Ayling - President

## Short term 1-3 Months

1. Advocate for Rent holidays or reductions with commercial property owners (Done)
2. Advocate for Commercial rates reductions with BVSC (Done)
3. Provide Mental Health services through local agencies
4. Grant Applications – Looking for opportunities to access grants
5. Create a list of available support options on our website (Done)
6. Advocate to Insurance companies for Business interruption insurance (Michael Britten offering assistance)

## Medium 4-12 Months

1. Host meeting to inform businesses about the importance of having appropriate insurance cover. (Insurance Advisor Net offering assistance)

## Long term 1- 2 years

1. Big ticket items
  - a. We need to have a list projects ready for funding opportunities in Merimbula CBD

# Retail

How we will work to support our Retail. Lee Salisbury – Chair - + Sub Committee

## Short Term 1- 3 Months

1. Develop new website for Chamber including Gift Voucher options
2. Promote businesses through our website and social media channels
3. Businesses need to be open
  - Knowing dates of events etc.
  - Window decoration for events and holidays etc.
4. Voucher booklet
  - For \$ - discount or value
  - Can be sold online
5. Easter
  - Easter Bunny
  - Easter Crazy Day
  - Easter hat and bonnet parade
  - Source bunny-like elf

## Medium Term 4-12 Months

1. Set up Micro Retailing outlet
2. Get more businesses online
3. Winter Wonderland in Merimbula.
  - Snow FM/ 2EC/Power FM outreach
  - Giveaways
  - Jazz Festival events
  - Lantern Walk
4. Business awards – June/July
  - Customer service
  - Business presentation
5. Cross promotions between
  - a. Clubs – Golf etc.
  - b. Hard copy calendars – for tennis, bowls etc.
6. October fundraiser
  - a. Beyond Blue
  - b. RU OK?
7. Crazy Day – September School Holidays

## Long Term 1-2 years

1. Beach Street for Markets

# Events and Visitation

## Visitation

Working in conjunction with a paid Event Co-Ordinator & Merimbula Tourism

### Short term 1- 3 months

1. Funding for Event Co-Ordinator
  - i. Apply for grants
  - ii. Target clubs and interest groups to come to Merimbula:
  - iii. Photography groups
  - iv. Sporting groups – competition regional and interstate
  - v. School groups
  - vi. Car and motoring enthusiast groups
  - vii. Dragon boat clubs – competition
  - viii. Talk to government departments to move events– NRL etc
2. Tourism package needs to include Vouchers distributed to people outside effected areas (similar to health kid's vouchers) to be redeemed at businesses inside effected areas. This money will go a lot further as people will spend more than the value of the voucher
3. Investigate the opportunities for increased low-cost flights into Merimbula
4. Develop Calendar of events
  - Includes all events
  - Holidays and school holidays listed
  - A super calendar which includes all others
  - Interim calendar could be taken from Merimbula and Sapphire Coast tourism's calendars
5. Major Black-Tie event to raise funds and stays
  - 1,000 people
  - Fundraising for community
  - Use it to invite back for future stays
6. A progressive dinner/lunch through all our eateries

## Medium Term 4-12 months

1. Event Co-ordinator role
  - Establish a number of NEW Major events throughout the year as well as grow existing events. Needs to be self-sustaining
  - Across Bega Valley Shire
  - Sponsored by Council
  - In charge of calendar, bookings and assisting with event planning, information etc.
2. Regular events development
  - Foodie markets and local produce
  - Beach Street
  - Discuss with Rotary, Lions etc.
  - Art and craft
3. Cultural events
  - Well-known artists visiting
  - Relief and benefit concerts
  - Comedy Night
4. Targeted Marketing development – Canberra travel shows, Canberra Show etc.

## Long Term 1-2 years

1. Festival development – increase number, value and length
2. Events Management development – professional
3. Cruise ship market development – town engagement and involvement
  - a. Indigenous for cruise market
  - b. Other attractions for cruise market – nothing in Merimbula
4. EAT Merimbula – include Beach Street
5. Oyster Spring Festival – Oyster Princess

# Communication and Media

## Short term 1-3 months

1. Option to submit an idea via our website
2. Regular Newsletters
3. Other media and social outlets
  - a. Newspapers and Radio – not just local – big audiences
  - b. Celebrities
  - c. Tom Gleeson - ambassador for Merimbula  
Chris Cincotta big Facebook page  
Celeste Barber raised \$50m+ so far, Em Rusciano
  - d. Existing social media campaigns
    - i. Empty eskies, buy from them, Buy regional. Hashtags etc
4. Co-ordinated social media campaign
  - a. Focus our posts around a few different themes or hashtags.  
For instance #shoplocal to encourage locals to eat out and buy from retailers  
#openforbusiness to get the message out to wider audience outside of the area that we are here still  
#supportsouthcoast to try and get people outside the area to provide direct support.
5. Shop Local needs to have a heart Our Merimbula (Stories)
6. Understanding of our existing social platforms
  - a. Our Merimbula FB page – Official communication from Chamber about what is happening in the area
  - b. MCOC – FB Group – Communication from Chamber to Members and Local Businesses
  - c. Support South Coast Business – To promote businesses located in the BVSC to people outside the area.
7. Instagram account
  - a. Christine Farnham and Taryn Lucas to assist
    - Create link @ourmerimbula
    - Get every accommodation provider and local business to ask their database to share this link

## Longer Term 1-2 years

1. Better targeting to the younger market
  - Promote night venues
  - Adventure activities
  - Scuba diving, walks, oyster tours
  - Nice restaurants
2. TV Advertising for BUSINESS once we get our house in order (more shops)
  - Cooperatively Funded

# Economic Development

## General:

1. Bega Valley Business Forum
2. Combined Chambers of Commerce
3. Working together as a Shire

## Short Term 1-3 Months

1. Being open for business
2. Making business “fit”
  - Give them skills
  - Financial skills
3. Mentoring
  - Different areas each month

## Medium Term 4-12 Months

1. Canberra retirees – invest in businesses here
2. Target city-based businesses to relocate or outpost
3. Business hubs
  - Get Ready
  - Empty spaces
  - Customer services
4. Grow Chamber Membership
  - a. Employ staff
  - b. Target Different Sectors, Trades and Professionals
  - c. Events co-ordinator
5. Chamber relationships
  - a. Illawarra
  - b. NSW
  - c. Snowy mountains
6. Customer satisfaction
  - Information
  - Business awards (June / July)

## Long Term:

1. Fast track major infrastructure projects in effected areas
  - a. Eden Port (wave attenuator/marina/land side precinct)
  - b. Tourism tracks and trails,
  - c. Airport upgrades
  - d. Business park
  - e. CBD masterplan development Merimbula

2. Educational Institutions to keep youth

- Innovation hub
- TAFE
- Look setting up Centre for excellence, Aquaculture, or Clean Energy, Ocean Research.

Population Growth

1. Decentralisation and remote workers