

Strategic Plan - Kodja Place



Purpose

The purpose of The Kodja Place is to provide opportunities for visitors and locals:

- **to explore evolving stories of our rural community, through award-winning presentations that combine Noongar and non-Indigenous experiences**
- **to take part in the life of the community through a range of activities in vibrant spaces**
- **to enjoy the benefits of local enterprises, including services and employment with the aim of enhancing experiences in the area.**

Notes:

1. The first dot point relates to the Rose Maze, The Kodj Gallery and the Storyplace and draws attention to the very special ways in which The Kodja Place brings together the stories of Kojonup through the experiences of different cultural groups. 'Evolving stories' refers to the importance of always making room for new stories as time passes and the community changes. 'Award-winning presentations' encourages us to set our sights high and to hold on to our commitment to excellent design.
2. The second dot point recognises The Kodja Place's important role in providing gathering places, like the stage and courtyard, the Rose Maze and the galleries, for a range of activities, including film nights, performances, exhibitions and weddings. It refers to the opportunities for locals to be involved in developing the community's stories for display and to assist visitors and school groups. 'Vibrant' infers that we will proactively maintain and enhance the spaces in which all these activities occur.
3. The third dot point recognises the importance of Kodja Place enterprises, including the cafe, visitor centre and Jack's Indigenous Tours. Employment opportunities are a key concern for all small communities. The provision of Noongar employment and business opportunities was a key plank of The Kodja Place's creation. The Kodja Place also has a key role in promoting other local businesses and services to visitors including accommodation providers and other tourist attractions. The Kodja Place precinct should complement not compete against other businesses in the area.

Executive summary

The Kodja Place Advisory Committee has been appointed to identify improvements and opportunities for the entire facility at The Kodja Place whilst retaining its cultural experience for visitors. The purpose of the strategic plan is to look at what those improvements and opportunities are and to formalize a list of strategic goals to ensure that the facility remains a viable proposition. In this regard you will see throughout this document that there are many existing strengths and opportunities to ensure its future. The weaknesses and threats identified could be mitigated by successful completion of the strategic goals.

The vision/purpose for The Kodja Place remains constant; however there are many opportunities to improve the current financial status of the facility as you will see in the graphs under the financial plan in page 5 of this document. There is also an opportunity for the annual funding allocation from the Shire of Kojonup to be reduced or discontinued, particularly if the strategic goals are successfully implemented.

As you will see in the Organisational Chart on page 7, the committee has determined that the facility is to be integrated and managed by the committee through the Chief Executive Officer of the Shire of Kojonup. This plan provides for a management structure of the facility and the café. There is an opportunity for the employment of a full time Manager for the facility who reports directly to the CEO. This position will be responsible for ensuring that the strategic goals of the facility are met annually.

When the Café becomes integrated into the one facility, there is also an opportunity to employ a full time Manager who also has KPI's that link into the strategic goals to enhance the entire facility and add value for visitors and their experiences.

However, there is also an opportunity for the entire facility to be managed by an Operator through a Licence Agreement where the Committee and CEO set various KPI's and operational requirements within that document without the need for further funding. The operator pays an annual licence fee which could be placed in a Reserve account for future maintenance and replacement costs of the facility.

Overall there is a positive future for The Kodja Place with opportunities to increase exposure to the facility and become a must see attraction.

Context

In 2014 The Kodja Place Advisory Committee (KPAC) have come together to complete a Strategic Plan to focus on the strategic issues facing the organisation, remembering the vision and purpose of the facility. The terms of reference are to advise Council on the following requirements at The Kodja Place:

- Prioritisation of capital works within the Shire of Kojonup budget allocation;
- Consider the current purpose and future planning of the precinct;
- The requirements of individual stakeholders within the precinct;
- Improve stakeholder communication;
- Identification of opportunities and improvements to current operations; and
- Methods to integrate all aspects of the precinct into one seamless customer experience and a singular attraction

Every member of KPAC is committed to revitalising and realising the enormous potential this iconic facility possesses despite the barriers and hurdles that had to be addressed.

A SWOT analysis was completed (Appendix A) which highlights some of the challenges going forward.

History

The Kodja Place is the result of the inspiration and drive of the local community to build a facility incorporating a Visitor Information Centre, Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Centre, Historical Interpretive Museum and a Rose Maze.

The most powerful and unique aspect of the Centre is the original branding of “One Story Many Voices” which conveys the Rose Maze’s extensive cultural interpretations of three women (Noongar, English and Italian) and their stories of survival and life experiences in the twentieth century. Complementing these stories are the Kodj Gallery and the Storyplace displays in which many local Noongar and non-indigenous peoples’ experiences and perspectives are also combined in imaginative and richly layered interpretations.

The Kodja Place is the story of the creation and development of Kojonup and the achievements of the different cultures, highlighting how they have worked side by side to develop Kojonup and build a strong community. It acknowledges the hard times and struggles as well as the joys and everyday ways of our contemporary country life. The land and bush are a key part of the story.

From the original concept in 1997, The Kodja Place was officially opened in September 2002 and highlighted the existence of the different cultures in Kojonup and provided a place where they can all be together. Further to that a Café was opened to integrate all the various attractions and add value to the visitor experience.

The facility employs a full time Manager with the support of many community volunteers who are as passionate today as they were from the beginning in terms of showcasing the history of the culture and history of Kojonup and how all cultures came together to highlight the road to reconciliation.

Internal situation

The Kodja Place Advisory Committee (KPAC) comprising of delegates from the Kojonup Tourist Association, Kojonup Aboriginal Corporation, The Kodja Place Community Fund Inc., Rose Maze, Story Place and the Shire of Kojonup, was formed in November 2013. At the first meeting in February 2014 the Shire President advised that KPAC were to begin “a new process of integrated Strategic Planning to ensure assets such as The Kodja Place achieved the vision that was originally intended and continued viability as change is constant”. At the Strategic Planning workshop a number of strengths were recognised including the location, unique concept/facility, established networks, increased traffic, award winning museum, diverse attractions, cultural links, etc. The main weakness for The Kodja Place is the lack of continued marketing including updated signage in more strategic areas, effective information technology, although this is currently being addressed, and a lack of definition as to what The Kodja Place is.

External situation

Whilst there are many opportunities identified by KPAC, the main ones are to hold regular events with no or low cost advertising through media releases, linkages to Education Department for learning opportunities, employment of local Noongar and Wadjela’s through traineeships, engage younger people and create excitement for the

local community with residents wanting to become involved in the ongoing success of the facility.

A number of other opportunities such as promotion of The Kodja Place and Kojonup as a destination are constrained by the lack of funding available and Council's budget. Furthermore without additional trained volunteers there is the threat of volunteer burnout and through this a loss of knowledge and lack of information of the operations.

Markets/stakeholders

An analysis of the Visitor Book in 2010 provided details as to the current market. Most visitors are from within Western Australia followed by International visitors. The largest number of intrastate visitors is from Perth followed by the South West. The largest number of international visitors comes from the UK, followed by Europe and Asia. The Kodja Place is currently waiting on the WA Tourism report for further information as to market segmentation.

Information from Google analytics provide information as to site visitors, which page they were attracted to, etc. and this is attached for further information.

Goals and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), Strategies, Actions Plans

A list of seven strategic goals are provided at Appendix "B" with information as to the actions required to achieve each goal, the resources required, responsible officer, date to be completed and the KPI's of achieving each of the goals.

Program

A number of programs were highlighted in the Strategic goals at Appendix "B" including:

- Upgrade of IT infrastructure to improve the visitor experience
- A smartphone app to advise motorists approaching Kojonup of the attractions such as The Kodja Place, accommodation, cafes, etc., as well as provide information as to the numbers accessing the app.
- Uniform signage to include an updated branding of The Kodja Place strategically situated on the East/West main roads approaching Kojonup and before Williams and Mount Barker on the Albany Highway
- Planned calendar of events promoting The Kodja Place such as celebrating the cultural heritage of Noongars and Wadjela's.

Marketing/Engagement plan

A number of activities have been highlighted in Appendix "B" and include:

- Obtain funding for traineeships and in particular Noongar trainees to assist with greeting visitors and sharing their cultural history.
- Mentoring of volunteers and other parties
- Partnerships with other providers in the Great Southern Region
- Aligning the facility with local businesses for promotion
- Working with School Groups and holding competitions for students to provide ideas for growth, etc.

- Creating a number of events, promotions to engage and excite the local community.
- Engage with other tourism providers around Australia to highlight the many attractions and the uniqueness of the “three women’s” journey of three different and distinct cultures.

Core elements

Brand statement

The Kodja Place is to be positioned as a high quality visitor experience and an authoritative presenter of regional Australia’s cultural journey.

The Kodja Place

One Story, Many Voices

(Combining Noongar and Non-Indigenous experiences and viewpoints through contemporary interpretations of Kojonup’s cultural journey.)

The Brand Statement also encapsulates the diverse community efforts in the Rose Maze, Yoondi’s Mia Mia, Kodj Gallery, Storyplace, Visitor Centre, Café and landscaped areas within the precinct as they all form part of one story but with many voices; contributing to the journey undertaken and continuing at The Kodja Place.

Target markets/stakeholders

The current target markets are:

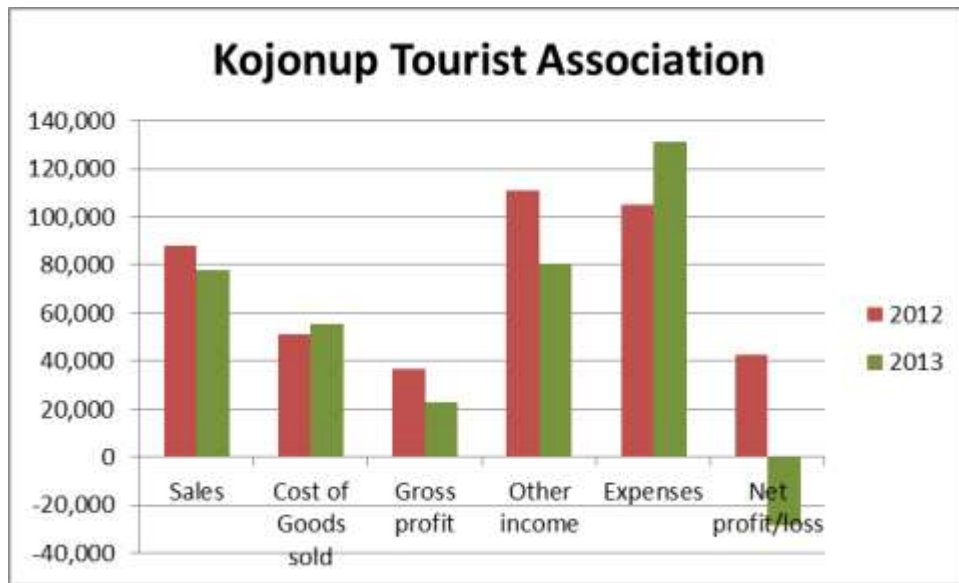
- All town visitors
- All transit/through travellers
- Perth and the South West
- UK and European and Asian visitors

New target markets could include:

- Developing links with nurseries
- Travellers from Perth and Albany – promote must see attraction as half way to Perth and Albany
- Grey nomads – campervan website and magazine
- Students from schools between Perth and Albany

Financial plan

For the year ended 30 June 2013, the financial statements show a loss of \$28,180 whereas in 2012, there was a profit of \$42,768, a downturn in profit of \$70,948. This is explained by a small decline in sales, increase of stock purchases, and decline in catering/ hires income, commission income, and events income. The expenses in 2013 compared to 2012 were \$26,000 higher and this relates to advertising and promotion, fixtures and fittings, staff superannuation, telephone/internet, contract administration staff, etc. Net assets declined by 30% represented primarily by the loss of profit. It is clear that the income from sales, events, catering and commission income has declined substantially in the 2013 financial year. See graph below:

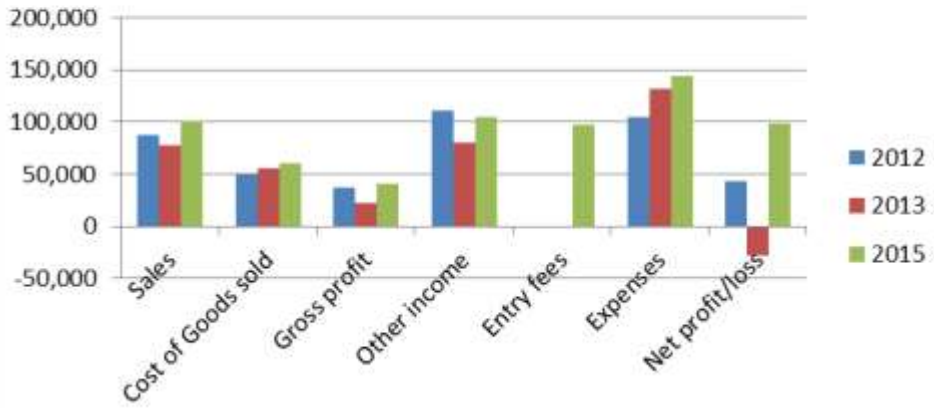


The financial statements for 2014 have not yet been completed. If the strategic goals are met, it is not unreasonable to expect an uplift in visitors and therefore sales. Furthermore holding events throughout the year gives the opportunity for increased sales and ultimately profits. The strategies to be put in place will also lead to increased visitor satisfaction and experiences, leading to word of mouth marketing and generates an excitement among the local community to further advocate increased awareness and potential visitors.

A potential increase in sales could equate to 30% uplift in revenue and other income. Expenses will however be increased due to the cost of achieving and implementing the strategic goals.

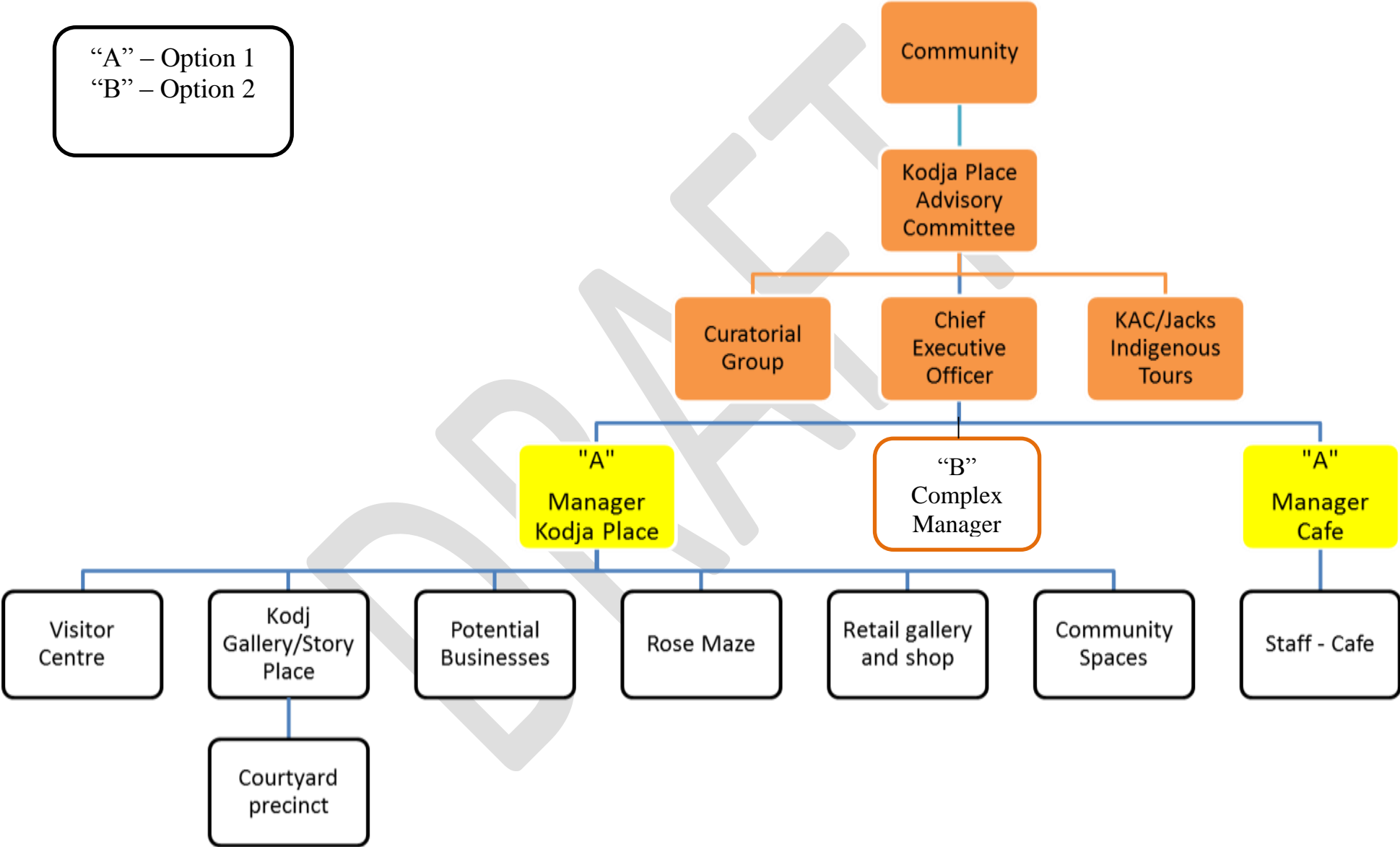
If income increased by 30% and expenses by 10% plus commence charging an entrance fee of \$5.00 per person and \$10.00 for family of 4 the total profit could increase substantially as evidenced in the below graph. Previous indications of the number of visitors were around 20,000. If visitor numbers increased by 30%, this would provide for a total of 26,000 visitors per annum. Assume half of these are families and the remainder singles which would provide additional income of \$97,500.

Kojonup Tourist Assn - 2015 financial projections



DRAFT

“A” – Option 1
“B” – Option 2



Staff information

Facility Manager – Glenys Russell (Kojonup Tourist Association Inc.)

Volunteers

Present Committee

Cr. Ronnie Fleay	Shire President and Chair of “The Kodja Place Advisory Committee”
Cr Robert Sexton	Deputy Shire President (Proxy)
Rick Mitchell-Collins	Chief Executive Officer, Shire of Kojonup
Glenys Russell	Kojonup Tourist Association Delegate
Cr John Benn	Kojonup Tourist Association Proxy
Craig McVee	Kojonup Aboriginal Corporation Delegate
William Harvey	Kodja Place Community Fund Inc Delegate
Roger Bilney	Kodja Place Community Fund Inc Proxy
Cathy Wright	Rose Maze Delegate
Kate O’Halloran	Rose Maze Proxy
Wendy Thorn	Story Place Proxy
Barbara Hobbs	Story Place Delegate
Margaret Robertson	Story Place Program Coordinator

Potential Future “Skills Based” Committee

Chair - Shire President

Kodja Place Precinct Manager

Kojonup Aboriginal Corporation

Story Place Program Coordinator

Representatives:

- Tourism
- Arts & Culture
- Finance/Information Communication Technology (ICT)
- Governance
- Marketing & Promotion
- Education

Possible risks in not achieving the Strategic Goals

Risks	Probability	Impact	Strategies to mitigate risks
External/environmental – significant economic changes, Govt. policy, etc.	Unlikely	Reduced visitor numbers	Signage, advertising, events, media
Financial – affordability of strategic goals	Possible	Cannot implement all goals and possible reduction in visitors	Ensure structure completed asap, engagement of manager/contractor, look at innovative ways to reduce costs
Marketing and reputation	Possible	Brand damage and reduced visitor numbers, reduction in community loyalty	Ensure all marketing and events are run professionally and considered by Committee and CEO prior to proceeding
Management – new manager/operator does not possess full expertise required, loss of key people/volunteers	Possible	Loss of knowledge and reputation, reduction in visitor numbers	Ensure new Manager/Operator has the required experience and reference checked
Operational – committee members not all agreed on strategic goals and way forward	Possible	Disenfranchised committee, disengaged Manager and strategic goals not met - status quo	Ensure committee agree to the strategic goals and are fully committed to them prior to adopting the Strategic Plan.

APPENDIX "A"

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location • Unique facility/concept • Established networks • Ethos • On main highway • Increased traffic • Passionate volunteers • Low running costs • Award winning museum • Types/quality product • Knowledgeable staff/volunteers • Open 364 days per year • Diverse attractions • Policies and procedures • Cultural links • Local product • Local meeting place • Existing built infrastructure 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perception visitor centre only • Lack of persistent marketing • Signage • Access to policies and procedures • Lack of curator • No succession planning • Lack integrated planning • Organisational structure • Local value/ownership • Kojonup not a destination • Lack of marketing or targeted • No wow factor existing signage • Volunteers unskilled • Duplication IT, face book • No wow factor at entrance • Limited expansion opportunity • Layout of all space • Asset management costs • Lack of volunteers • Lack risk management • Website & effective delivery
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Destination • Partnerships • Smartphone App • Brochures – airports, campervan, etc. • Events – media releases (no cost) • Articles/ads gardening magazines • Signage • Induction manual • Increasing revenue streams • Events • Increasing community acceptance • Develop tourism strategy • Links to Café – integration • Engage younger people with IT skills • Employment of locals • Increasing volunteers • Co-ordinated approach to all areas • Online product sales • Expanding school interest/aboriginal education • Growing cultural awareness • Restructure of management • Sponsors • Continuous improvement • Traineeships – Noongar and others • Develop links to Education Dept. 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of funding available • Competition other venues • Loss of cultural links • Council capping subsidy • Reduction external grants • Professional presentation • Lack of manuals to standardise procedures • Non compliance • Volunteer burnout • Equipment/IT failure • Lack Business Continuity • Loss of knowledge • Lack of information of operations

APPENDIX "B"

Strategic Goal	Actions (how will the Goal be achieved)	Responsibility	Resources required (Financial, Marketing, Human Resources, IT, etc.)	Date to be completed	KPI's – How will we measure the success of each goal?
To enhance and improve the cultural experience for all visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrade multimedia • Update and enhance selected display elements • Commence works on completing displays in Storyplace i.e. Workshop/Farm Office • Photo database - keywords • Develop Intranet site content – (Stage 1) • Improve signage out of town 	CEO/Advisory Committee	Budget allocation, grant funding, Manager, Curator, brand developer	June 2015	Increased visitor numbers, positive satisfaction survey results,
Greater Noongar presence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain funding for traineeships • Mentoring by internal/external parties • Engagement • Long term programs/employment 	Manager	Time, existing staff	June 2015	<u>Noongar</u> trainees at work
Management restructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Form advisory Committee • Agreement on way forward • New agreements • Compliance • Engage Manager for business <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Individuals ○ Company 	CEO/Advisory Committee	Budget allocation for appointment of Manager and Curator	June 2015	Management structure in place

Marketing of events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upgrade IT including “What’s on” page updates within Kodja Place Web site • Smartphone app • Uniform signage/branding • Current marketing plan/strategy • Event planning and promotion 	TBA	Marketing consultant <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Brand experts - Funding opportunities Sponsors	June 2015	Increase in visitors Increased web visits Increased app users Engaged community
Risk Management plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify risks <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Building maintenance/renewal o Staff/volunteers 	CEO + Advisory Committee	Funds to be allocated in budget for Special Project Officer to prepare plan	Dec 2014	Completed Risk policy and Plan
Strategic Alliances/Partnerships	Partnering with other providers Aligning with local providers	Manager/Advisory Committee	Manager + Advisory Committee	June 2015	Partnerships/alliances in place
Engage younger people	Youth Council, Face book, high school, competition for community re what their areas are to improve	Manager/Advisory Committee	Budget allocation	June 2015	Young people employed