

Norfolk Island Regional Council

MEDIA RELEASE

KEEPING THE COMMUNITY INFORMED

MAYOR VISITS WOOLLAHRA MUNICIPAL COUNCIL

'Whilst my time off Island last week was for personal business, I did take the opportunity to meet with the Mayor of Woollahra Municipal Council Cr Toni Zeltzer, the General Manager Mr Gary James and Councillors,' Mayor Adams said, 'Woollahra Municipal Council is just up the road from Rose Bay where I was staying with friends. Their Council which has 15 Councillors meets twice a month on a Monday at 8.00pm. I was very warmly received by the Mayor who gave the Norfolk Island Regional Council formal recognition during their Council meeting. It was interesting to observe their meeting procedures which are very similar to ours though most of the evening's business was debating planning issues.'

CURBING AND SEALING OF TAYLORS ROAD

'I responded on radio this week to questions asked of me about the works on Taylors Road and I hope the following is helpful though it does not answer the question "why are we only curbing the low side of the road,"' Mayor Adams said.

The Commonwealth provided \$500,000 grant funding for –

- a) the footpath from Channers Corner to Norfolk Village;
- b) roadworks at Channers Corner to the cattle stop on Taylors Road, including concrete kerb/gutter and dish-drain; and
- c) roadworks along Taylors Road from this cattle stop until the Commonwealth's funds ran out which was expected to happen near the Colony Chinese Restaurant.

A decision was taken to only concrete curb and gutter the road on the low side to collect runoff and channel it into the pit outside the Chinese Restaurant. Funds have been provided in Council's 2016/2017 Budget to complete resealing Taylors Road from the Chinese Restaurant to, and including, Norfolk Village. Again the project will include curbing on the low side of Taylors Road.

MANAGEMENT PLANS FOR COMMONWEALTH MARINE RESERVES

At its October Council Meeting this week Council agreed a submission be sent in the following terms:

That Council provides a submission outlining the following:

- (1) Currently Norfolk Island fishers can legally collect (in pots and nets) spanner crabs etc in waters surrounding Norfolk Island up to the limits of the 40nm x 67nm 'box'. Rezoning the majority of 'the box' from MUZ (Multiple Use Zone) to HPZ (Habitat Protection Zone) will prevent Norfolk Island Fishermen from participating in traditional fishing activities; including using pots and nets to collect crabs outside of the 10 kms x 10km MUZ. We ask that the current traditional fishing activities remain legal in waters surrounding Norfolk Island up to the limits of the 40nm x 67nm 'box'.

- (2) Council is in agreement with the northern part of the reserve maintaining the marine national park zone.
- (3) Council is in agreement with the southern part of the reserve introducing a new marine national park zone which provides protection over the Vening-Meinsez Fracture Zone.
- (4) That the recommendation to rezone a large part of Norfolk Islands 'box' from MUZ to HPZ and to create a small 10km x 10 km MUZ zone around Norfolk Island be amended to be the same size as our current 'box'. For clarity, the recommendation would need to be amended to read 'Change the MUZ to HPZ except for an area of 40nm X 67nm centred around Norfolk Island'.

In summary:

In 2012 all Norfolk Island waters with the Norfolk Island box (The Box) were zoned multiple use. The current proposal recommended by the Review Panel is that 98.5% of the area inside The Box is to be rezoned a habitat protection zone. This move is creating wide spread confusion in the community and is not supported by the Norfolk Island Regional Council. The confusion is easily removed by leaving the area inside The Box zoned as a multiple use zone.

BUSINESS CASE TELECOMMUNICATIONS

In relation to Council's deliberations on the future of Norfolk Island's Telecommunications, as discussed in the Confidential part of the Ordinary Council meeting, Council resolved the following:

'In acknowledgement that –

- 1) Quality telecommunications are imperative to Norfolk Island's future prosperity especially as a tourism destination;
- 2) Norfolk Telecom is currently the principle provider of fixed-line ADSL; PSTN; 2G voice and text mobile services on the Island; and
- 3) The commercial viability of Norfolk Telecom currently is in serious doubt –

in order to improve the commercial viability of Norfolk Telecom going forward Council be provided as a matter of urgency with a business case:

- A) To support an application being made to the Commonwealth -
 - (i) For grant funding to upgrade the mobile network to 4G which in 2014 was estimated to cost \$3.7 million; and
 - (ii) For grant funding to update the fixed voice system with fixed wireless units with the 4G system at an estimated cost of \$640,000;
- B) To support Norfolk Telecom becoming a Retail Service Provider (RSP) for nbn services as recommended by Senator the Hon Fiona Nash in her letter to Cr Adams of 21 September 2016 thereby allowing Norfolk Telecom to compete with other RSPs to provide nbn services on Norfolk Island as well as to expand its potential market to other parts of regional Australia;
- C) To support a further application being made to the Commonwealth for grant funding to enable fibre optic connectivity; and
- D) If the aforementioned are not successful then Council commence discussions with the Minister for Regional Communications, Senator the Honourable Fiona Nash, with the aim of extending the *Telecommunications Act 1997 (Cth)* to Norfolk Island by 30 June 2017.

'Detail of other matters dealt with at the meeting of Council this week can be accessed at [http://www.norfolkisland.gov.nf/NIRC Council Meetings/Minutes](http://www.norfolkisland.gov.nf/NIRC_Council_Meetings/Minutes),' the Mayor said.

Cr Robin Adams
Mayor

21 October 2016