

Norfolk Island Regional Council

MEDIA RELEASE **KEEPING THE COMMUNITY INFORMED**

Visit of Gai Brodtmann MP

Councillors, the General Manager and Group Managers met with Ms Gai Brodtmann MP last Saturday and whilst her visit was short it would seem that she was able to have discussions with a broad cross section of the community as well as visiting the Hospital. Councillors took the opportunity to raise a number of issues which included –

- What Commonwealth funding is available to Councils?
- What is the ACT framework for preschool child care?
- Economic opportunities in addition to tourism, it being our single industry on which Norfolk's economy depends.
- Modern Health facilities
- Medicinal marijuana licencing
- Community (all purpose) hall at the school
- Problem with storage of excess power generated through photovoltaics.

'Council has undertaken to provide Ms Brodtmann with the Community Strategic Plan and the Operational Plan when adopted by Council later this month, as these documents will provide Ms Brodtmann with an understanding of where her efforts to advocate for Commonwealth funding would be best placed. The outcomes from the meeting were positive,' Mayor Adams said.

Early Education and Child Care Services

'The General Manager and I are meeting this afternoon with providers of early education businesses on the Island and the School Principal to discuss the issue of how these businesses will be able to meet Australian accreditation standards in the next 3-5 years,' Mayor Adams said. 'This is an issue that is causing concern for families with preschool children and the Administrator and I are agreed that the issue is one that requires ongoing collaboration between all parties –Local, State and Commonwealth - to ensure that Norfolk Island is able to provide the community with early child care services into the future.', Mayor Adams said.

Suicide Prevention and Awareness Day

'The draft Community Strategic Plan clearly identifies the role of Council to lobby and advocate for public health awareness', Mayor Adams said, 'and last Sunday was *Suicide Prevention and Awareness Day* which was commemorated on Norfolk with over 30 bike riders doing a round-the-Island bike ride to raise awareness of this issue. I extend sincere thanks of councillors to the Mental Health Awareness Group and to Melinda Hassen and Lee

Hamilton-Irvine for their community spirit in organising the event and for bringing to the Island, Hamid and Robyn Couri.'

Hamid Couri, an inspiring speaker, is an advocate for raising awareness of the issue of depression and how it can be addressed within communities. Hamid works to raise awareness through his participation in *The Black Dog Ride* around Australia and the USA.

Visit of consultants and officers from South East Sydney Local Health District and from Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development

Councillors met on Tuesday with consultants from CARRAMAR, a firm of consultants engaged to develop a Norfolk Island Health and Aged Care Clinical Services Plan. They were accompanied by officers from South East Sydney Local Health District and from the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development.

'I am very pleased to be able to tell the community that the rumour that the pathology department is closing down is totally incorrect; in fact the Commonwealth is funding the provision of new equipment needed to update the facility', the Mayor said. 'It was good for Councillors to hear firsthand what a Multi-Purpose Services (MPS) model is and to learn that Norfolk already aligns in the main with that model.'

'It was also encouraging,' the Mayor said, 'to hear the consultants say that they saw Norfolk had the potential to be a showcase for the MPS model, as we move forward.'

Mayor meets with officers from the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources

On Thursday the Mayor met with officers of the Department of Agriculture and Water Resources who are on Island to continue assisting the community to understand the new biosecurity regime in place for Norfolk Island following the application of Commonwealth biosecurity legislation to Norfolk Island from 1 July 2016.

'It is a matter of the community now needing to accept that there is a new regulatory regime in place for the importation of plants, animals, stock feed etc. and it is in the interest of all of us to learn as quickly as possible how the new system operates so that we can make it work for us, not hinder us,' the Mayor said. 'I raised the need for the Commonwealth, as a matter of priority, to have available easy to understand Factsheets for importers. I am confident that the Biosecurity officers stationed on Island are available and willing to assist the community with addressing any concerns they might have and assisting importers in navigating the permit regime now in place.'

Robin Adams
Mayor
9 September 2016