

Norfolk Island Regional Council

MEDIA RELEASE

KEEPING THE COMMUNITY INFORMED

VISIT OF SENATOR THE HON FIONA NASH MP TO NORFOLK ISLAND

Minister for Regional Development | Minister for Local Government and Territories |
Minister for Regional Communications

‘As readers will recall on 20 July I wrote on behalf of Councillors to Senator the Hon Fiona Nash MP offering congratulations on her appointment as the Federal Minister with portfolio responsibilities for Norfolk Island. I also extended a warm welcome to the Senator to visit Norfolk Island to have discussions with the Council on how we can work together for the benefit of the Norfolk Island community going forward’, Mayor Adams said.

Minister Nash arrived late last night and met with Councillors and the General Manager this afternoon at the Council Chambers. Minister Nash was accompanied at the meeting by His Honour the Administrator Mr Gary Hardgrave; Mr Nathan Smyth (Chief of Staff to the Minister); Ms Robyn Fleming (Executive Director to Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development); Mr Les White (Deputy Chief of Staff and Media Adviser); and Advisers Mr Adam Wyldeck and Mr Nick Hannan. Mayor Adams offered the following words of welcome.

‘Minister Nash, Administrator, ladies and gentlemen. It gives me great pleasure Minister on behalf of the Norfolk Island community, Councillors and the General Manager of our Regional Council to welcome you to our beautiful Island.

‘Council is currently in the final stages of settling the Island’s Community Strategic Plan which will cover the next 10 years. Development of the plan has entailed a very lengthy consultation process with the Norfolk Island Community; and Council has received and considered many submissions. The Plan is to be adopted by 1 October 2016. The Vision proposed in the Community Strategic Plan is –

NORFOLK ISLAND: THE BEST SMALL ISLAND IN THE WORLD

‘This Vision is not new. In fact it first appeared in the Population Study of Norfolk Island dated 31 March 1974 written by Professor G.J. Butland on commission from the then Australian Government. Professor Butland in his report concluded that –

“If a concerted effort were made, backed by larger financial resources, the community could turn the very small area of the island to its own advantage by converting Norfolk Island into ‘the best small island in the world’, a model haven of considerable beauty, of unique historical interest, of a thriving community, and of rest and relaxation – which are the objectives of the overwhelming mass of the tourists who make the journey to its shores.”

‘Minister I continue to hold the view that Norfolk Island has the potential to be Australia’s showcase to the world of best practice; but to achieve that goal requires a commitment on the part of the Commonwealth Government and Norfolk Island to partner and collaborate on achieving that outcome.

'I am sure Councillors and the General Manager join with me in saying we look forward Minister to working closely with you and the Administrator to realise the goal that Norfolk Island is the best small island in the world.'

Councillors took the opportunity to raise with the Minister the following issues which Council is currently addressing.

- The Hawaiki Submarine Cable System providing fibre connectivity internet access for Norfolk Island – options for funding – Regional Council to operate
- Financial Assistance Grants from Commonwealth
- Waste Management – Investigation for a suitable Incinerator with partnership grant funding
- Electricity – state government role – need for funding source / grant opportunities for solar power storage facility
- Multi-purpose hall at the Norfolk Island Central School
- Waiver of the Airport Loan (Reference letter to Administrator of 1 August 2016)

'The discussions were broad ranging and informative and I will report on the outcomes next week', the Mayor said. 'It was very encouraging to have the Minister across the issues we raised and to ask searching questions to which Council will respond promptly.'

POTENTIAL FOR FIBRE CONNECTIVITY FOR INTERNET ACCESS TO NORFOLK ISLAND

By way of background

Councillors and Senior Management were briefed on Monday morning by the Chief Technical Officer for Hawaiki, Ms Virginie Frouin who paid an overnight visit to the Island to present the Hawaiki Submarine Cable System to Council. This commercial opportunity was brought to the table for discussion with Councillors and with the Administrator by Councillor McCoy. The deadline for Norfolk to commit to being part of the Hawaiki cable installation is 30 September 2016 and Minister Nash's visit is very timely.

'Council sees the Hawaiki opportunity as essential for both Norfolk Island and the Commonwealth Government to be able to optimise diversification of its economy; and to facilitate many other commercial opportunities for the Island along with telemedicine, e-health and e-education.' Mayor Adams said.

ROADSIDE CLEAN UP

Last Sunday a small band of community minded people helped with the removal from our roadsides of noxious and woody weeds including cascade onion, thistles, lantana and baekastuff. This was an initiative of Landcare and the Norfolk Island Cattle Association and Council thanks those who turned out to help both in the lead up to Sunday and on the day. Noxious weeds Island wide are becoming a major problem in many areas and it is going to take an army of dedicated people to eradicate them. Ownership of most of the roads on Norfolk Island and some reserves was recently transferred from the Commonwealth to the Norfolk Island Regional Council and the noxious weeds issue is a serious matter for Council to consider going forward.

ANGLICARE

'It was a pleasure on Thursday to meet Anglicare representatives Ms Jill Wrathall (Regional Manager), Mrs Tracy Hicks (Program Manager) and Ms Margot Thomas (Family Worker),' Mayor Adams said, 'and it was interesting to learn that Anglicare has been a provider of community and aged care services since 1856. As their pamphlet says, "the same year that the Pitcairners arrived on Norfolk Island".' Ms Hicks (mobile 51644) has now moved permanently to the Island and Ms Thomas (mobile 51663) is here for 6 weeks assisting with the setting up of Anglicare on the Island. The Anglicare office is currently upstairs in the Parish Centre and you can contact the on island Office Administrator Ms Barbara Elliott on 52000 to make an appointment.

The experience offered by Anglicare encompasses child, youth and family services; out-of-home care and adoption; relationship and financial counselling; disability and mental health support; emergency relief; community and residential aged care and retirement living.

'I was encouraged that Anglicare were concerned about a number of issues, particularly those affecting families with children 0-5 years', Mayor Adams said, 'and I look forward to further discussion with Anglicare on these issues.'

Robin Adams
Mayor

16 September 2016