

Council Reference: ECM3467128  
Your Reference: V14/97



19 September 2014

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Dear Ms Hobbs

### **2014/15 Small Business Friendly Councils Program**

In response to your letter of 16 September 2014 with respect to requested information from Tweed Shire Council in relation to its participation in the Small Business Friendly Council (SBFC) Program I advise the following.

#### Update Council's Operational Plan

The Tweed Shire Council Operational Plan will be updated to include "On time" Payment Policy and Business Improvement Processes. However, it is not feasible for this to occur prior to 1 October 2014 as you have suggested. The reason for this is updates to the Operational Plan will need to be worked through by staff and then placed before a General Council meeting and this is not possible before the meeting to be held on 20 November 2014. Council will however, still be able to report on these for Q2, Q3 and Q4 of the 2014/2015 reporting year.

#### Public Commitment to the SBFC Program

Your comments as to the media fact sheet and the standard statement are acknowledged. The SBFC logo and statement from Council will be placed on Council's website.

#### Dispute Resolution Services

I confirm what was stated in my letter of 15 September 2014, in that the Tweed Shire Council will only refer matters to the Dispute Resolution Unit when there is not an internal complaints mechanism or another statutory mechanism available such as the Land and Environment Court, Information Commissioner or NSW Civil and Administrative Tribunal.

#### Business Advisory Board

Council's current Economic Development Strategy satisfies this requirement which states we will, 'Prepare a draft charter and membership structure for the Economic Development Committee of Council identified in the Economic Development Strategy'. It is planned for this Committee to be established within the 2014/2015 financial year.

#### On time Payment Policy

You requested information as to Council's current payment cycle. The adopted Tweed Shire Council Finance Protocol states:

#### **'Creditors - Payment of Accounts**

*Payment of accounts to creditors will be made promptly and, unless mitigating circumstances apply, within the due date.'*

In reality Council pays based on the terms stated on the invoice of which there are generally only three being 7, 14 or 30 days.

### Business Improvement Processes

In relation to the two Business Improvement Processes strategies Council will implement, I advise the following:

1. The first being many businesses have highlighted the complexity of the development application process as a barrier to investment. Some of this relates to State Planning Policy but there may also be a requirement for Council to provide a more service orientated process in particular for business. With this being the case Council will appoint a new position within the organisation to act as a business concierge. The position title will be 'Economic Development Officer'.
2. Tweed Shire Council will participate in a regional procurement review in conjunction with other Northern Rivers Regional Organisation of Councils (NOROC). The review will be facilitated through ArcBlue, a specialist procurement consultancy group.

The review will look at matters such as local preference policies and group purchasing. The aims of the review are to:


- make savings and create efficiencies by sustainably reducing the cost of goods, services and infrastructure sourced through external suppliers;
- to stimulate economic activity across the Region through providing broader opportunities for local suppliers of the goods, services and infrastructure required by Council; and
- to provide a structured model and Regional Roadmap to strengthen on-going collaboration and regional cooperation.

### One additional SBFC Initiative

As to an additional Small Business Friendly Council initiative I can advise Council will review the time it takes for processing requests from the public, businesses and consultants such as solicitors and conveyancers for the provision of sewer diagrams. In the past such a request has taken up to ten days to be processed and has delayed things such as contract of sale for properties. Council will work towards providing the diagrams within five working days and within two working days with an 'urgency fee' component attached to the application.

Yours faithfully



19 Sep 2014 2:18 PM   
**Troy Green**  
**GENERAL MANAGER**