

Tweed Shire Council
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TWEED SHIRE COUNCIL
RECEIVED
DATE - 3 JAN 2018

Dear Mayor / General Manager

REGIONAL CITIES NSW

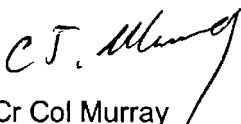
Ref: *nh/PB/SF1271*

As a major regional city in NSW you would have a clear understanding of the important role that you play in the ongoing growth and prosperity of your city and the broader surrounding region. As one of the 16 largest regional cities in NSW outside of the Newcastle/Sydney/Wollongong area I am writing to invite you to participate in an exciting new initiative that will provide an increased opportunity to influence government policy and spending for the benefit of our collective regions.

The Inland Forum is an existing group of seven Councils that have worked collaboratively for a number of years to achieve improved outcomes and opportunities for inland NSW. The current Inland Forum members of Albury, Armidale, Bathurst, Dubbo, Orange, Tamworth and Wagga Wagga Councils have agreed that there is huge potential in expanding the membership of the group to create a new body to be known as Regional Cities NSW. The attached model/discussion paper is based heavily on the successful model that has been implemented in Victoria where the ten largest cities outside of Melbourne work co-operatively on issues and projects of mutual interest that affect regional cities in that State. That group has achieved some significant outcomes and established a strong partnership with the Victorian State Government.

I invite you to read the attached proposal and indicate whether you would be prepared to meet with the current Inland Forum members and other identified regional cities in Sydney on Thursday 1 March 2018 to further discuss your participation in Regional Cities NSW. The NSW Government has already expressed their strong support for the formation of this group and the Deputy Premier and relevant senior bureaucrats will also be invited to participate in the discussions.

Yours sincerely



Cr Col Murray
Mayor

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19 December 2017

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Regional Cities NSW

Who is RCNSW?

RCNSW comprises Mayors and CEOs/General Managers of 16 large cities in regional New South Wales. These cities reside outside of the expanded metropolitan areas of Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong, have distinct regional catchments, and share similar opportunities and challenges for growth and investment. The group meets quarterly and is chaired by a host council which is voted to the position annually.

RCNSW is an alliance of regional cities dedicated to achieving real change in regional New South Wales through policy development and active implementation of those policies.

Regional cities are the heart of regional New South Wales and by improving their infrastructure and liveability, regional cities can help to grow and support wider regional and rural communities.

The RCNSW Vision

Building a sustainable New South Wales through regional growth.

Our Objectives

- Continue to play an important role in the development of strategies that benefit regional and rural New South Wales and inform government policy.
- Develop long-term policy positions that support and encourage the growth of regional New South Wales in its own right, that develop the regions as a viable alternative to metropolitan Sydney, and that encourage, enable and support government to deliver these policies.
- Improve the infrastructure and liveability of regional cities through development of quality services, amenities and transport networks in order to promote economic development in regional and rural communities.
- Encourage new industries and increase workforce capacity and employment opportunities in regional cities.
- Continue to build awareness of RCNSW within government, media, business and RCNSW communities.
- Maintain a reputation for well-considered and evidenced-based positions.

Governance

Regional Cities New South Wales (RCNSW) is an alliance of 16 regional cities that represent the collective interest of regional cities within the regions. Our members work co-operatively on issues and projects of mutual interest that affect regional cities as well as the whole state of New South Wales.

The following councils have been granted the right to membership of RCNSW by virtue of having a distinct city identity that provides services to a broader regional catchment.

- Albury
- Armidale
- Bathurst
- Cessnock
- Coffs Harbour
- Dubbo
- Griffith
- Lismore
- Maitland
- Orange
- Port Macquarie-Hastings
- Queanbeyan
- Tamworth
- Greater Taree
- Tweed
- Wagga Wagga

Membership excludes those councils that are located in the coastal development corridor from Newcastle in the North to Shellharbour in the South due to the existing high level focus of the State Government on the development of these regions.

RCNSW will be governed by an unincorporated arrangement (Memorandum of Understanding) which is effective for a period of five years commencing January 1, 2018. RCNSW will allocate appropriate resources to fulfil the role of a secretariat that will work to an approved Strategic Plan, which will be reviewed annually. A standard membership fee of \$10,000 per annum will apply and voting rights shall be one vote per member Council in attendance.

RCNSW's vision is to build a sustainable New South Wales through regional growth.

Our objectives are:

- Define and develop long-term policies that support and encourage the growth of regional New South Wales as a viable alternative to metropolitan Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong
- Encourage, enable and support governments to deliver those policies
- Ensure regional cities continue to enjoy quality services, amenities and transport networks
- Increase workforce capacity and employment opportunities in regional cities
- Continue to build awareness of RCNSW among government, media, business and RCNSW communities.

Changes to the above membership of RCNSW is by invitation only and Cities seeking to join must submit an application in writing. Membership will only be granted after unanimous approval of the RCNSW group.

RCNSW members seeking to leave the group will need to advise RCNSW in writing and will be required to give 12 months' notice.

The member Councils will be represented by the Mayor and the Chief Executive Officer/General Manager. Member Council's may nominate alternative delegates only when the Mayor or CEO/GM are absent on approved leave e.g. when an Acting CEO/GM has been appointed by Council.

The meeting schedule for RCNSW in 2018 is: *(actual dates to be advised)*

- February
- May
- August
- November

The position of Chair and Deputy Chair will be subject to election in November of each year and will Chair meetings for the subsequent year.

RCNSW's daily operations will be managed by an Executive Management Group (EMG) consisting of:

- RCNSW Chair
- RCNSW Deputy Chair
- CEO/GM of Chair's Council
- CEO/GM of Deputy Chair's Council

The EMG has delegated authority to:

- Approve expenditure on individual items/projects in accordance with the approved RCNSW Strategic Plan.
- Approve written correspondence on behalf of RCNSW.
- Approve media statements on behalf of the group.
- Nominate RCNSW members to attend delegations and political briefings.
- Instruct the RCNSW secretariat to perform tasks in accordance with the approved RCNSW Strategic Plan.

The EMG will hold fortnightly or as necessary work-in-progress meetings with the secretariat.

Should external consultants be required to undertake work on behalf of or for RCNSW, the secretariat will ensure that all procurement/engagement processes are carried out in accordance with statutory requirements e.g. Local Government Act. A recommendation to appoint an external consultant will then be presented to RCNSW who will be responsible for any appointment.

The amount to be contributed by RCNSW members will be determined annually following the development and approval of an annual budget. Contributions will be paid monthly.

Approval of major items of expenditure will be subject to agreement of the members. Should additional expenditure above the approved annual budget be required, approval will be required from a majority of RCNSW members.

The secretariat is responsible for preparation of communications and advocacy documents required by RCNSW. All external documents will need approval from either the RCNSW Chair or the EMG before public release.

RCNSW's strategic plan will be reviewed annually and achievements will be measured by:

- The consistency of Policy announcements from Government and Opposition with the RCNSW Strategic Plan.
- The inclusion of RCNSW representatives on relevant working parties, committees or reference groups established by governments, peak bodies or other industry/sector organisations.
- Achievement of population growth, employment growth and liveability targets.
- Level of media coverage achieved for issues identified in the approved RCNSW Strategic Plan.

Strategy

Over-Arching Objective

Establish RCNSW as the trusted authority and thought leader on regional New South Wales.

To promote RCNSW's aspiration to have a 'seat at the table' when views are being sought and decision made by government regarding regional New South Wales.

Enabler (Underpins All Objectives)

Strategically communicate with government, business, industry and RCNSW community stakeholders in order to derive the best possible outcomes for regional and rural New South Wales.

RCNSW is well-placed to influence the business and industry sectors to ensure the best possible outcomes are achieved for regional and rural New South Wales. Regular exposure to key business and industry leaders is crucial to RCNSW's success in this area.

Our Objectives

- **Objective 1:** Actively promote food and fibre from regional New South Wales into world markets through appropriate avenues.
 - *Promote the positioning of regional New South Wales within world food markets*
- **Objective 2:** Pursue infrastructure financing which supports and enables growth in regional areas.
 - *RCNSW will continue to promote the need for alternative funding models to assist regional cities in addressing funding and financing of infrastructure in fast-growing areas.*
- **Objective 3:** Encourage the development of new and existing industries and advocate for increased funding for re-skilling and training for specialist roles through TAFE facilities, to enable people to remain in their regional communities as industries evolve.
 - *To support growth in regional New South Wales, RCNSW will encourage the development of new industries including research and development opportunities and industry specific workforce training through the local higher education structure. This will enable re-skilling and training for local people that accurately reflects evolving industry needs within their region.*
- **Objective 4:** Advocate for improvements to transport corridors e.g. roads, passenger and freight rail and the regional airport network.
 - *Enhancements to transport corridors which will improve connectedness between key regional cities and to Sydney are critical for economic development in regional New South Wales.*