

The Upper Spencer Gulf Intergovernmental Group (USGIG) chaired by Minister Koutsantonis (representing the Premier) with members including the Mayors/CEOs of the Whyalla, Port Pirie and Port Augusta Councils and Local regional MPs Eddie Hughs and Geoff Brock, recently met to progress key strategic growth and recovery issues in the region.

The meeting included an update from John Chapman who is co-ordinating the implementation of the Federal/State Government Whyalla Support Package with a particular focus on grants for contractors impacted by the administration of the Steel Works. The take up of grants continues to be pleasing with support being readily called upon.

Sam Crafter, State Lead, Whyalla Steelworks Industrial Transformation also provided a verbal update to the meeting on activities of his office. He reported on:

- daily interactions with KordaMentha (the appointed administrators) for the Whyalla Steelworks;
- the State's process for receiving and considering Expressions of Interest related to taking over the operations of the Whyalla Steelworks;
- industry engagement related to accessing gas supply,

The two advisory groups formed by the USGIG also provided updates on:

Workforce & Skills

- the uptake of counselling, advisory, training and skills development for displaced workers
- progress with the formation of the Jobs and Skills Hub operating out of the TAFE centre in Whyalla
- support being provided to displaced apprentices and trainees to transfer to new employers and/or complete the current training
- the conduct of the Heavy Industry Workforce Summit (being held for the third year) and a previously held Health Care Sectors Summit
- Proposals for engaging further with business/industry and local training/skills providers to ensure programs and offerings were meeting needs
- State budget outcomes for support in the region for skills development

Housing

- the demand profile which was potentially impacted by the take-up of local housing and the use of tourism accommodation by part-time and contract workers;
- approaches to the development, alongside the Department of Housing and Urban Development, of a specific housing strategy for the SGC, developed using data from the current 3 Regional Plans impacting on the cities;
- Investigations into land available for housing and how any zoning arrangements may need adjustments to facilitate housing projects.

Pigeon Management and Control

Port Pirie Council reported on specific issues impacting on its city and businesses and engagement occurring with PIRSA regarding future long term baiting and other strategies to manage population growth.

Social Impact & Liveability

Alignment of a project being undertaken by the SGC with the work of the Premier's Office in developing South Australia's first Social Development Statement. The SGC reported that its project, funded by the LGA Regional Capacity Building Fund, would hold a series of workshops planned for later in the month and in September where businesses, the community, councils and governments will be invited to assist the development of the scope of issues that support social development and liveability. This scoping document is proposed to be used for monitoring and evaluation of social impacts of growth and decline and taking corrective action.

Nyrstar

General discussions about the challenges being faced by Nyrstar and the impacts on the smelter and the community in Port Pirie.

Port Pirie Mayor Leon Stephens said "these meetings continue to enable frank and open discussions regarding the challenges in the region and outcomes being achieved along with the future work that needs to occur".

Minister Koutsantonis said "the State Government continues to have a strong focus on the Upper Spencer Gulf. This week, we announced our \$55m commitment to Nyrstar Port Pirie operations as part of a broader \$135m package in partnership with the Commonwealth and Tasmanian Governments. That ongoing focus demonstrates why this continued engagement with the elected representatives, stakeholders and broader communities of this region remain so important".

The next quarterly meeting is planned to be held in Port Pirie with a date to be confirmed.

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