



Mayors Brief Treasurer on State of the Region

16 August 2018

Mayors from the Upper Spencer Gulf are continuing to advocate strongly for the region following recent meetings with Ministers from the new state Liberal Government, including the Treasurer.

Chair of Spencer Gulf Cities, Sam Johnson said the region wrote to every Minister after the March election to provide an update on the challenges and opportunities.

"Last year we identified 30 strategic initiatives to help pave the way for transition of our economy and our communities. We have provided every Minister with a copy of this '*Transforming the Upper Spencer Gulf*' report and have sought their support and commitment to help us continue to pursue these goals."

"We had a very positive meeting with State Treasurer, Hon Rob Lucas and we have also met with Trade and Investment Minister David Ridgway and of course Minister for Mining and Energy, Dan van Holst Pellekaan."

"Unfortunately we have so far been unable to secure a meeting with the Minister for Regional Development or the Ministers responsible for Education, Skills and Training or Planning. We do understand they are very busy and are hopeful to receive a response in the near future."

Whyalla Mayor Lyn Breuer said whilst the future Upper Spencer Gulf is looking positive, now is not the time for complacency.

"Over the past few years, the Upper Spencer Gulf and our communities of Port Augusta, Whyalla and Port Pirie have faced considerable challenges as we commenced our evolution from a traditional heavy industry and manufacturing base"

"Fortunately, we have now started to turn the corner, with major initiatives including the recent sale of the Whyalla steelworks, the solar thermal power plant near Port Augusta, transformation of the Port Pirie smelter, expansion of the Cultana Defence Training Area and a resurgence in mining and minerals processing."

"These are fabulous economic investments in our region and we now need to make sure we do everything we can to provide the workforce, services and infrastructure at a community level to support them. That will require a strong partnership effort by all levels of Government"

Port Pirie Mayor John Rohde agrees, saying the three cities are very eager to fully brief the new Government about the rapid changes occurring across the region.

"In addition to the industry transition in our region, we have also been fortunate in attracting a number of national conferences and events to the Upper Spencer Gulf, we are well on our way to establishing a local university study hub and there has been considerable investment into sporting, community and main street upgrades across our cities."

"We have a strong foundation to build on and are keen to work with Government to keep that momentum going".

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