



Partnership Strengthens for Upper Spencer Gulf Councils

2nd August 2017

Port Augusta Council played host to its neighbouring Spencer Gulf cities earlier this week, with delegates visiting the Port Augusta power station to see firsthand the demolition and remediation of the site.

The Port Pirie, Whyalla and Port Augusta Council Mayors and CEOs were in Port Augusta as part of the bi-monthly 'Spencer Gulf Cities Association' meeting. The agenda included preparation for the Mayors visit to Canberra, progress on the continued investigation into establishing a 'Joint Planning Board' across the three Councils and an update from the South Australian Local Government Association on several initiatives, including their 'China Engagement' project.

Chair of Spencer Gulf Cities Association, Port Augusta Mayor Sam Johnson, said the level of cooperation between the three cities is maturing.

"We are starting to ramp up our investigation into opportunities for joint purchasing of services and equipment that can't be bought locally, coordinating specialised training and working more closely on legislative responsibilities such as landuse and development planning", Mayor Johnson explained.

"Because the size and operation of the three Councils is consistent across many issues, we should gain some good economies of scale and generate some savings and efficiencies."

Whyalla Mayor Lyn Breuer agrees, noting the level of both political and operational collaboration has really strengthened the tri-city alliance.

"The importance of the three cities sticking together cannot be under-estimated", said Mayor Breuer. "We all have so much potential to grow but we all share similar issues in terms of overcoming negative perceptions, growing our skilled workforce and making our three cities places people want to come and live, work and visit."

Representing the Port Pirie Regional Council, Deputy Mayor Leon Stephens said it is pleasing to see a growing air of optimism across the three cities.

"With the sale of the Whyalla steelworks now finalised, Port Pirie's smelter and CBD redevelopment generating positive results and a large scale solar power project signed off in Port Augusta, people are really starting to see just what our region can become."

"We need to use this momentum to continue to push towards more economic diversification, strengthen the role of Pt Pirie, Whyalla and Pt Augusta as regional centres and secure our long-term future."

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