



USG Mayors pursue opportunities for efficiency gains

20 June 2017

A jam-packed meeting of Upper Spencer Gulf Mayors saw the leaders of the three cities progress a range of issues, including preparation of a regional transport infrastructure strategy to opportunities for joint procurement and landuse planning, growth of defence industries and preparation for hosting a number of statewide and national conferences.

Chair of Spencer Gulf Cities Association, Port Augusta Mayor Sam Johnson, said the opportunities for the three cities are huge, with many starting to gain some traction.

"With a growing sense of optimism in Whyalla ahead of the Arrium sale, Port Pirie's redevelopment generating very positive results, a commitment by the Federal Government to solar thermal for Port Augusta and, we can now afford to look at pushing forward with more certainty", explained Mayor Johnson.

"Ultimately this is about strengthening the role of Pt Pirie, Whyalla and Pt Augusta as regional centres, improving business and community confidence and making sure our three cities are places people want to come and live, work and visit".

The Mayors are also exploring potential to generate savings and efficiencies within their Council operations by looking at 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 John Rohde, from Port Pirie Council said the size of the three Councils is consistent across many issues and should provide good economies of scale.

"We are starting to focus on areas where the three cities can gain better efficiencies through cost savings, service delivery and access to technical expertise", said Mayor Rohde.

"There are some administrative and regulatory hurdles to ensure contracts and policies align, but we can see a real benefit to starting to do that background work now".

Whyalla Mayor Lyn Breuer says the importance of the three cities working together cannot be under-estimated.

"The economic and cultural alliance between the Port Pirie, Port Augusta and Whyalla Councils extends back many years", said Mayor Breuer.

"Economically, our three cities have been connected for the better part of a century, with the Councils working formally together for close to twenty years. It just makes sense that we now look at new opportunities within our own operations that can generate savings and strengthen our collective future. None of us can do this alone".

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Photo 1 and 2: Overpage

Photo 1: Port Augusta Council CEO John Banks, Port Pirie Mayor John Rohde, Whyalla Mayor Lyn Breuer, Port Augusta Mayor Sam Johnson, Spencer Gulf Cities Executive Officer Anita Crisp, Whyalla CEO Chris Cowley, Port Pirie Council CEO Andrew Johnson.



Photo 2: Port Augusta Council CEO John Banks, Port Pirie Mayor John Rohde, Port Pirie Council CEO Andrew Johnson, Whyalla Mayor Lyn Breuer, Whyalla CEO Chris Cowley with representatives from the South Australian Local Government Association – Andrea Malone (Director, Legislation) and Kathy Jarrett (Executive Director Executive Director Corporate and Member Services)

