



Quarterly Progress Report to Council Members October-December 2019

#### **New CEO**

New CEO Mark Baker's first month has been dedicated to understanding NTDC's priorities, ongoing work and the background behind it. The CEO has continued, reestablished or formed relationships with key stakeholders in a series of meetings that has outlined the value proposition for NTDC as the principle regional economic development body for Northern Tasmania.

The first priority was to meet or speak to all mayors and GMs, which the CEO has now done with the exception of Flinders acting GM and incoming Meander GM.

Has also met with Dorset Mayor Greg Howard on whether council will consider coming back into NTDC.

#### **New Executive Assistant/Communications Officer**

One of our main priorities at NTDC is attracting great people to the live and work in Northern Tasmania. So we are delighted to announce Anna Di Camillo as our new Executive Support and Communications Officer.

Anna has extensive experience in executive assistance, communication and marketing, and brings tremendous skills to the role with her graphic design background.

Born in Perth, Western Australia, she recently moved to Launceston with her fiancé after stints in Melbourne and Darwin.

Anna has been in Launceston for about nine months and is looking to settle permanently in the city. With a strong interest in arts, culture, film and photography, Anna has already immersed herself in the Launceston community and joined the board of Sawtooth ARI in December.

Her first day with NTDC will be on January 20.

#### **Regional Economic Development Strategy**

All councils endorsed the REDS in their December meetings and we are lining up council workshops for February/March for the implementation strategy planning.

A small media release welcoming the endorsement gained good media coverage through The Examiner on p3 and its social media.

The REDS has been a long and detailed process and NTDC would like to recognise former CEO Maree Tetlow and Project Officer Georgie Brown for their work on getting it to the final stage.

Next Steps:

- a) February/March – Workshops with Council Members first and then State Government agencies to commit to supporting specific actions and programs to deliver on the REDS.
- b) April/May 2020 – Draft Implementation Plan available for review (this is dependent on agreement of State Government and Council Members)

### **Envision workshops**

Population Coordinator Edward Obi is arranging workshops in each council area for jobseekers and those who want to help jobseekers find employment.

The presentations will be primarily targeted to people who are currently looking for work but will also be of value to those people in the community who know and wish to assist people looking for work. The presentations will also be promoted to local schools who may use the information provided to assist their students with increased knowledge of the local labour market. The presentations will cover a range of areas including job search technique and possible employment opportunities that could assist those looking for work. The presentations will also have a 'Jobseeker Champion' talk about their experiences of being unemployed and their move to employment and an 'Employer Champion' talking about what employers are looking for in their employees.

Tentative dates are:

- \* Break O'Day - Wednesday 11/3
- Georgetown - Friday 13/3
- Northern Midlands - Wednesday 18/3
- Meander Valley - Friday 20/3
- West Tamar - Wednesday 25/3
- Launceston - Friday 27/3

We will be recording a session and working with Flinders to have them video conference into a session as costs prohibited holding one on the Island.

### **Mayors' quarterly catch-up**

CEO has secured mayors' support for quarterly informal catch-up each quarter with the CEO and NTDC staff.

Anna will be arranging these dates but the idea is to hold them in the first week of each season, so March, June, September and December, rotating around the seven member councils.

They are planned as an informal gathering with a flexible agenda and designed more to keep the lines of communication and feedback open and relationships strong.

### **2020 Vision message**

NTDC wants to get on the front foot for the new year by looking at each municipality and what the key projects, priorities and developments are that will drive economic growth - a sort of "2020 Vision" concept.

NTDC will promote this through its channels and take it to the media to further spread the word on what is happening in Northern Tasmania.

I have an agreement from The Examiner to run it as a series over several days.

All mayors/councils were asked:

- 1) What is the main economic priority for your council in 2020?
- 2) What projects or developments have the greatest potential to deliver economic growth in your region?
- 3) How can people learn more or get involved in supporting these projects, developments or concepts?
- 4) What traditional industry, ie, agriculture, tourism, manufacturing, is in good shape for 2020 and why?
- 5) What industry is emerging as a growing area in your region?
- 6) What excites you most about the year ahead?
- 7) Where do you see your region at the end of this decade?
- 8) Looking back at the last decade, where have you come from, what has been the successes and what has surprised you?

### **Population advisory group**

Population coordinator Edward Obi continues to work well in attracting and supporting new people to the region.

He is supporting about five skilled migrants per week in their settlement and job hunting.

That work is making regular case studies for our social media channels and is showing the value NTDC provides by supporting many skilled workers such as engineers, accountants, researchers and medical professionals remain in Northern Tasmania.

Edward is arranging four meetings of the population advisory group between March-December.

### **Hydrogen Energy Plant Bell Bay**

The development of a hydrogen energy hub concept at Bell Bay was endorsed in early 2019 by Member Councils as one of the priority projects for the region.

NTDC has been working with Council Members to position Bell Bay as a potential green hydrogen energy hub that could attract support from the Federal Government for demonstration and early stage commercial projects.

Energy Minister Guy Barnett has released the state government's draft action plan, which outlines a vision for the state to become a world leader in large-scale renewable hydrogen production by 2030.

Minister Barnett has said Bell Bay manufacturing zone is an ideal site for developing hydrogen.

NTDC will be seeking Chief Scientist Dr Alan Finkel and Minister Barnett address a business breakfast or lunch on the topic early in the year.

NTDC also had a briefing with a private company looking to get the technology into the bus fleet so this space is looking very promising.

### **UTAS I-PREP**

NTDC had reopened conversations with UTAS about greater promotion and facilitation of its intern program I-PREP. I-PREP is a program for international students and Humanitarian Visa holders to better equip them for their future working lives. The program is designed for students in their final year of study and delivers a range of experiences, including an unpaid internship in a Tasmanian organisation, to prepare students for the workplace and graduate employment. NTDC sees supporting this program to provide interns to private business and councils, if desired, as a great way to engage potential employees to stay in the region.

### Work experience

In late January, we will be joined by UTAS student Josh Rowlands for work experience. Josh is studying business and Chinese language. He is passionate about supporting Tasmanian business, industry development, and sustainable economic initiatives. Josh will play a role in working on the 2020 Vision and, given he speaks fluent Mandarin after living in China for 3.5 years with his parents, will help NTDC plan a Chinese student retention and community/business engagement strategy.

### Board update

Directors Greg Bott, Lucy Byrne and Chris Griffin will serve their last board meeting in February.

Interim chair Sue Kilpatrick is happy to continue in that role until a new chair is appointed. The constitution calls for the independent chair to be advertised by members.

This leaves the board with the minimum three directors. The constitution allows for a maximum of nine directors with a preference for seven.

Members have discussed having mayoral and GM representation on the board to greater align strategy and communication between NTDC and members.

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