

15 January 2018

OSCAR Acting President Tony Gibson  
PO Box 105  
Coolum Beach QLD 4573

Dear Mr Gibson

Thank you for your correspondence and for OSCAR's continuing interest in the operations of Council.

As you would be aware, Council resolved at the Special Meeting of Council on 19 September 2017 to consider the Bendelta Report as a confidential matter due to the contractual, legal and industrial considerations within the report. Given this resolution, under section 171 (3) of the *Local Government Act 2009* (the Act), I am not lawfully able to disclose information which is identified as confidential to the Council and therefore, there are limitations on the information which I can provide.

However, in the interests of responding as comprehensively as possible to OSCAR's request, I have outlined below information on the organisational structure and the considerations that informed the design of that structure, without compromising the obligations which exist under the Act.

The Next Steps review focused on establishing a structure that best positions the organisation for the future. With the formulation and adoption of Council's new Corporate Plan for 2017-2022, which is focused on advancing a new regional vision of "Australia's most sustainable region - healthy, smart and creative", Council recognised the critical need to ensure its operating and business model is tailored to achieving this vision and that its service philosophy and delivery arrangements are best targeted to support what is the second fastest growing region in Queensland.

As you would be aware, our region is forecast to grow by a further 200,000 people by 2041. With this in mind and coupled with increasing visitor numbers and our region's outstanding environment and liveability credentials, it is incumbent on our Council - in serving the interests of our community - to ensure it has the most appropriate structure and service model that is responsive to the needs of residents, can drive and deliver new initiatives that will build the prosperity of the region and support the needs of a growing customer base in a prudent and sustainable manner.

In this context, the Next Steps review process proposes a model that:

- is capable of delivering a progressive agenda for the region that reflects the needs and aspirations of the community;
- better integrates policy and service delivery arrangements;
- ensures appropriate expertise and resources are devoted to the delivery of quality services and key region-making projects; and

- is consistent with the principles and commitments that the community elected this Council to deliver on at the 2016 local government elections.

By way of some examples, the new structure brings together the Environmental Policy and Environmental Operations functions in the same organisational Group, which will better enable policy to be directly informed by the practical application and intelligence from on the ground delivery of services. This is considered essential if Council is to successfully implement and achieve the objectives of the recently released Sunshine Coast Environment and Liveability Strategy - which I understand OSCAR to have strongly supported.

Similarly, the new structure brings together Council's transport infrastructure policy and planning functions and the associated operational functions so the organisation is better positioned to advocate for, and leverage, long overdue investment by other tiers of government and potentially the private sector in the critical road, rail, public and active transport infrastructure that will be crucial to the functionality and social and economic performance of the region.

A comparable approach is also being advanced through an enhanced focus in the structure on strategy and innovation, helping drive critical opportunities like the delivery of an international broadband submarine cable to the Sunshine Coast and to shape the next five year implementation plan for the Sunshine Coast Regional Economic Development Strategy 2013-2033 (REDS). Council and the region have achieved some outstanding results from the delivery of the first five year implementation plan for the REDS. It is absolutely essential for our residents and the future of the region that this momentum is not lost and that the region maintains and further engenders its competitive edge - hence the consolidation of focus on innovation, improving design standards and driving our Smart City framework.

As indicated above, a core element of the new organisational model is focused on the delivery of quality services and in this context, the new structure will drive a better integrated regulatory service and business development philosophy underpinned by a clear customer service charter. Council considers this to be a key facet of the new model and a fundamental element of how the organisation will continue to service the needs of the community both now and into the future.

The process followed in conducting the review was largely staff driven, with key design principles and recommendations informed by a reference group comprising representatives across the organisation. As part of the review, extensive opportunities were provided for staff to engage with both the review process and the consultants.

The Sunshine Coast Council Next Steps Report was provided to all staff in the organisation and was approved by Council for public distribution. A copy of the document is attached for your reference.

The cost of the review was market tested through Council's established procurement arrangements and was delivered within a budget that is consistent with the cost of such reviews in similar sized organisations. The implementation of the new organisational structure is being done in an efficient manner that is aligned to existing budgets. For example, changes in workplace location will be considered alongside the move to the new Sunshine Coast Council City Hall in 2020. Other matters will be considered as part of the annual budget process and decided by Council accordingly.



As you point out in your letter, there are confidential contractual obligations associated with employment matters and as such, I am not able to release details related to employment contractual entitlements as this would constitute a breach of contractual conditions and could potentially expose the ratepayers to claims for compensation. I can advise, however, that those officers who unilaterally decided not to apply for positions offered under a closed recruitment process (ie. a closed recruitment process for five positions and where the applicant pool was confined to the existing five directors) received their entitlements in accordance with the terms of their contracts of employment.

I believe the Next Steps review process better positions Council for the future and reinforces our continuing capability to provide great service to the community.

Yours sincerely



**MAYOR MARK JAMIESON**

