



2 December 2020

## Social Distancing Brings Bass Strait Island Councils Together

Collaboration during the COVID-19 pandemic has led to an agreement between Flinders and King Island Councils to work together to address shared issues facing their island communities and economies.

The two councils' joint approach to government ensured special quarantine requirements for the islands were instigated during the emergency phase of COVID-19 and that community concerns regarding lifting of intrastate travel restrictions were heeded.

Premier Peter Gutwein congratulated both councils on their proactive collaboration and said "It is very pleasing to see the increasing collaboration between both islands' administration and with this Government, at a number of levels. In my view, both islands have so much more to offer and contribute to our State, particularly in the areas of tourism and trade opportunities."

Minister for Local Government, Mark Shelton MP, said "The Tasmanian Government is committed to ensuring that local councils are well placed to address their long term sustainability challenges and to continue to meet modern service delivery expectations. I applaud the shared commitment of the Flinders and King Island Councils to further collaboration as a way of achieving worthwhile outcomes for their local communities."

Flinders Council Mayor Annie Revie said today, "The joint work began with a professional development visit two councillors made to King Island in January 2020 to explore the islands' similarities. Then along came COVID-19. We've already learned much from our interactions and anticipate many benefits to come."

General Manager of King Island Council, Greg Alomes, visited Flinders Island in September to further grow the relationship. The partnership was formalised in November when Flinders Council and King Island Council entered into a Statement of Intent to explore further opportunities to improve efficiencies and sustainability of the Bass Strait islands.

King Island Mayor Julie Arnold said, "I am delighted that our Council has agreed to a formal Statement of Intent with Flinders Council to develop a collaborative approach to issues unique to our small island communities. It is the start of our Councils working together on joint approaches to service delivery and policies that sustain our communities and grow our economies. Together we can have a strong voice to celebrate our uniqueness and promote the needs of our communities."

*Further information and all media enquiries to be directed to*

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