



MEDIA RELEASE

Port Augusta City Council Election Priorities

Port Augusta City Council have announced their 2022 Election priorities. Antisocial behaviour, Renewable Energy, Housing Refurbishment, Marine Infrastructure Commitment and Fair Funding for the Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden have been highlighted.

The election priorities are based upon the strong advocacy work of Council via formal resolutions in consultation with Elected Members.

"The five priorities have been developed in consultation with Elected Members and all have consistently been on Council's radar for the entire term of the current Council." Mayor Brett Benbow stated".

"In 2022 Port Augusta City Council believes we need commitment to these priorities from State Government, to help make Port Augusta a great liveable and economical regional city in South Australia." Mayor Brett Benbow stated.

1. Anti-social behaviour / COVID-19

Port Augusta is a traditional meeting place for the aboriginal community, some of whom are vulnerable people. Federal and State Government policies relating to COVID-19 are exacerbating an already situation that encourage or practically require people from remote and regional Australia to seek accommodation and services in Port Augusta without appropriate support. Council seeks the urgent allocation of resources and the effective coordination of all services to ensure the health, amenity, safety and liveability of the City is enhanced and does not suffer.

2. Fair funding for the Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden

Unlike other botanical gardens within South Australia, the ratepayers of Port Augusta fully fund a botanical garden of State & National significance. Council seeks State Government funding of the operational deficit (\$750k) of the Australian Arid Lands Botanic Garden. This represents 4% of Council rate revenue and is an unfair burden upon a financially disadvantaged community.

3. Commitment to the \$22M refurbishment of the SA Government owned Port Augusta Wharf and other marine infrastructure

Council welcomes the South Australian Government's announced commitment to fund \$22M for the refurbishment of the Port Augusta Wharf, the demolition of the Great Western Bridge and the construction of a new pontoon(s).

Council seeks written confirmation of the announced works and the budget allocation and requests engagement in the consultation process and project scope.

4. Renewable Energy

A view of the Southern entrance of Port Augusta near Stirling North will take in the sight of multiple wind turbines in nearly all directions, across the base of the Flinders Ranges and to the west on top of the hills. You will see the multiple power poles and wire across the landscape.

The local Port Augusta community does not benefit financially through the inability to obtain a fair contribution to municipal services from predominately international power companies for their electricity generating or storage facilities? Why is the local community expected to subsidise the renewable energy sector rather than benefit from it through fair and equitable revenue? Council seeks legislative amendments to enable the fair and equitable income from the electricity generation and storage industry.

5. SA Housing Authority refurbishment

Years of underinvestment in the management, maintenance and refurbishment of these properties that contribute to declining property capital values in Port Augusta – 1.79% across Port Augusta and – 3.46% in central Port Augusta.

Council seeks a commitment to better manage and refurbish existing SA Housing Authority properties and to stop the transfer of properties to the not for profit sector which further exacerbates inequities due to mandatory rate rebates of 75%. The lack of investment in SA Housing Authority properties further disadvantages a community that is already represented amongst the lowest in the country on socio economic indicator.

The up-and-coming state election will be held on Saturday 19 March 2022.

For any further enquires please contact Councils Media and Communications officer on 8641 9100.

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