

Wind-up of Prom Country Regional Tourism

Several weeks ago the Committee of Prom Country Regional Tourism (PCRT) flagged its intention to wind up the organisation. Before the organisation could commence the winding up process, and without notice to Council, all of the remaining industry-based Committee members resigned leaving only the two Council representatives on the Committee.

The following is part of what was sent to PCRT members in the lead up to the organisation's Annual General Meeting.

Over the past 18 months it has become apparent to your committee that changes to the industry require a different approach for effective tourism advocacy. These changes include:

- *PCRT's engagement with Destination Gippsland and confidence in that organisation's capabilities;*
- *the effective rollout of broader branding and marketing by Destination Gippsland;*
- *digital disruption: a huge take-up of online services: booking engines, social media, individual business web sites over the past 5 years;*
- *a reduction in the impact of (locally produced) print media and campaigns and their effectiveness;*
- *more efficient ways to deliver services; and,*
- *more effective ways to use your money.*

In addition, Committee feels the existing structure and funding model no longer provides the best outcomes for industry or our partners.

Given this publicly expressed intention of the PCRT Committee to wind up the organisation, Council will now take advice on the steps that need to be taken to give effect to this.

South Gippsland Shire Council Administrator Christian Zahra is one of two Council representatives on the PCRT Committee and expressed his disappointment at the sudden resignations and decision of industry Committee members to leave it to Council to give effect to the decision to wind up the organisation

"I think most people would say that if you signal your intention to wind up an organisation you should also take on the responsibility of seeing that through, rather than leaving it to others to follow through on the decision you've made.

“Given that the Committee had already signalled its intention to wind PCRT up, Council will now seek advice on how that can be achieved given these unexpected resignations. As Council has only ever had two representatives out of the eight member Committee, it is an unusual position that the resigning Committee members have left us in. In effect, they have taken the decision to wind-up the organisation and left Council the responsibility of dealing with it.

“While this is a disappointing development, Council remains very committed to supporting the local tourism sector and will continue to work in close partnership with local tourism service providers.”

South Gippsland Shire Council CEO Bryan Sword said that Council was focussing on looking after the PCRT members and making sure local tourism operators were supported.

“PCRT’s decision not to fill the vacant Executive Officer role has meant that a number of the responsibilities of the organisation were not being fulfilled. Council has taken on some of PCRT’s functions in order to ensure that the sector was supported as it comes into its busiest time of year.

“Council’s Tourism team recently took over the production of the Touring Guide and Official Visitor Guide, and management of the [visitpromcountry](http://visitpromcountry.com.au) website due to PCRT’s inability to complete these tasks for its membership.”

A report on the future of PCRT has been included in the agenda for next week’s Council Meeting.

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