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MEDIA RELEASE

Alexandrina's new Economic Development Strategy adopted - A bespoke plan for a resilient economy and a sustainable future

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Alexandrina Council's much anticipated new Economic Development Strategy was adopted at the last Council meeting for 2021, setting the region up for a fruitful and exciting start to the New Year.

The innovative strategy, known as "Economic Development Strategy 2022-2027 - Regenerating Alexandrina's Economy", is built around the concept of regenerative economics, an emerging discipline concerned less with growth for growth's sake, and more with building a sustainable economy which meets the needs of both people and the environment.

This is in response to a clear community mandate arising from A2040 for healthy and sustainable growth, balancing the need for progress with a deep respect for heritage and the environment.

Guided by the Economic Development Strategy, Council will now be directing its efforts towards fostering a resilient economy by focusing on four key action areas:

Leadership and advocacy: Council will advocate for key economic infrastructure to support local businesses and tourism.

Investment attraction: Council will spread the word about our amazing Alexandrina to attract new investors, businesses, residents and visitors.

Town building: Council will enhance the unique history and character of each township to help to attract new residents and growth.

Business and industry development: Council will build on the strengths of our major industries – including agriculture, tourism and healthcare – to create jobs.

"Our new five-year Economic Development Strategy is a bespoke plan for the Alexandrina region, capitalising on the unique opportunities before us and addressing the challenges we face, guiding us towards a more inclusive, innovative, resilient and agile future economic growth response," says Alexandrina Council Mayor Keith Parkes.

Alexandrina Council CEO Glenn Rappensberg is equally enthusiastic about the plan.

“Economic success in the Alexandrina region is fundamentally dependent on our beautiful surroundings – which this plan acknowledges, in alignment with our A2040 vision,” he says.

“Our region generates over \$1 billion in gross domestic product and is home to 2,174 local business, of which 99% are small businesses, who provide and support over 7,000 local jobs.

“With this plan we acknowledge the symbiotic relationship between our environment, our community, and our economy – and we now have a clear pathway to nurture these connections for the good of all.”

Already, Alexandrina Council is ‘walking the talk’ in providing dedicated support to help the region progress.

For example, with Business Alexandrina’s help, Ben Shaw recently won funding from the SA Tourism Commission’s Tourism Industry Development Fund to launch his own wine label ‘Home of Plenty’ in Currency Creek.

The Business Alexandrina team is excited to see the adaptive reuse of an old woodshed into a new cellar door, as Council continues to support business in the region to thrive.

This is just one example of the results that are being borne with the assistance of key partners who wish to see the region grow in a regenerative way.

Business Alexandrina is commencing 2022 with a concentrated effort on connecting with the agribusiness sector – an important area of focus within the Economic Development Strategy as it is the largest sector of the region’s economy, accounting for 24% of businesses in the Alexandrina region.

Business Alexandrina is looking to work with the sector to identify and leverage the opportunities and define the role Council can play to better support them. An ‘Agribusiness Conversation’ event will be held in March / April to engage the sector and will include information on relevant key regional projects, a summary of the Economic Development Strategy as it relates to the agribusiness sector, and will initiate the revitalisation of the former Alexandrina Sustainable Agricultural Roundtable (ASART).

Alexandrina Council would like to thank all of the community members and businesses who took the time to provide input into the development of the ‘Economic Development Strategy 2022-2027 - Regenerating Alexandrina’s Economy’. Importantly this strategy also responds to the ongoing challenges that COVID-19 presents to the Alexandrina region.

The ‘Economic Development Strategy 2022-2027 - Regenerating Alexandrina’s Economy’ can be read in full at www.alexandrina.sa.gov.au/plans