

ITEM 14 NOTICE OF MOTION - COUNCILLOR TANIA BROWN - CO-WORKING HUBS

Councillor Tania Brown has submitted the following Notice of Motion –

“I formally move that –

- 1 The General Manager write to Minister John Barilaro, Minister for Regional New South Wales, Industry and Trade and Minister Stuart Ayers, Minister for Jobs, Investment and Tourism seeking reinstatement of the Smart Work Hubs program and highlighting that in a post COVID environment, Wollongong has the potential to deliver local business hubs that could support our regional economy.
- 2 Council request that Invest Wollongong consider raising with Investment NSW and the Office of Regional NSW, the potential for Wollongong to grow as a base for Co-Working Hubs, targeting start-up and scale-up businesses.
- 3 A report or briefing be provided back to Council by February 2022 on outcomes and opportunities.”

Background provided by Councillor Tania Brown:

The Post COVID-19 Peak Bodies Taskforce has raised the opportunity of Co-Working Hubs as a growth opportunity for Wollongong. The rise in remote working has highlighted the potential of development of co-working spaces for local businesses hubs as we adapt to a post lockdown / post COVID environment.

Between 2014 and 2016, the NSW Department of Industry and Trade conducted a pilot program into the establishment of ‘Smart Work Hubs’ (SMHs), which saw five hubs established in areas with large commuter populations in the Western Sydney and Central Coast regions.

The pilot program completed in 2016 demonstrated that there was strong support from business and government for the flexible-working facilities that SWHs provided, particularly for telecommuters and private sector investors.

The pandemic has highlighted that how we work in 2021 has changed and moving forward Co-Working Hubs could be the next step in the evolution of remote working.

If Wollongong is to meet our jobs target of 10,500 as identified in the Economic Development Strategy, we need to attract new business investment to the City.

Promotion of Wollongong as a Co-Working Hub could attract entrepreneurial or start-up businesses looking to relocate out of the Sydney CBD and provide a further opportunity for vacant office grade accommodation.