

**ITEM 21 LORD MAYOR TRAVEL TO TAURANGA CITY IN NEW ZEALAND**

Wollongong City Council and Tauranga City Council have established an Intercouncil Exchange Program between the two Councils to share information and ideas on a range of common priorities. The proposed visit to Tauranga City is an opportunity to formalise the relationship between the two Councils and explore further opportunities for collaboration and learning between the two cities.

**RECOMMENDATION**

That the Lord Mayor be approved to travel to Tauranga City in New Zealand between 7 and 12 February 2026.

**REPORT AUTHORISATIONS**

Report of: Todd Hopwood, Manager Customer + Business Integrity  
Authorised by: Renee Campbell, Director Corporate Services - Connected + Engaged City

**ATTACHMENTS**

There are no attachments for this report.

**BACKGROUND**

In July 2025, Wollongong City Council and Tauranga City Council established an Intercouncil Exchange Program between the two Councils to share information and ideas on a range of common priorities such as city centre planning and development, planning for Port growth and potential Cruise attraction, cultural engagement, and the role of local government in supporting the delivery of housing and major projects.

As part of this program, it was agreed that the two councils would arrange a series of themed visits during 2025 – 2026 based on these areas of interest.

Wollongong City Council recently had the privilege of hosting a delegation from Tauranga City Council in October 2025 during the World Triathlon Championships, in which the Tauranga Mayor, Councillors, CEO and cultural leaders visited Wollongong to understand more about the city and the functions of local government in the Illawarra region.

**PROPOSAL**

In light of the recent visit from Tauranga City Council to Wollongong, it is proposed that the Lord Mayor visit Tauranga to formalise the Intercouncil Exchange Program and the relationship between the two Councils with the Mayor of Tauranga.

This visit will also provide an opportunity to explore further opportunities for collaboration and learning between the two cities.

The Lord Mayor's proposed itinerary will focus on the business of Council, city centre repositioning and management, foreshore planning and management, cultural development, University engagement, major events and cruise/destination activities.

Tauranga City Council staff are preparing an itinerary for the Lord Mayor pending approval to travel.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The estimated costs associated with the proposed travel for the Lord Mayor is around \$2,500. This includes airfares, accommodation and incidental costs.

**CONCLUSION**

With the relationship between Wollongong City Council and Tauranga City Council continuing to build and evolve, the proposed visit by the Lord Mayor provides an opportunity to formalise the relationship between the two cities and explore further opportunities for collaboration and learning.