

**ITEM 17 NOTICE OF MOTION - COUNCILLOR LINDA CAMPBELL - SCREEN FRIENDLY COUNCIL ACCREDITATION**

Councillor Linda Campbell has submitted the following Notice of Motion –

“I formally move that Wollongong City Council –

- 1 Actively seeks early accreditation as a screen friendly Council.
- 2 Looks for opportunities to contribute to the development of the guidelines and processes surrounding accreditation.”

**Background provided by Councillor Linda Campbell:**

The Screen and Digital Games Industries Bill 2025 has been adopted to encourage and support screen and digital games production in NSW.

The bill includes key principles that public service decision-makers across the New South Wales government and local councils must consider in relation to facilitating screen and digital games production. These principles include ensuring that approvals are timely, fees are reasonable, and the default response is to support the production unless there are specific reasons not to.

It also includes the introduction of, and opportunity for, Councils to be accredited as screen production friendly Councils. This reflects the key role that councils play in supporting the film sector and allows the most supportive councils to be recognised for their valuable role.

Eligibility and the process for accreditation will be determined by guidelines issued by the Minister, allowing time for these matters to be developed and consulted on with key stakeholders. Criteria for accreditation of councils could include effective, long-term compliance with the Local Government Filming Protocol, including maintaining a film contact officer role and prominently displaying information about filming application and permit processes on their websites.

It could mean promoting filming in their area to the industry by contributing location images and information to the Screen NSW locations database. It may include council film contact officers completing a Screen NSW run screen-friendly training and certification course. Overall, to be accredited, the Government will be looking to councils that are willing to go above and beyond in encouraging filming in their local government areas and in making it easier for screen productions.

The bill includes amendments to division 4 of the Local Government Act to deliver on and be consistent with the goals outlined. Specifically, in section 116, the number of days within which a council must acknowledge receipt of an application to film has been reduced from seven days to two business days. This reflects contemporary business practices and technologies, such as automated email responses, which are the norm. In addition, amendments are proposed to section 117 to provide that the maximum application fee payable and the number of days within which an applicant must pay fees to a council be outlined in the Local Government Filming Protocol instead of the Act and regulations.

Having input into the development of guidelines and processes will assist to ensure relevance and workability for Council.

Wollongong offers a compelling mix of diverse locations, a growing local film industry, and economic benefits, making it an attractive place for film production, as evidenced by recent projects like "Return to Paradise" and "One Night".

Wollongong is home to diverse and scenic locations: coastal beauty, industrial landscapes, escarpment and urban areas. It has an active and growing local film industry with existing connections within a range of skilled creatives and local talent.

Screen Illawarra has played a key role in bringing together many of these and connecting productions with local talent and resources, including the recent industry visits which attracted key decisions maker from both local and overseas companies.

Potential economic benefits include increased local spending, creating local jobs in both the film industry and related sectors including hospitality, transportation and accommodation.

Early accreditation as a screen friendly council may be a key advantage for Wollongong City Council in our bid to attract this growing industry to our City.