

**Office of the Commissioner for Kangaroo Island**  
**MEDIA RELEASE**

**Call for Options Paper for Provision of Visitor Information Services**

18 April 2019

Following conversations with the current and the previous Council, initiated by Tourism KI (TKI), regarding the urgent need to address future funding shortfalls a crunch point has been reached. There is no guaranteed future funding resulting in the TKI board losing critical staff and having to close the doors of the Visitor Information Centre (VIC) in Penneshaw.

Historically the Council contributed funds towards the operation of the visitor information centre until approximately 2010 when this arrangement ceased. Acknowledging the importance of visitor information centre functions and in the absence of any viable alternative, TKI continued to manage this function. This was undertaken with the view to obtaining future financial support from council for the performance of this function. This has to date, been unsuccessful.

“It’s a well-known fact that visitor information services don’t make enough money to fully fund the costs of providing the service, but without these services, in whatever form, the economy of any regional community, including KI is severely impacted.

“Councils across SA take an active role in funding and/or staffing these centres, including with the support of well trained volunteers and we would do well to look at what exists in other regions.

“I have been discussing the issues with TKI and Council’s Acting CEO, and I see no other way forward than to work up some options that can be discussed. I have granted \$10,000 to TKI to prepare an options paper and to engage with the Council in its preparation. I trust Council will be an active participant in this project.” Said Wendy Campana, Commissioner for Kangaroo Island.

Here are some stats about tourism on KI:

- 226,000 annual visitors and steadily rising
- 800 direct and 200 indirect jobs
- 570,000 bed nights with the average stay of 4.7 nights
- 32,536 visitors to the VIC in the last 12 months and 9094 connections via email or phone
- \$125m spend annually by tourists
- Over \$2.5m p.a. injected into the local economy as a direct result of visitor engagement with the Visitor Information Centre.

“TKI is committed to working with the Council on finding solutions for this critical service, including exploring alternative service models, and recognise their commitment to 30 June to find solutions, but there is no plan beyond this period.

“We have secured numerous businesses to date to become information service providers as an interim measure and we thank them for coming on board. We have also engaged the Victor Harbor VIC to assist us with phone and other enquiries.

I thank the Commissioner for initiating discussions with TKI and funding an options paper which ought to give Council and my board the basis to make better informed decisions on the way forward”, said Pierre Gregor, Chair of TKI.