

Date: 3 May 2017

SUMMARY:

- Shire to seek agreement to relocate its administration centre into the Ningaloo centre.
 - Decision based on independent valuations that showed Shire would have to subsidise TAFE lease.
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Shire seeks agreement to call the Ningaloo Centre home

The Shire of Exmouth will seek agreement from its Ningaloo Centre funding partners to relocate its administrative operations to the centre following a decision at last night's Council meeting.

Under the proposal, the Shire will become an anchor tenant for the building, taking up the 420m2 of floor space that had been earmarked for Central Regional TAFE. Both TAFE and the Shire have agreed in principal to withdraw from the leasing arrangement with no penalty and are working to identify alternative facilities.

Commissioner Ian Fletcher said the decision to relocate had not been taken lightly but was ultimately based on independent valuation advice that showed that under previously arranged lease arrangements, the Shire would be subsidising the TAFE lease to the value of \$40,000 per year.

Mr Fletcher said that if the arrangements were allowed to stand, the cost to ratepayers would be \$400,000 over the next 10 years.

"It makes much more sense for the Shire to take up that lease, pay full market rental and reduce the duplication costs associated with operating both the Shire offices and the Ningaloo Centre."

Commissioner Fletcher said one of his priorities as Commissioner had been to ensure not only that the Ningaloo Centre could operate as a focal point for regional tourism, but that the Shire as the owner of the building was able to sustain the centre in the long term.

"Moving the Shire's administrative functions to the centre will help achieve cost savings for the Shire without impacting on the overall function of the centre," he said.

Mr Fletcher said that if agreement was reached with the State Department of Regional Development the Shire would start planning for the move.

The administration centre will take up just 11 per cent of the overall leasable space at the Ningaloo Centre.

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