



Media Release

27 November 2018

Cockburn motivated to engage and support local business community

As a long-term, active supporter of the local business community, the City of Cockburn has achieved two milestones in its endeavour to improve connections with the vibrant, growing sector.

The City has appointed its inaugural Business Engagement Officer, and signed the Small Business Friendly Local Governments Charter (SBFLGC), an initiative of the Small Business Development Corporation (SBDC).

Cockburn Director of Governance & Community Services, Don Green, said the two milestones were a result of a need to improve business engagement as determined by extensive research undertaken by the City, after a Council decision in 2017.

A Cockburn resident for more than 20 years, Sarah Kahle is the new Business Engagement Officer.

She has extensive experience in communications, relationship management and project management and comes to the City following a lengthy career in higher education.

“I’m a small business owner myself and come from a family of small business owners in the fishing, hospitality and tourism, and agriculture industries,” Ms Kahle said.

“The role and its motivations are close to my heart in terms of how important local business is to communities.

“I’m looking forward to engaging with Cockburn’s businesses, as well as advocating to the City on their behalf.

“There are many opportunities available to business owners and I aim to help all 8,000 businesses in Cockburn to access them.”

Some of the initiatives local business can expect include:

Media Release

- Regular business e-newsletter and print newsletter – such as planning information, opportunities for grants, business events within the City and information about council decisions
- Developing an online directory of businesses within the City
- Coordinating and facilitating business development activities and networking events in conjunction with the SBDC and other agencies
- Promoting sustainable business practices via our “Building Better Business” program; and
- Assisting with the development and implementation of an Economic Development Strategy for the City.

The SBFLGC recognises local governments that are committed to actively supporting small business in their area.

Mayor Logan Howlett said, when teamed with the City’s new business engagement role, the charter formally recognised the City’s ongoing demonstration of ‘better practice’ in engaging with the small business community.

“The City has long been committed to the three basic tenets of the initiative – adopting a policy to pay invoices from small business suppliers within 30 days, regularly meeting with this community to improve our understanding of its needs, and effective dispute management processes.

“We have actively supported the interests of the local business community by sponsoring the Melville Cockburn Chamber of Commerce, appointing a Business Engagement Officer, hosting biannual business workshops and maintaining a dedicated “Business in Cockburn” page on our website.

“The City’s economy id reporting tool reveals the business industry sectors, the majority of which comprises small business, is creating value well above the state average from the productivity of goods and services they offer.

“The key findings show that Construction (28.7 per cent compared to 14 per cent), Manufacturing (16.6 per cent compared to 5.5 per cent) and Transport/Postal/Warehousing (9.9 per cent compared to 5.8 per cent) in Cockburn are creating output percentage values well above the state average.”



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The City is one of 13 Perth metropolitan local governments to join the initiative.

For more information about “Business in Cockburn”, visit

<https://www.cockburn.wa.gov.au/About-Cockburn/Business-in-Cockburn>

For more information about the Small Business Friendly Local Governments initiative visit

<https://www.smallbusiness.wa.gov.au/about/projects-and-initiatives/small-business-friendly-local-governments>

Did You Know

- The City of Cockburn's Gross Regional Product is estimated at \$8.36 billion, which represents 3.5% of the state's GSP (Gross State Product). (2017 figures)
- Commercial/Industrial properties contribute to approximately 31% of the City's rates income.

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