

## **President's Report 2017-18**

### **Maroochydore Chamber of Commerce**

It is my great pleasure to present the Maroochydore Chamber of Commerce (MCC) President's report for 2017-18. It has been a privilege to serve as the Chamber President and I thank all of our members for this opportunity.

2017-18 has been a year of successes, challenges, change and transition for MCC, and a year for setting the Chamber up for a sustainable future. As detailed in the following report, the Chamber has been up to the task and has had some fantastic achievements and outcomes.

It has also been an incredible year for the Maroochydore region with the approval, commencement and continuation of major infrastructure and investment projects such as the new CBD, the Airport expansion, Plaza re-development, Yaroomba Beach and others. The announcement of the International Broadband Cable project is yet another exciting development for Maroochydore and we look forward to the opportunities this project will bring for businesses in the region.

The 2017-18 AGM in September 2017 saw the election of a number of new faces and talent to the Chamber Executive Committee, all of whom contributed significantly to the work and growth of the Chamber over the 12 months. It has truly been a team effort, and I would like to express my sincere gratitude for the support of all committee members. It would be remiss of me not to give special mention to the individual contribution of committee members who went above and beyond and put in an extraordinary amount of time and effort:

- Scott Elsom was responsible for implementing a new website and supporting system that fully integrates all Chamber activities providing many efficiencies in the administration and operation of the Chamber.
- Our Treasurer, Stuart Thompson was responsible for managing the Chamber finances and streamlining our financial management systems and processes, producing a fantastic result for the Chamber in 2017-18.
- David Marr, for his support and work in organising our inaugural Golf Day event and other events. Also for his work in engaging our partners and supporting me personally with this.
- Mark Hancock who stepped in as Secretary and put in many unpaid, personal hours in the organisation of events, member communication and administration and operation of the Chamber.
- Peppi Bueti for his invaluable expertise and coordination of much of our advocacy and media activities.
- Vice President, Brendan Bathersby for his sage advice, support for me personally, initiative in connecting members through the Members Lunches and advocacy work with other business groups and networks.
- Meagan Cross who devoted time and resources to ensuring the Chamber could be responsive to members and for ensuring the Chamber has a home at the Hive @ Kon Tiki.

I would like to thank our previous executive officers, Jenny Butler and Tracey Schultz who ensured the Chamber delivered a successful Business Awards and were instrumental in the contributing to the growth of the Chamber membership. I would also like to thank Jennifer Forster and Carlo Marchese for their time and contribution to the executive committee and the activities of the Chamber. A special mention is also required to Alan Scott from Asmosys who supported and guided the committee through the strategic planning process. His work and insight was invaluable and we are grateful for this.

## **Partners**

Special acknowledgment and thanks also goes to our valued partners. Their support is vital to the success of the Chamber and we look forward to continuing to work with them for the benefit of members and the Maroochydore region.

- MCC found its home at The Hive @ Kontiki who have continued there unwavering support over the 12 months providing operational and administrative support and many other services critical to the operation of the Chamber.
- Secure Access IT provided invaluable technology support to achieve efficiencies in and simplify the Chambers administrative operations and communication.
- Telstra Business Centre / TShopBiz are a long-term supporter of the Chamber and provide great support across a range of areas.
- SunCentral and Mosaic have continued to support the Chamber and ensure that we have input into and can provide feedback about the future development of the Maroochydore CBD and are in a position to connect our members to associated opportunities as they arise.
- Our media partners Hot91 / Zinc, Sea/Mix FM and the Sunshine Coast Daily have also been valued media partners and we look forward to continuing to work with them in our advocacy, and providing opportunities for our members to leverage the wonderful value they provide.

## **Members**

Most importantly, the Chamber welcomed many new business to our community, increasing our membership to nearly 300 in August 2018. From a declining membership of less than 200 18 months ago, this is a great achievement.

We sincerely thank our members for their continued support and look forward to delivering event more services, benefits and value in the coming year.

As always, we welcome our members' feedback which helps shape our activities and is critical to ensure we are delivering the things our members want and need. It is not "job done" by any stretch of the imagination, but we are confident we have set a stable platform for the future and in a position to grow as Maroochydore grows.

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So what has the Chamber delivered in 2017-18?

### **A New Strategic Direction**

In October 2017, the new committee embarked on a process to determine a new strategic direction for the Chamber. With the Business Awards transitioning across to the management of the Sunshine Coast Chamber Alliance, it was time for the Chamber to focus on delivering value, services and opportunities for our members. With financial support provided by the Sunshine Coast Council, an expert consultant was engaged to help guide the committee through the process. We received some very frank and valuable feedback throughout this process from our members and stakeholders, for which we are very grateful. The outcome was the articulation of four key areas of focus: Connectivity, Advocacy, Acumen and Resilience.

As this is a new strategic framework that the exec committee has decided to hold itself accountable to, the next section provides a report of the Chamber activities, achievements and outcomes in each strategic area, or pillar:

## Connectivity

Connectivity is about connecting our members with each other and with other businesses, projects and opportunities in the region, and to connect the Chamber with other business groups and networks that would benefit our members.

**Sunshine Coast Business Awards** - connecting members to opportunities to showcase their businesses and be recognised for excellence, and connecting members to other businesses.

The Chamber delivered yet another successful Sunshine Coast Business Awards program and event in 2017. The Business Awards showcased some incredible local businesses who are punching well above their weight on the regional, national and global stage. Many of the businesses nominated, and some finalists, were MCC members and this achievement was made all the more special by the fact that there were a record number of nominations and applicants in 2017. It was a great opportunity to

**Inspiring Women to Work** – connecting members to skilled staff.

The Chamber's unique Inspiring Women to Work program kicked off in September 2017. In the following 12 months, this project resulted in providing 60 local mature aged women who have had a career break and were finding it tough to get work with updated technology and business skills. A key aspect of this project was to engage local successful and inspiring women in business, media, arts, local government and other industries to provide mentoring, motivational workshops and other support. At this stage more than half of the participants are now in jobs, many of which are now employed by our members. We thank our mentors for giving up their time and our members for supporting this project by providing valuable work experience and job opportunities.

**Events** – connecting members to each other and opportunities.

The Chamber delivered more than 30 events in 2017-18 aimed at increasing the opportunities for our members to connect, and providing education and business development opportunities.

- **Coffee and Connect and After Hours** events continued to attract strong attendance. A number of the events were hosted by our partners including Telstra Business Centre, The Hive @ Kon Tiki, Mosaic and others. Our members also hosted some great events including Cricks Group and Mercedes Benz.
- **MCC Members Lunches** commenced in 2018 hosted by the Chamber Vice President to critical acclaim
- **Lunch with the Lightning** – This event was a sell out with over 200 people attending.
- **Inaugural Chamber Golf Day** – was a huge success raising over \$1,000 for our charity sponsor Volunteering Sunshine Coast.

## Website and membership Management System

With much wailing and gnashing of teeth, and support from Secure Access IT and our own Scott Elsom, the Chamber implemented a new website and supporting Chamber management system. This now integrates the management of all Chamber activities and functions, creating efficiencies in our admin and operations. This means more resources can out to delivering for our members.

## Engagement of other Business Groups and Precincts

Significant work by the Chamber exec has gone into reaching out to other business groups and precincts in the Maroochydore region to look at ways of connecting their members and stakeholders to MCC members. A key example of this is the collaboration between the Chamber and the Ocean Street traders to develop a reactivation strategy for Ocean Street to drive connectivity with other areas in Maroochydore such as the new

CBD.

## Advocacy

Being a strong voice for business in Maroochydore and representing our members' interests and views in a range of forums and media, and with government, business and community stakeholders in the region.

There have been 3 key aspects to this in 2017-128:

**Stakeholders** - Chamber exec members have regular engagement through events and meetings with a range of stakeholders to discuss about issues that impact, or are likely to impact on our members and businesses in Maroochydore including:

- Local federal and state members and councillors
- Local, state and federal government agency representatives – economic and community development, employment, education and training, permits and licensing.
- Developers and major project proponents.
- Business groups including the Sunshine Coast Chamber Alliance, Visit Sunshine Coast, other local, regional, state, national and international Chambers and business and industry membership bodies.

**Media** – through our media partnerships and expertise of our communications lead, Peppi Bueti, significant effort has gone into increasing our media presence in relation to issues that the Chamber should have a view or be commenting on including, federal, state and council budget impacts for business, local developments and other business issues.

## Other Businesses and precincts

MCC members have been assisting our new members and other businesses in the Ocean Street precinct with advocacy around specific local government and other issues and strategies for this important area of Maroochydore. Initial discussions have commenced with other similar groups and further information will be forthcoming.

## Acumen

Providing and facilitating opportunities for our members to access education, training, business growth services and to grow the knowledge base of the Chamber.

A key challenge and opportunity for the Chamber is to apply further focus in this area in 2018-19.

**Take 3 Workshops** were delivered by MCC members and were aimed at leveraging the expertise of MCC businesses to provide attendees with practical skills to immediately implement in their businesses. Now the new website and integrated Chamber management system is in place, we will drive further activity in this area by facilitating access to existing opportunities in the region, and delivering further activities.

Along with the Sunshine Coast Multicultural Advisory Group, Sunshine Coast Council and the Nambour Community Centre, the Maroochydore Chamber of Commerce has been an active participant and supporter of the inaugural Migrant Work Ready Program and leveraging our exec committee's and members expertise to help connect local migrants to work and business opportunities. Over an eight week period up to 30 local migrants have learnt about Australian work culture as well as resume writing, interview skills and it was an honour for me to deliver a presentation on finding work in the local job market. This program will provide lasting economic and social benefits for our region and

sits within the connectivity and acumen pillars of our Chamber's business strategy.

### **Resilience**

Ensuring the Chamber is financially sustainable, has sound governance, achieves operational efficiencies and plans for the future.

**The new strategic direction** articulated by the Chamber in early 2018 was the first step in delivering on this strategic area with a solid plan for the future.

**Sound decision making and governance** was implemented , utilising a range of innovative ways to ensure decisions could be made quickly to take advantage of opportunities and reduce risk to the Chamber.

**The surplus financial result in 2017-18** was the best result for the Maroochydore Chamber in a long time, and the Treasurer and Exec Committee should be recognised for this. This now stands the Chamber in a great position to be sustainable into the future.

**The new website and management system** has allowed the Chamber to achieve operational efficiencies and direct resources to where they need to be: delivering services to our members.

Once again, thank you for the opportunity to serve as Maroochydore Chamber of Commerce President and I look forward to the new Executive Committee building on the 2017-18 achievements throughout the coming year.

Kris McCue  
President

12 September 2018