



MEDIA RELEASE

09/12/2020

HUNTER REGION LOOKS BEYOND COAL POWER

Foundation to attract new investment, new industries and new jobs for the region.

The Hunter Joint Organisation is working to establish a new Foundation to help it deal with the long-term economic impacts of the scheduled shut down of power stations and major changes to thermal coal mining across the region in the coming decades.

In addition, the Foundation would assist the region to respond to the significant economic and social impacts of COVID-19.

With 25,000 people in the Hunter working either directly in mining and energy or in their supporting industries, and local exports of coal worth \$3.6 billion dollars, the impact of these industrial challenges could be devastating to the local economy.

“The Hunter has faced this sort of challenge before, with the closure of BHP operations in the 1990s. What we learnt then was that we need to start dealing with this potential crisis immediately,” Hunter Joint Organisation Board Chair and Mayor of Cessnock City Council Cr Bob Pynsent said.

“That’s why we intend to create the *Hunter 2050 Foundation* well ahead of planned closures. Through this, we can ramp up new industries and businesses and get ahead of the curve.”

The scheduled changes will begin in 2021 with the closure of mining operations in Ravensworth East, and the closure of both the Liddell and Bayswater Power Stations scheduled in 2023 and 2035, respectively.

“These closures are the start of local industrial changes that we can’t fully predict or control. We need to be prepared for these changes and for the implications of state and global targets of zero net emissions by 2050. New and emerging Industries like defence, hydrogen, renewables, wine and tourism and agri-business can secure the future of our region, if we act now,” Cr Pynsent said.

“We need a \$15 million dollar investment into this new Foundation. Once established, it will help to secure the capital for new industries, repurpose our land resources and help local business and workers move into new sectors and roles that are meaningful, enjoyable and use their skills to best effect.”

The first job for the Foundation will be to find ways to create new employment and business opportunities for those people in the Hunter impacted by the COVID recession.



59 Bonville Avenue | PO Box 3137 | Thornton NSW 2322
P (02) 4978 4040 | F (02) 4966 0588

FOLLOW OUR PROGRESS  

“COVID-19 provides us with a test case for what could happen if we don’t take this seriously. The impact of doing nothing will not only be devastating for the Hunter, it will be bad for the whole country,” Hunter Joint Organisation Board Member and Mayor of Singleton Council Cr Sue Moore said.

The new Foundation is being supported by the Hunter Joint Organisation, as well as industry partners, education providers, local leaders and community organisations.

Media contact:
Hunter Joint Organisation: Louisa Bulley 0413 891 320
City of Cessnock: Annaleize Hambling 0409 733 731

HUNTERJO.COM.AU

