

FROM THE COAST

Economic Opportunities for Esperance

Deputy Shire President Natalie Bowman

Last week I attended the 'Over the Horizon' Annual Business and Industry Forum and was inspired listening to the presentations discussing Esperance's economy. It was great to hear about the thriving businesses already operating in Esperance, and the potential opportunities they were exploring or working towards that will grow our economy and produce jobs.

The day's events provided a forum for people to network and learn about industries in our region. It is always valuable to hear about what's going on and coming up in our local area and the areas surrounding us.

I was most excited to hear about the Abalone Ranching project for Esperance and it's potential to deliver 100t of abalone annually, which will create 12 new full time positions in addition to creating new work for local established businesses as they build the 'abitats' locally. A clever business idea that requires no ongoing power or feeding inputs to grow the abalone and also has been proven to encourage the natural breeding of local fish life around the 'abitats'

In some of the discussions we've had lately in regards to our Strategic Community Plan, business investment and new employment opportunities is a topic that has been continually popping up. Some of the feedback we've received has highlighted jobs and future business opportunities as a matter of importance.

Some of the different business ideas we've heard are tourism businesses providing things to do when it's not beach weather, cafés, aquaculture and aged care expansion. Another area of interest that's been raised is attracting and retaining young professionals in our area.

We should all remember to be open to new ideas, wherever they come from, and encourage thinking outside the square. Unfortunately sometimes we see negative reactions to new ideas on social media and these comments can be accessed from anywhere in the world. Some of these comments are not very inviting and may even discourage someone from visiting Esperance or exploring setting up business here. It's up to each and every one of us to put a positive message online about Esperance and encourage visitors to experience our beautiful part of the world and imagine the possibilities of relocating and setting up business here. We all have a part to play in making the Esperance Experience a positive one.

New opportunities are a great way to expand what Esperance has to offer, and I look forward to seeing innovative ideas explored with an open mind and a welcoming community