

FROM THE COAST

We will get a Jetty

Council is committed to providing a recreational jetty for our community. We met with members of the Heritage Council and representatives from Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage last week and visually inspected the Tanker Jetty and the recovered section from the uncontrolled collapse, before a meeting of both Councils to discuss a way forward.

I would like to thank the Heritage Council for coming to Esperance and explaining what needs to be done to progress this project. In consultation with the Heritage Council we have been told our concept design is a good starting point and we will continue to develop this. The Heritage Council has stated they will support reconstruction of the existing structure based on the 1935 design, and if this is not feasible, then replacement using a more contemporary design driven by heritage values and constructed with new and recycled materials.

Council is bound by the Local Government Act to make financially responsible decisions that will not burden our community. We do not want to place a financial millstone around the necks of the Esperance Community by committing to any option at any cost. Council has stated it can afford a \$6 million capital spend which includes \$1 million in reserves, a \$1 million loan, and \$4 million funding from different sources. Ongoing maintenance costs for this \$6 million project are accounted for within the current long term financial plan with no additional increase to rates for the purpose of a jetty.

All information is easily accessible on the Shire website albeit lengthy and technical. We have always been open and transparent, right from the 2011 decision on the jetty, yet we still hear incorrect 'facts' which are often taken as gospel truth. Council struggled with the decision to demolish and replace, but it was a financially responsible solution.

Looking backwards and blaming past decisions and the handling of the jetty won't help us move forward. What has happened in the past has happened and we need to find a solution. Council does not want this to be a problem for future generations. We would like a jetty as soon as possible that will last for at least 50 years, have low maintenance costs and allow new memories to be made. Ultimately we want a recreational jetty that can be accessed and enjoyed by locals and tourists that incorporates heritage values, and tell the story of our landmark structure in the bay.