

SMDC Media Statement:

23 June 2022

The Southern Mallee District Council and Mr Jason Taylor have decided to bring Mr Taylor's employment to an end on 4 July 2022.

Mr Taylor joined the Southern Mallee District Council in July 2018 as Chief Executive Officer on a three-year contract and has had two one-year contract extensions on the strength of his performance.

Mr Taylor has led the Council through a golden era of success over the past 4 years, attracting millions of dollars in external investment to deliver major community and local infrastructure projects.

Mayor Jeff Nickolls said the Council and its residents had benefitted greatly from Mr Taylor's tenure and would be sad to see him leave.

"Mr Taylor has been an exceptional CEO for our Council. His passion, innovation, investment attraction, project delivery and leadership skills are what have propelled our district forward in recent years," Mayor Nickolls says.

"Since he has been in the leadership role, our Council has attracted many millions of dollars in competitive and non-competitive grant funding from State and Commonwealth Governments. This has enabled us to deliver major lifestyle and economic development projects across the district."

During Mr Taylor's leadership we have achieved the following outcomes, just to name a few:

- major commercial centre upgrades in Pinnaroo and Lamerook
- extensive community pool upgrades
- a major four-stage upgrade of the Pinnaroo wastewater management system
- major strategic road upgrades to Kulkami and Billiat Roads and the Lovers Lane Bypass
- upgrades to the Lamerook Memorial Hall and Pinnaroo Institute
- significant works to the Pinnaroo Aerodrome, and
- the establishment of two new childcare centres.

Mr Taylor has also led the establishment of new memoranda of understanding with key community groups such as the Lamerook and Pinnaroo Lions clubs, the Geranium Community Group and the Pinnaroo Show Society. Council has also developed its first-ever *Environment Action Plan* and a new *Disability Action Plan*, and a district-wide rebrand – *Southern Mallee, You're Always Welcome*.

"Organisationally he's introduced improved systems, structures and corporate reporting and planning to ensure our Council has a sustainable future that provides exceptional outcomes for all members of our community – something he should be very proud of," Mayor Nickolls says.

Mayor Nickolls announced that the cessation of Mr Taylor's contract was to make way for new leadership as the local government election approached in November, at which time there will most likely be a change in the leadership role of the elected body.

"I firmly believe that Mr Taylor has been an asset to this Council and the Southern Mallee community. I believe he will move on from Southern Mallee with a strong future ahead of him, and the next organisation lucky enough to recruit him will be strengthened by his presence and capabilities."

Mr Taylor expressed his gratitude to the Southern Mallee community and his loyal staff for their support of him while in the role.

“It has been an absolute honour to serve this community, and I’m really proud of the great work done by all of the staff here in recent years to make extraordinary things happen for our small rural towns and communities,” Mr Taylor said.

The Council will not make further comment on this matter.