



# TOOWOOMBA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

23 October 2022

## Media Release

### **ALLIANCE ARGUES FOR A BETTER DEAL FOR LOCAL BUSINESSES**

On Friday 21 October 2022, representatives from six regional towns came together to speak as one voice to Toowoomba's Councillors.

The Darling Downs Regional Alliance (including the Crows Nest Progress, Recreation & Tourism Association, Highfields Chamber of Commerce, the Millmerran Commerce and Progress Association, the Oakey Chamber of Commerce, the Pittsworth District Alliance, Toowoomba Chamber of Commerce, along with the Clifton Chamber of Commerce and Yarraman Business Group) is now the only group across the Council's footprint who represent the former shires pre-amalgamation.

President of the Toowoomba Chamber Kate Venables said, "With a combined membership of representing almost 1000 businesses and community groups, the Alliance are on the ground listening to their communities as issues arise.

"In recognition of the similarity of many issues that relate to the Council, an invitation was extended to Toowoomba Regional Council's elected members to have an opportunity to listen to community leaders advocating on behalf of their members.

"Too much red tape, lack parks and facilities maintenance, internal miscommunication, lack of ongoing consultation on masterplans and burdensome volunteer inductions were all highlighted by the Alliance as persistent and costly barriers caused by Toowoomba Regional Council's systems and processes.

"The cost of hiring rooms in TRC facilities and the \$10 million public liability insurance demands, along with a request that Council meetings rotate around the region were other issues the Alliance raised for the Councillors to act on.

"Despite the frustration outlined by Mayor Paul Antonio, that the legislative restrictions impose on communication between councillors and TRC employees, some agreement was reached for some of the issues.

"The Mayor talked about their job to listen and make things happen when we can and empathised with the frustration the internal red tape experienced by local communities.





# TOOWOOMBA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

“The Alliance felt that there was real value in the meeting and are looking forward to seeing movement in the insurance demands, volunteer inductions, and greater consultation as masterplans are rolled out in the townships.

“Ultimately the true impact of the meeting will only be measured by actions taken – so we will continue to push for more action around the issues that impact our communities”, expressed Kate.

### About The Alliance

The purpose of the Darling Downs Regional Alliance is to support and be the voice of regional business. Working together with other Chambers and like associations within the Toowoomba Local Government Area to coordinate policy and advocacy, networking and training; collectively advocate for what business sees as the key drivers to help growth across the entire region; develop and implement strategies to improve outcomes related to regional business growth; and provide members of the local Chambers and business associations with access to benefits of a coordinated voice on regional issues. |

**Photo Opportunities / Media enquiries:** Kate Venables, 0427 210 298

