

EMAIL TO ADAM BELL

Adam Bell
Journalist
Mosman Daily
29th April 20014

Adam,

It was accidental meeting you yesterday evening at the North Sydney Council in that it was the first of many that I will attend over future months/years.

Below is the email sent to all 13 Councillors on 17th April, Mayor Jilly Gibson has acknowledged receipt.

I can only briefly explain the reasons for Chamber's actions and interest in North Sydney Council, but would welcome an opportunity to explain more fully and answer any questions you might have.

As the email states Chamber from its earliest organising meetings in 1974 is now almost 40 years old. I have been re-elected President since November 1989. Some of the background can be found in my Observations articles on the ACCCI Website Homepage re www.accci.com.au

Since 2010 ACCCI has transformed into a Think Tank/Peoples Diplomacy organisation concentrating on six levels of Governance in Australia and China re Council/District, City/Municipal. State/Province, Federal/Central, Regional/Indauspac, Global/Institutional - our new Mission statement is "Australia China Relations in a Global Era".

Hence as our base has always been Sydney, Chamber has pressed for the re-structuring of Greater Sydney as a truly international financial multicultural center. Prior to the last State Election in 2011 we pressed the then Opposition on a number of issues. Unfortunately Premier Barry O'Farrell was not amenable to establishing a Minister for Greater Sydney in his Cabinet. He, like the new Premier, preferred to be the Minister responsible for Western Sydney, which is understandable in raw politics but actually an insult to all of Sydney, and not addressing the condescension shown by visiting mayors from the great cities of the world particularly China. On the other hand our relentless pressure for the State Government to open Trade and Investment offices in Asia and the Pacific was implemented with considerable success under the leadership of the Deputy Premier.

Most importantly as you know there have been inquiries/reports by the Independent Local Government Review Panel concerning the reform of the state's 152 councils and specifically the 40 plus in Greater Sydney. There is now major disputation over the subject of council amalgamations with a submission by some 22 of Sydney's metropolitan mayors against "massive structural change". However if Sydney is to achieve it's global potential there will have

to be substantial change and only the State Government with Federal support can drive it - a bit like the Second International Airport.

Chamber has over the last 4 years also supported the concept of a Greater Sydney Authority. Some prominent people have made statements, one of which was recently on the front page of the Daily Telegraph. The representation of Sydney internationally has to be by someone with legitimate authority, not a pretender from the CBD who has very little power - the Chinese mayors are in many respects more powerful than Australian State Premiers and in their protocol requirements demand "equivalence" in their meetings. Indeed for about 20 years 1989-2009 throughout China I was known as the de facto Mayor of Greater Sydney for all sorts of diplomatic reasons.

Thus to achieve results ACCCI has been advocating the division of Greater Sydney into 5 Zones, which we arbitrarily did from 2007 to meet the requirements of visiting Chinese mayors, with the various councils grouped into the appropriate ROC organisations (Regional Organisation of Councils). Hence the North Shore ROC of 11 Mayors which proposal was rejected by North Sydney Council re a vote 8/3 over the recommendation of Mayor Jilly Gibson. Apparently councillors at the time believed North Sydney could stand alone in Sydney?

Because the Chamber's HQ is now in Berry Street North Sydney, this decision needs to be reversed. Perhaps North Sydney could decide to join an enlarged City of Sydney re Metropolitan Sydney joining both sides of Sydney Harbour and the Bridge? However given the views expressed by residents in four previous surveys where amalgamation with Mosman, Lane Cove, City of Sydney, and Willoughby were overwhelmingly rejected, there needs to be a full public debate and not just majority decisions by this Council.

Anyway that is my brief, and quick, summary of what the Chamber has been promoting and why. As you would expect we are also talking to ministers in both the NSW and Federal Governments.

Coffee at your convenience is suggested.

Michael C H Jones
President - ACCCI
Tel: 89202997

ATTACHMENT TO EMAIL

17th April 2014

Dear Councillors of North Sydney,

I email you directly and individually as ACCCI will be doing across Greater Sydney to over 40 plus councils.

Recently you voted 10/3 to reject a working relationship with other Mayors on the North Shore, I am advised that 10 councils have voted to participate. Do you really believe North Sydney can survive in isolation?

I have owned property in North Sydney since late 2005, previously at Belrose for over 50 years. Late last year the Australia China Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ACCCI) transferred its International Office to Berry street North Sydney - www.accci.com.au The Chamber has operated from Sydney/NSW since 1976, and until the GFC in 2008 managed a key and contact cities network of some 200 business districts in China. To that end we were always embarrassed by our inability to introduce senior visiting Chinese municipal officials to their opposites in Sydney - equivalent rank is still considered of protocol importance in China.

Thus we have advocated, and support, proposals to make Sydney a truly global city in its organisational and representational structure. These include a State Minister for Greater Sydney, a Greater Sydney Authority, division into 5 boroughs/districts, enlargement of the City of Sydney, and upgrading of the ROC structure. Whatever the ultimate decisions by the NSW State Government it is clear that councils such as North Sydney can no longer stand alone in any aspect. Perhaps North Sydney could amalgamated with City of Sydney - Clover Moore surely would enjoy that possibility?

For these reasons Chamber has gradually played a more forthright role in the discussion concerning Greater Sydney and its relations with the world. As we are based in North Sydney, and given your recent vote, we believe a broader and deeper public discussion is necessary. I and my colleagues are available to meet with you should you feel this would be advantageous.

Kind regards

Michael C H Jones
President - ACCCI

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