Media Release

Monday 9 November 2026

Barunga West Council Welcomes New Chief Executive Officer

Barunga West Council is pleased to announce the appointment of Mr Ian Hart as its new Chief Executive Officer, commencing Monday, 23 November 2026.

Mr Hart brings a wealth of executive leadership experience across local and state government, the private sector and community organisations, with a strong background in strategic planning, community development, stakeholder engagement and corporate governance.

Most recently, Mr Hart has served as Chief Executive Officer of Kingston District Council, a position he held for almost three years. Prior to this, he was Director Community Development at Kangaroo Island Council and Executive Manager, Community and Economic Development at Derwent Valley Council in Tasmania.

His broader career includes senior executive positions in regional economic development, tourism, sport and recreation, together with extensive experience in managing organisations and working collaboratively with businesses, government and community stakeholders.

Mr Hart holds a Master of Business Administration (MBA) and is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.

Mayor Leonie Kerley welcomed the appointment, highlighting Mr Hart's breadth of experience and understanding of the opportunities and challenges facing regional communities:

"Council is delighted to welcome Ian as our new Chief Executive Officer. He brings a broad range of knowledge and experience, particularly in regional local government, community development and strategic leadership as well as workplace culture growth and support.

"His experience working across different levels of government and with regional communities will be invaluable as we continue to plan for the future and deliver services and infrastructure that meet the needs of our community."

Mr Hart said "I'm looking forward to working with the elected members and staff team in servicing and positively contributing to the Barunga West community in the beautiful upper Yorke region."

"Council looks forward to working with Ian to build on our achievements and continue delivering positive outcomes for the Barunga West district," Mayor Kerley said.

Mayor Kerley also acknowledged the contribution of Interim Chief Executive Officer Andrew Aitken during the recruitment and transition period.

"On behalf of Council, I sincerely thank Andrew for his leadership, professionalism and commitment during this period. His contribution has been greatly appreciated."

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