



Shelley Hancock
Minister for Local Government

MEDIA RELEASE

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CENTRAL COAST COUNCIL SUSPENDED

The NSW Government today suspended Central Coast Council and appointed an interim administrator.

Minister for Local Government Shelley Hancock said an interim administrator will restore the proper and effective functioning of the council.

“There is a clear need for greater oversight and control over the council’s budget and expenditure to restore its financial sustainability and importantly reinstall the community’s trust in the effective functioning of their council,” Mrs Hancock said.

Dick Persson AM has been appointed as interim administrator of Central Coast Council for three months.

Mr Persson is a highly experienced local government administrator with a proven track record of fixing council dysfunction. He was appointed administrator following the dismissal of Warringah Council in 2003 and Port Macquarie-Hastings Council in 2008 as well as Northern Beaches Council when it was created in 2016. He has also held senior roles in the NSW, Queensland and Federal governments.

Mr Persson will bring with him a highly experienced former local government general manager Rik Hart to oversee the council’s operational recovery.

Mr Hart has nearly two decades of experience as a local government general manager at councils including the City of Parramatta, Inner West Council and Warringah Council.

“Dick Persson and Rik Hart bring with them the knowledge, skills and experience needed to restore the financial sustainability of Council,” Mrs Hancock said.

“I am pleased that two such highly experienced and qualified local government professionals are taking up these positions.”

Mrs Hancock made the decision to suspend the council after carefully considering a submission from the council in response to a notice of intention issued on October 21.

The appointment of an interim administrator will provide independent governance to address financial, reputational and organisational risks.

Suspension applies to the mayor and councillors. It does not affect council staff and daily operations.

The administrator will perform the functions of the mayor and councillors for three months.

“Dick Persson and Rik Hart are well placed to restore the proper and effective functioning of the council and ensure that the best interests of ratepayers are being served now and in the future,” Mrs Hancock said.

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