

## MEDIA RELEASE

DATE: 20 September 2019

### COUNCIL TO DISPOSE OF SURPLUS DREDGE



*Photo: Original cutter suction dredge of which Council has agreed to dispose of*

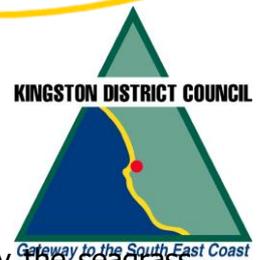
Council has agreed to dispose of its original cutter suction dredge following a unanimous decision at the September meeting. In making this decision Mayor Kay Rasheed said, "it simply came down to the fact that the vessel is no longer able to be effectively utilised". The dredge is not in survey as required by Australian Maritime Safety Authority, and we have been advised it is highly unlikely that the vessel will ever meet requirements and standards to be appropriately 'in survey'.

#### COUNCIL OFFICE

29 Holland Street  
PO Box 321  
KINGSTON SE SA 5275  
**Phone:** 08 8767 2033  
**Email:** [info@kingstondc.sa.gov.au](mailto:info@kingstondc.sa.gov.au)  
**Web:** [www.kingstondc.sa.gov.au](http://www.kingstondc.sa.gov.au)

#### COUNCIL WORKS DEPOT

Lot 23 Adam Road  
PO Box 321  
KINGSTON SE SA 5275  
**Phone:** 08 8767 3070  
**Email:** [depot@kingstondc.sa.gov.au](mailto:depot@kingstondc.sa.gov.au)  
**Web:** [www.kingstondc.sa.gov.au](http://www.kingstondc.sa.gov.au)



Given the significant increase and change in material accumulation, primarily the seagrass wrack within the Maria Creek, the original dredge is not capable in successfully removing this material. This is compounded by the fact that there is no engineering or specifications on the vessel and the environmental impact is unable to appropriately be assessed by the relevant authorities.

It is already known that the vessel's mechanics create water quality issues as it is not capable of containing suspended sediment within the water column. This is of important consideration in Maria Creek, where there are known sensitivities and water quality issues, and this suspended sediment (referred to as 'plume') can be extremely detrimental to the marine environment.

Mayor Rasheed, in recognition that the dredge was previously built and operated by volunteers, said "I'd like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and commend the huge amount of time and volunteer effort that was put into the previous operations of the dredge."

Disposing of the dredge will provide an opportunity to consolidate marine assets and operate only one, particularly given Council's current position to focus on a long-term sustainable solution for the boat launching facility at Maria Creek. Mayor Rasheed indicated that this process took a step forward at the September meeting, with Council agreeing to proceed to Stage 1 – detailed concept design. This follows receipt of Tonkin Consulting's scope of work brief which will see Council seeking quotations for a scientifically proven concept design for alterations to the existing structures.

- ENDS -

**Contact:**

Nat Traeger

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER | KINGSTON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Phone: 08 8767 2033 | E: [ceo@kingstondc.sa.gov.au](mailto:ceo@kingstondc.sa.gov.au)

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**Web:** [www.kingstondc.sa.gov.au](http://www.kingstondc.sa.gov.au)