

CHIEF EXECUTIVE
OFFICER

COUNCIL REPORT

Meeting 20 November 2024



Item 1: Meetings Attended

- CEO met with UPNorth Consultants about submitting an RFQ to develop Council's corporate Plan and assisting with a grant application to undertake a project to update Council's Planning Scheme.
- CEO met with Barabara Schmidt and Associates about Financial and Operational reporting for Council's Aged Care facility.
- CEO attended the Local Government Association of Queensland's (LGAQ) Annual Conference with the Mayor and selected Councillors.
- CEO attended an engagement meeting with the Department of Housing's First Nations Housing and Homelessness Unit about Council's Local Housing Plan and Strategic Capital Plan.
- CEO participated in a CEO Induction Program delivered by the LGAQ.
- CEO participated in an engagement meeting with Queensland Ambulance Service and the Torres and Cape Hospital and Health Service.
- CEO participated in an engagement meeting with the National Indigenous Australians Agency.
- CEO participated in an engagement meeting with the Department of Tourism, Innovation and Sport.
- CEO participated in a Teams workshop with staff from Douglas Shire, Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire and Cook Shire Councils about a potential Disaster Management MOU with Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council covering the 4 Shires.
- CEO participated in a Community Meeting about Council's Horse Management Strategy.
- CEO participated in a Teams Meeting with the Department of Housing about Hope Vale's Strategic Capital Plan.
- CEO met with members of the Hopevale Congress Board, together with their CEO, about opportunities for collaboration.
- CEO participated in a series of meetings about the future of Aged Care Services in Hope Vale as part of the Review being undertaken by Council's consultants.
- CEO participated in a Teams Workshop with Telstra and Attentis Technology about a potential collaboration to deploy localised weather monitoring technology across the region based on a citizen science approach.
- CEO met with Apunipima Cape York Health Council about the Gather and Grow Food Security Program.
- CEO participated in a workshop with the Mayor and Councillors and Department of Housing about Hope Vale's Strategic Capital Plan, Local Housing Plan and Remote Home Ownership.
- CEO participated in a workshop to operationalise the Growing Respect Mayoral DFV Taskforce in Cooktown.
- CEO met with the OIC of the Hope Vale Police Station about opportunities for collaboration locally about community wellbeing and safety.

Recommendation**That Council:**

- (a) receive the Chief Executive Officer's Report, and**
- (b) note the meetings attended by the Chief Executive Officer**

Item 2: National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) – Funding of Youth Engagement Program

The National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) is a Federal Government Agency that works in genuine partnership to enable the self-determination and aspirations of First Nations communities.

NIAA implements the Australian Government's priorities and support the Minister for Indigenous Australians. Key focus areas include:

- Closing the Gap;
- Culture and Empowering Communities;
- Early Childhood Development and Education;
- Employment and Economic Development;
- Environment and Land;
- Health and Wellbeing; and
- Housing and Community Safety.

NIAA has confirmed that as a result of the efforts that HVASC has put into improving the lives of Indigenous Australians through the delivery of Hope Vale Youth Engagement Program, the funding for this activity has been approved to continue from 1/1/2025 to 31/12/2027 (3 full calendar years).

The funding has been approved under the Indigenous Advancement Strategy. Council will be working with NIAA to develop a Project Schedule for the program.

Recommendation:

That Council receive and note the information provided about the Youth Engagement Funding Program.

Item 3: Regional Disaster Management Memorandum of Understanding

In 2023, the CEOs from Cook Shire Council, Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council and Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council met and agreed to continue collaboration between the three Councils around disaster management aimed at strengthening disaster preparedness and response across the remote communities.

The agreement builds on a history of collaboration between the Councils and acknowledges the common and unique natural and other hazards relevant to the region collectively and each Council individually. The agreement recognises the mutual benefits of collaborating at a regional level and the positive impact such collaboration can generate on building community confidence.

Following TC Jasper/Flooding of December 2023, Douglas Shire Council is being added to the MOU to further enhance regional resilience, improve emergency response coordination, and ensure the safety of these remote communities.

All parties to the Memorandum of Understanding acknowledge the comprehensive and all hazards approach to disaster management that underpins disaster management across Queensland and Australia.

Objectives

The agreement is made in good faith for the purpose of ensuring the highest standard of disaster management by each Council and collectively as a region. The Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council, Cook Shire Council, Douglas Shire Council and Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council consider that increased collaboration on matters of disaster management will:

- Enable coordination of activities relevant to planning and preparing for disasters;
- Encourage increased engagement between Local Disaster Management Groups (LDMGs) from each Council; and
- Enhance each Council's ability to respond to and recover from disasters in the Local Authority areas through stronger partnerships.

Status and Review of the Memorandum of Understanding

The Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council, Cook Shire Council, Douglas Shire Council and Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council acknowledge that the Memorandum of Understanding is not legally enforceable and relies on the spirit of collaboration leading to its development and adoption in times of need.

Recommendation:

That Council receive and note the information provided about the Regional Disaster Management Memorandum of Understanding.

Item 4: Collaboration with Telstra and Attentis Technology – Weather Monitoring in Times of Disaster

As Council is aware, the Queensland Police Service (QPS) has assumed responsibility for disaster management. All 77 Queensland councils, plus Weipa Town Authority, recently participated in a series of roundtables with QPS across the State to gather feedback about what works and what needs improving in disaster management. I was involved in a roundtable in Cooktown.

One of the key themes to emerge from those roundtables as identified in a presentation delivered by Deputy Commissioner Chelepy recently is "improving situational awareness." Specifically, this involves:

- Localised weather intelligence supported by timely delivery.
- More rain gauges and river/creek monitoring.
- More road and bridge cameras.

Following on from the LGAQ Conference, we are looking at a collaborative partnership between Council, Telstra and one of its technology subsidiaries, Attentis, to potentially roll out weather monitoring equipment across the region. This would provide localised weather data, to monitor micro-climatic conditions, which will assist in targeting responses during times of disaster.

Recommendation:

That Council receive and note the information provided about the collaboration between Council, Telstra and Attentis.

Item 5: Disaster Management Pre-Season Exercise – Semper Paratus

Disaster Management Operations within the Cairns Disaster District and the Hopevale Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG) area is guided by the Disaster Management Act 2003 (the Act), and associated policy outlines the key guiding principles to follow including:

Prevention, Preparation, Response and Recovery (PPRR)

Every year, the Cairns DDMG puts their member councils through a scenario exercise. The objective of the scenario is to refresh the LDMG on practical application of the PPRR measures specific to our respective local government area (LGA). The response and recovery aspect of the scenario is specifically designed to challenge LDMG DM practitioners in the maintaining of local government and all other facets of local services (health, education, policing, etc.) due to impacts and other influences.

The Local Disaster Coordinator (LDC – the CEO for Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council) is provided with a document which provides the first part of the overall scenario along with several components which if practitioners are new to the LDMG/LGA will provide a degree of situational awareness of local infrastructure and services. The DDMG acknowledges the local knowledge held within Council and our LDMG membership, as in most cases with events “local problems are solved through local knowledge informed by local experience.”

The particular scenario worked through was as follows:

It is 20th December 2024.

School has finished for the year and students are enjoying the holiday period. The Hope Vale area is currently experiencing heat wave conditions with daytime temperatures reaching 35 - 37 degrees. Even so, the community is very much out and about fishing and swimming along with boating activities.

Key LDMG members are on Xmas/New Years leave either doing so by leaving community or if already working from locations based in Cairns or elsewhere. Significant MoG changes across State government has taken place since the October 26th election and there are whispers of the Australian government posturing for a Federal election early in 2025.

The Hopevale LDMG has met once in the last six months and have undertaken some cyclone season preparations within the community. There is a sense of nervousness within the community due to their experience with TC Jasper in December 2023.

The same day the Hope Vale LDMG Chair and LDC are contacted by the Cairns DDMG XO advising that a system has developed in the Coral Sea and all indications are is that it is tracking towards Hope Vale and will cross very near the community in five days' time as a Severe Category 5.

Although we know that the tracking of cyclones is problematic and can change course as it closes in on the coastline, the Bureau is very confident that this system will not change course due to the current atmospheric guiding mechanisms.

The Bureau's new seven-day tropical cyclone forecast map supports all available modelling as well.

The Cairns DDMG XO also advises that the State Disaster Coordinator (SDC) is very concerned about the system and its potential impacts on the Hope Vale population along with its critical infrastructure and essential services.

The SDCG and the Cairns DDMG have moved quickly to Lean Forward.

The LDC was asked to prepare responses to a range of tasks which mirrored what would occur if a cyclone was tracking towards Hope Vale.

Recommendation:

That Council receive and note the information provided about the Semper Paratus disaster management exercise.

Item 6: Annual Christmas Closure

Under Council's Industrial Award, the Queensland Local Government Industry (Stream A) Award - State 2017, Council is required to advise all employees of the annual Christmas closedown period.

Council normally closes its operations for a period of 3-weeks, during which time essential services continue to be provided. An on-call roster of staff is developed in advance, so that Council can respond to any issues or events, including disaster events, that might impact the community.

In accordance with normal practice, the Christmas closedown period for 2024/25 is proposed to be from Friday 20 December 2024 to Sunday 12 January 2025, with Council reopening for business on Monday 13 January.

Recommendation:

That, pursuant to Division 2, Section 1, Clause 19.4 (a)(i)(ii) of the Queensland Local Government Industry (Stream A) Award - State 2017, Council advises all employees concerned: Council's annual close period commences from close of business on Friday 20 December 2023 through to Monday 13 January 2024.

Item 7: Councillor Portfolios

The roles and responsibilities of the Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council Mayor and Councillors are prescribed in the Queensland Local Government Act 2009. At a practical level, many councils across Queensland allocate their Mayor and Councillors to portfolios of responsibility, which align to the identified areas of strategic importance to the community.

The portfolio system provides councillors with an opportunity to develop an increased level of knowledge, leadership and representation across their region in specified areas of responsibility. The portfolio system encourages teamwork and collaboration between Council, officers, other stakeholders and the community they serve.

The councillor portfolio system has a strong alignment with the strategic priorities of Council and as such, portfolio councillors:

- Build knowledge of council proposals, issues and activities which are relevant to their portfolio.
- Act as the official council representative on portfolio relevant matters.

- Provide input and advice to council officers on matters relevant to their portfolio.

They also allow the councillors to identify opportunities and to advocate for our region. The portfolios are based around what council wants its communities to be: vibrant, liveable, secure, creative, healthy and active.

The Mayor and Councillors have developed the following portfolios for Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council:

Mayor Bruce Gibson

Governance, Disaster Management and Land (Justice and Safety)

- Law and Justice (DFV)
- Council Organisation
- Disaster Management
- Land
- Building Construction
- Youth Justice
- Housing

Deputy Mayor Barry Bowen

Community Wellbeing (Health and Wellbeing)

- Health
- Disability and CHSP - NDIS
- Aged Services

Cr Rowan Hart

Infrastructure Services

- Civil Construction
- Building Projects
- Essential Services (Waste, Water, Sewerage, Parks and Gardens)
- Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements (DRFA - REPA)
- Animal Management (Biosecurity)

Cr Eva Bounghi

Education and Training (Education, Language and Digital Inclusion)

- Kindergarten
- Childcare
- Education and Training
- Youth Development
- Sport and Recreation
- Arts and Culture
- Indigenous Knowledge Centre

Cr Sha-lane Gibson

Economic Development and Tourism

- Employment
- Investment
- Development

- Communications – Technology
- Events
- DFV
- Finance and Audit

Item 8: 2024/2025 Operational Plan – First Quarterly Report

Council's Annual Operational Plan documents the annual progress in the implementation of the 5-Year Corporate Plan and manages Council's operational risks. Attachment A to this report provides a summary of Council's progress towards implementing the Annual Operational Plan for the first quarter.

Recommendation: That Council receive and note the report of Council's progress towards implementing the annual Operational Plan for the first quarter as shown as Attachment A of the Chief Executive Officer's Report.

Item 9: CEO Verbal Briefing

- 9.1 Establishment of a Hope Vale Community Safety Group.
- 9.2 Communication support proposals.
- 9.3 Meeting with Hopevale Congress Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC.
- 9.4 Growing Respect Mayoral DFV Taskforce.



Lawrence Booth
Chief Executive Officer
20 November 2024