

Hope Vale Environmental Health Plan 2024 - 2029





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Mayors/Council Forward

It is with pleasure I present you the Environmental Health Plan for Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council 2024 – 2029.

Sincerely,

Mayor

Date

Bruce Gibson

Environmental Health Plan Sign Off: 2024 – 2029

Organisation	Position	Name	Signature	Date
Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council	Chief Executive Officer	Lew Rojahn		
Queensland Health Tropical Public Health Services	A/Manager Environmental Health	Andrew D'Addona		

Disclaimer:

The scope of work and specific activities identified within this Environmental Health Plan are reflective of the “Description of Services” detailed within the Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council Service Agreement number 3590-2022-23-Agreement-001.0 between:

- The State of Queensland acting through Queensland Health; and
- Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council

All performance and financial reporting schedules will remain as detailed in the Service Agreement schedule.



Acknowledgment to Country

We would like to acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land. We pay our respects to our elders both past and present and acknowledge the many leaders in the community.

Introduction

In creating the Hope Vale Environmental Health plan, we stand in our deep-rooted knowledge and understanding of our community. We recognise we are the experts in identifying the environmental health factors impacting our health and well-being, and with this understanding, we develop a plan reflecting the priorities and ongoing aspirations of our community.

Our approach to community wellbeing remains grounded in collective wisdom and lived experiences which empowers our people to take ownership of our environmental health journey. By coming together as a community, we aim to collaboratively design strategies addressing not only the immediate environmental health hazards, but also lay the groundwork for long-term resilience and sustainability. Through this process, we will continue to honour our culture and traditions, weaving them into the fabric of our plan to ensure its relevance and effectiveness for our future generations.

The interconnection between culture, environment, and health is undeniable. As we move forward, we acknowledge the progress made through previous environmental health initiatives and the dedication of Council, community, organisations, and governments at all levels.

However, there are ongoing and consistent challenges, and the need for a comprehensive, strategic, and sensitive approach to environmental health remains more crucial than ever. In aiming to address these factors, this plan, has incorporated community engagement as a fundamental principle.



What is environmental health and why is it important?

Environmental health is a critical factor in maintaining the community's public health and is the connection between human health and the surrounding environment. Our living environments have a direct impact on our health, and management of our environments can reduce our risk of disease and support good health outcomes.

The scope of environmental health includes the quality and reliability of drinking water supply and sewage services, adequate housing with working facilities, pest control, controlling disease vectors like mosquitos, healthy and well cared for domestic animals, air quality and control of dust, waste management, and good food hygiene practices.

Diseases known to be influenced by environmental factors include acute rheumatic fever, rheumatic heart disease (RHD), trachoma, gastroenteritis, diarrhea, skin and ear infections, sepsis, pneumonia, and respiratory disease.

Improving environmental health conditions is particularly important where environmental health factors are contributing to higher levels of communicable diseases, chronic health conditions and hospitalisation rates. Ultimately, prioritising environmental health is essential for safeguarding our health, the health of our animals and ensuring our people can live in environments which support their health and well-being.

Service Scope

Councils play a key role in environmental health management in our community. The council's role is to ensure our community has access to essential services such as water, sewage and waste management, safe living conditions, and support for sustainable environmental health practices. The following key areas form part of our ongoing Environmental Health service delivery:

- Ensuring housing in the community is safe and suitable for habitation. This includes addressing issues related to sanitation, hygiene, overcrowding.
- Providing essential services including waste management, drinking water quality, sewage and sanitation, pest management and monitoring services to identify any potential health risks.
- Ensuring food businesses in the community are meeting their requirements to provide safe food.

- Providing domestic animal management services to keep our community animals safe, happy and healthy and to prevent any risks to community members from unrestrained or dangerous animals.
- Enforcement of environmental health and animal management regulations and standards.
- Responding to environmental health emergencies, such as natural disasters, food borne illness outbreaks, disease outbreaks, or water contamination incidents.
- Allocation of resources and budgets for environmental health programs and initiatives. We must prioritise investments in infrastructure, services, and initiatives to address the most pressing environmental health issues within the community.
- Understanding public health risks in community through liaison with local primary health care providers and establishing effective referral pathways.
- Advocating for the needs and concerns of our people at higher levels of government. They can help us work to secure funding, support, and policy changes to better address environmental health issues.

First Nations Environmental Health Strategy 2024-2029

The Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council participates in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Environmental Health Program (the Program) which is supported by Queensland Health. This Program operates across 34 discrete communities in 16 Local Government areas and is focused on building environmental health capacity within these communities.

The integration of community environmental health plans into the wider framework of the First Nations Health Strategy (the Strategy) enables the local governments to leverage resources, share best practices and co-ordinate efforts. This collaborative approach between local government, Hospital and Health Service Public Health Units and Queensland Health ensures that environmental health considerations are embedded in service delivery. By participating in overarching programs, the local government can access funding, technical assistance, and expertise from a wide network of Environmental Health professionals to address environmental health issues effectively.

The Strategy can be viewed at: [First Nations Environmental Health Strategy 2024-29](#)

For communities, with communities, by communities

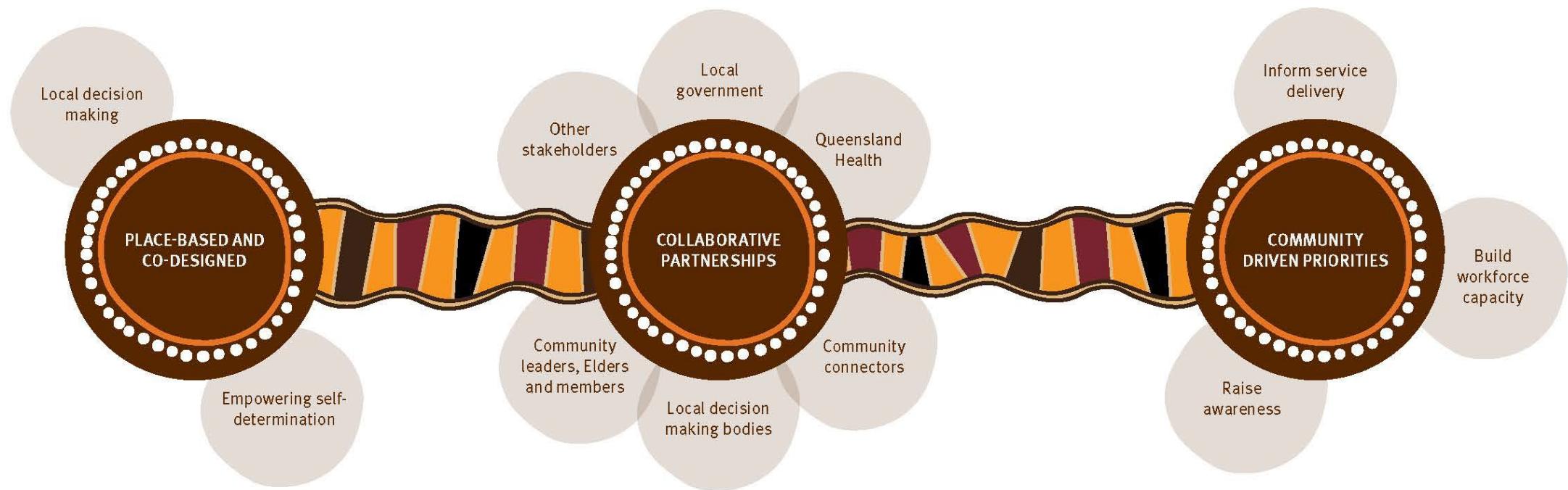


Image: Page 9 First Nations Environmental Health Strategy

See Appendix A for description of Thriving Communities Image First Nations Environmental Health Strategy
HVASC - Environmental Health Plan 2024 - 2029



Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council's Strategic Environmental Health Priorities 2024 – 2029

Community Engagement Process:

Community Engagement was conducted on Thursday 17 October 2024 at the Hope Vale Pioneer Community Hall. A team of officers from Council and Queensland Health worked closely together to put on the event.

During the community engagement process, the community was provided with an overview and explanation of nine (9) environmental health priority areas. Each community member who attended was given the opportunity to provide feedback on their choice of the top three (3) environmental health issues they considered to be most important to them and would like to see improvements within their community.

The following Environmental Health program priority areas were consulted:

Environmental Health Program Priority Areas
Domestic Animals & Visiting Veterinary Service
Pest Management
Waste Management
Healthy Housing (Hygienic Living Environments)
Safe Drinking Water
Disaster and Incident Response
Safe and Healthy Food
Wastewater
Safe Recreational Water (Public Swimming Pool and Splash Park)

Community Engagement Results:

Below is a summary of the results for all environmental health priority areas identified by the community for Hope Vale:

Total Number of People Participated: 22			
#	Priority Area Topic (In order of preference)	Total Number of Persons Recorded as a Priority (#/22)	Total Number of people recorded as a Priority %
1	Domestic Animals & Visiting Veterinary Service	19	86%
2	Pest Management	12	55%
3	Waste Management	12	55%
4	Healthy Housing (Hygienic Living Environments)	8	36%
5	Safe and Healthy Food	7	32%
6	Safe Drinking Water	7	32%
7	Disaster and Incident Response	7	32%
8	Wastewater	2	5%
9	Safe Recreational Water	0	0%



Priority Areas identified during Community Engagement for Improvement

The Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council acknowledges the community feedback and expectations that the following three (3) environmental health program areas are considered high priority by the community.

#	Top 3 Issues – Priority Area Topic (In order of preference)
1	Domestic Animals & Visiting Veterinary Service
2	Pest Management
3	Waste Management

Refer to Appendix B for breakdown of key activity areas, deliverables and resources required to address the top 3 issues.

Program Area	Statutory Obligation
Domestic Animal Management	<i>Animal Management Cats and Dogs Act 2008</i> Local Laws and Subordinate Local Laws
Pest Management	<i>Public Health Act 2005</i> <i>Medicine and Poisons (Pest Management Activities) Regulation 2021</i> Local Laws and Subordinate Local Laws
Waste Management	<i>Environment Protection Act 1994</i> <i>Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2003</i> Environmental Licence



Other Environmental Health Program Area Services and Scope

The following environmental health program activities shall continue to be implemented by the Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council as per State and Local Government statutory authority licensing and operational requirements.

Other Program Area	Statutory Authority
Healthy Housing (Hygienic Living Environments)	<i>Local Government Act 2009</i> <i>Local Laws & Subordinate Local Laws</i> <i>Public Health Act 2005</i>
Safe Drinking Water	<i>Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008</i> <i>Drinking Water Quality Management Plan</i> <i>Public Health Act 2005</i>
Disaster and Incident Response	<i>Disaster Management Act 2003</i> <i>Public Health Act 2005</i>
Safe and Healthy Food	<i>Food Act 2006</i>
Wastewater	<i>Public Health Act 2005</i> <i>Environmental Protection Act 1994</i> • <i>Environmental Licence</i>
Safe Recreational Water (Public Swimming Pools and Splash Parks)	<i>Public Health Act 2005</i>

Refer to Appendix B for breakdown of minimum key activity areas and deliverables to address “Other Program Areas” within the Environmental Health Plan.



Environmental Health Workforce

The Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council employs an Animal Management Worker and Trainee Environmental Health Worker who is undergoing professional development training. Under the leadership of the Operations Director, and with the support and guidance of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Environmental Health Program Staff, Council will implement the environmental health program areas identified within the Environmental Health Plan 2024-2029. The Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council will implement the plan, provide training to staff, and the leadership required to deliver work required under various program areas.

The key workforce resources include the following but not limited to:

Environmental Health and Animal Management Worker (EHW/AMW):

The Trainee Environmental Health Worker (EHW) and Animal Management Worker (AMW) constitute Council's Environmental Health Team under the Operations Department led by the Operations Director.

The Environmental Health Team will work in collaboration with other Council staff to achieve the deliverables of the Environmental Health Plan including the top 3 Health Priority Areas namely:

- Domestic Animal and Visiting Veterinary Service Program
- Pest Management Program
- Waste Management

The Environmental Health team will report regularly to the to the ATSIPHP Co-ordinator.

Appendix A

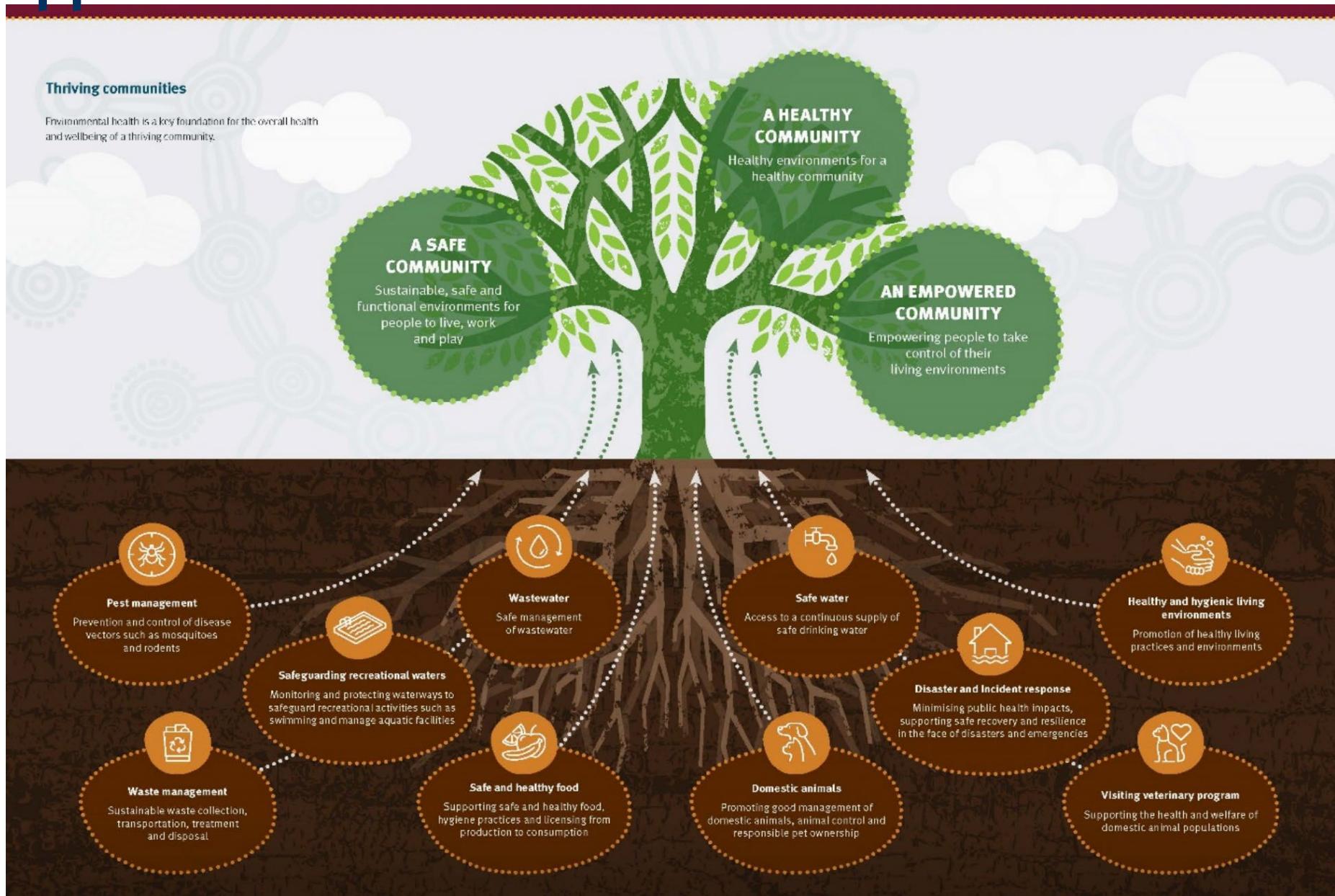


Image: Page 12 - First Nations Environmental Health Strategy

Appendix B

Service Delivery by Council:

1.0 Domestic Animals & Visiting Veterinary Service Program			
Key Activity Areas	Description	Resources Required to Achieve Deliverables	Time Frame to meet Deliverables
	<p>Domestic Animal Management relates to responsible pet ownership in particular Dogs, Cats and Horses and any other animal identified in the Hope Vale Model Local Law No.2 (<i>Animal Management</i>) 2013 and Subordinate Local Law No.2 (<i>Animal Management</i>) 2013. This does not include livestock and wildlife such as cattle, crocodile and kangaroos.</p> <p>Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council will implement the following key activities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Council is to Develop and implement an Animal Management Plan for dogs, cats and horses that includes but not limited to the following:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Census</i>• <i>Promote responsible ownership</i>• <i>Stakeholder engagement</i>• <i>Limited veterinary services</i>• <i>Promote registration including microchipping for dogs</i>• <i>Local Law / complaints management</i>• <i>Domestic Animal rehoming</i>• <i>Domestic Animal disposal / destruction</i>• <i>Management of pound</i>• <i>Media Strategy</i>	Operations Director, and Environmental Health Team	June 2026

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Staff training and authorisations</i> • <i>Record Keeping / Reporting</i> <p>2. Visiting veterinary service who will provide limited services which may include euthanasia, desexing and options for vaccination and microchipping at least every 6 months.</p> <p>3. Annual dog census (subject to access to expert volunteer resources and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Environmental Health Program staff). Will provide a record of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>address</i>, • <i>breed, colour, name of dog</i> • <i>animal sex (male/female)</i> • <i>desex status</i> • <i>registered / microchipped</i> • other information for example: request for animal to be permanent or temporary desexed. <p>4. Encourage pet owners to seek treatments for domestic animals (including ticks, fleas, parasites, and worms) are encouraged and facilitated through local service providers.</p> <p>5. Maintain the animal pound including a veterinary surgery room that will support visiting veterinary services.</p> <p>6. Escalate incidents of dog attacks and aggressive animals (including horses) for investigation.</p> <p>7. Commence a dog, and cat registration system. Subject to external support and expert volunteers, commence a horse registration system which aligns with QLD Biosecurity PIC/RBE system</p> <p>8. Consider domestic animal trapping program where necessary.</p> <p>9. Provide education and awareness for responsible pet ownership in community.</p>		<p>Ongoing, 2 per year (minimum)</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
Further Activity Areas	<p>Animal management worker is trained to deliver euthanasia under the supervision of a qualified veterinary officer. This may be via at least one of the following:</p>	<p>AMW</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>



for Consideration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Pentobarbital - Obtain a Drug Authority under the Medicines and Poisons Act and Regulation.</i>• <i>Firearm – Require a firearm licence</i>• <i>Captive bolt</i>• <i>Other</i>		
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2.0 Pest Management Program

Key Activity Areas	Description	Resources Required to Achieve Deliverables	Time Frame to meet Deliverables								
	<p>Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council is to implement the following key activities:</p> <p>Lead community wide pest management initiatives. Advocate pest control for Department of Housing properties. Implement pest management in Council owned properties.</p> <p>HVASC will assess public health risks associated with pest and vermin infestations. Where required, Council will conduct:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pest control treatments within Council properties. • Refer pest public health risk at locations where Council is not the owner to responsible agency for response e.g. Department of Housing properties, Queensland Health facilities, Police Service properties, department of Education properties; • Communicate identified public health risks to the property owners and community. <p>Typical types of pests include, but not limited to:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="473 1187 1237 1334"> <tr> <td>Cockroaches</td> <td>Ticks & Fleas</td> <td>Ants</td> <td>Spiders</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mice & Rats</td> <td>Flies</td> <td>Mites</td> <td>Bed Bugs</td> </tr> </table>	Cockroaches	Ticks & Fleas	Ants	Spiders	Mice & Rats	Flies	Mites	Bed Bugs	<p>Operations Director, and Environmental Health Team</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>
Cockroaches	Ticks & Fleas	Ants	Spiders								
Mice & Rats	Flies	Mites	Bed Bugs								



	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Continue to monitor pest activity sites 2. Develop and provide education, awareness and advice to community on pest management when required.. 		Ongoing
			Monthly
			Ongoing as required

3.0 Waste Management Program

Key Activity Areas	Description	Resources Required to Achieve Deliverables	Time Frame to meet Deliverables
	<p>Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council will support the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide support to the development and implementation of HVASC community waste management plan that includes the following: • Regular waste collection audits and report to supervisor • Routine inspections of the landfill with the HVASC Open Spaces Team for public health risk including areas of maintenance and pest control and report to council for appropriate action 	Operations Director, and Environmental Health Team	Ongoing Ongoing



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct weekly rubbish patrols in the community Environmental health education and promotions in the community including schools Provide support to the bin audit every 6 months. Reporting any broken or damaged bins to Council for repair or replacement. Support the roll out of HVASC annual abandoned vehicles and kerbside clean up in preparation for cyclone season (November – December) including illegal dumping sites. 		Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing
Further Activity Areas for Consideration	Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council may conduct community education on responsible waste management behaviours including littering, recycling, bin maintenance and repair, placement of bins on footpaths are secure from animals.	Operations Director, and Environmental Health Team	Note



Other Health Program Areas

Key Activities:

Healthy Housing (Hygienic Living Environments)

- Conduct Healthy Living Practices (HLP) education and awareness.
- Support referral to other agencies for work requests and health support.

Safe Drinking Water

- Safe drinking water is provided to community in accordance with the Drinking Water Quality Management Plan (HVASC Essential Services Team).

Safe and Healthy Food

- Food businesses inspections are conducted at least annually, and results reported to the Council.
- Food business licensing program is implemented and maintained in accordance with legislative requirements.
- Food hygiene training and awareness is conducted for businesses and home-based businesses.

Disaster and incident Response

- Incorporating environmental health into disaster preparedness planning events and LDMG.
- Collaboration of the Environmental health with local primary health clinic.

Wastewater

- Managing wastewater so that it does not have an adverse impact on public health.
- Operating and maintaining wastewater treatment system in accordance local and state legislative requirements including environmental licence requirements.

Safe Recreational Water

- Monitoring the swimming pool and splash park so that it is operated safely, and daily testing is conducted, and results recorded to ensure adequate disinfection is maintained when it is open to the public.



Acknowledgements:

The following persons are acknowledged for their contribution and involvement during the community engagement event:

HVASC Council		<u>Queensland Health - Tropical Public Health Services</u>		<u>Queensland Health – Torres and Cape Hospital Health Service:</u>	
Name	Position	Name	Position	Name	Position
Bruce Gibson	Mayor	David Hancock	Team Leader – Environmental Health	Angela McIvor	Public Health Officer/Nurse
Lew Rojahn	Chief Executive Officer	Andrew Drage	Environmental Health Officer		
Onisimo Mukodi	Operations Director				
Gary Bowen	Environmental Health Worker	Luke Bartolo	Environmental Health Officer		
Carmen Pearson	Local Thriving Communities Co-ordinator	Hayden Ernst	Healthy Housing Project Officer		