

## COUNCIL REPORT

Meeting 14 August 2024



### Item 1: Meetings Attended

- Mayor Bruce Gibson and I met with staff from the Office of the Coordinator-General to discuss the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process for the silica sand mining project being progressed by Diatrema Resources Ltd.
- The CEO participated in a Teams Meeting with staff from the State Library of Queensland to discuss the Hope Vale Indigenous Knowledge Centre's Annual Action for the 2024-2025 Financial Year. The Plan has been signed off by the State Librarian.
- The CEO participated in a number of meetings regarding the review of Council's Aged Care services, with short and longer term strategies being developed by the consultants which will place Hope Vale at the forefront of culturally-appropriate aged care service delivery.
- The CEO participated in a meeting with staff from the First Nations Digital Program in the Queensland Government Customer and Digital Group and the LGAQ regarding improving digital services in Hope Vale.
- The CEO met with the CEO of the Cooktown District Community Centre about service delivery in Hope Vale and the need for those services to be delivered from an office in town.
- The CEO participated in a meeting to discuss Council's WH&S Hazard Register and plans to mitigate identified and prioritised hazards.
- The CEO participated in a meeting with staff from Cape York Partnerships and Cape York Institute in preparation for a subsequent briefing of the Mayor and Councillors regarding the Justice Reinvestment program.
- The CEO participated in a Workshop to review Queensland's State Disaster Management Plan and Disaster Management Guidelines facilitated by QPS.
- The CEO participated in a meeting with the Mayors of Wujal Wujal and Cook to reaffirm their commitment to the Growing Respect Regional Mayoral Taskforce and several meetings with the DFV Prevention Council around operationalising the Taskforce.
- The CEO and Director Finance and Corporate Services participated in a workshop on Advancing Asset Management within Council with staff from the Institute of Public Works Engineers Australia (IPWEA) and the Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning.

- The CEO met with the Emergency Management Coordinator for the Far North Region regarding a review of Council's Local Disaster Management Plan and a forthcoming review of Plan involving the Inspector General of Emergency Management.
- The CEO participated in a Teams briefing about the First Nations Community-wide Wi-Fi program, a partnership between the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) and NBNCo.
- A number of other meetings were also held by the CEO in relation to various administrative, organisational, staffing and tenure issues.

#### **Recommendation**

##### **That Council:**

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

#### **Item 2: QAO – 2024 Closing Report**

On 29 July 2024, the Queensland Audit Office submitted its Closing Report for Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council for the Financial Year ended 30 June 2024 (Attachment A). The Report reinforces Council's strong commitment to good corporate governance and financial sustainability.

#### **Recommendation**

**That Council receive and note the Queensland Audit Office Closing Report for Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council for the Financial Year ended 30 June 2024 as shown as Attachment A of the Chief Executive Officer's Report.**

#### **Item 3: Audit Committee Meeting Minutes**

An Audit Committee Meeting was held in Hope Vale on 30 July 2024. A copy of the Minutes are attached for Council's information (Attachment B).

#### **Recommendation**

**That Council receive and note the minutes of the Audit Committee as shown as Attachment B of the Chief Executive Officer's Report.**

#### **Item 4: Annual Financial Statements 2022-2023**

The Annual Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2024 have been signed off by the Mayor and the Chief Executive Officer, after approval from the Audit Committee on 30 July 2024. The Statements were subsequently certified by the Queensland Audit Office.

A copy of the certified Annual Financial Statements for the Year ended 30 June 2024 is attached for Council's information (Attachment C).

## **Recommendation**

**That Council receive and note the certified Annual Financial Statements for the Year ended 30 June 2024 as shown as Attachment C of the Chief Executive Officer's Report.**

### **Item 5: Cape York Natural Resource Management – Board Internship Opportunity**

Council recently resolved to support a Councillor's involvement on the Board of Cape York Natural Resource Management (NRM). Following ongoing discussions with the CEO of Cape York NRM, Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council has been offered an internship as an induction to the roles and responsibilities of a board member.

The Intern Program is being coordinated by Dr Anne Walters, Director of the Northern Australian People Capacity and Response Network (NAPCaRN), which is part of the Federal Department of Industry, Tourism and Trade based in Darwin.

The internship lasts for 12 months, during which time the intern would attend the meetings as an observer to learn as much about being on a board as possible. At the end of the program, NAPCaRN will provide a half day training to assist interns to get a place on a board.

There are three half days of training that the intern will be required to attend – on 20 August, 27 August and 3 September from 10am-2pm.

A NAPCaRN officer based in Cairns is supporting the interns through regular meetings, to build their network and gain support from their peers.

As Council's CEO, I commend to Council the internship program developed by NAPCaRN.

## **Recommendation**

**That Council endorse the involvement of Cr Rowan Hart in the Board Internship program being run by the Northern Australian People Capacity and Response Network.**

### **Item 6: Hope Vale Community Wi-Fi Project**

The latest Closing the Gap Report has highlighted a digital access gap for Indigenous communities across Australia.

The Federal Government (through the National Indigenous Australians Agency – NIAA) has developed a First Nations Digital Inclusion Plan.

One of the strategies under the plan is the roll-out of free community Wi-Fi in selected First Nations communities.

Hope Vale has been chosen as one of the communities into which free community Wi-Fi will be installed. The Federal Government has partnered with NBNCo to develop tailored broadband solutions that meet needs of First Nations communities. The solutions are co-designed with each community into which they are installed. NBNCo has advised that it has received funding to provide free community Wi-Fi through to 2028. Consideration is currently being given to what happens to the program after 2028.

By rolling out the program, it is hoped that the free Wi-Fi in communities will boost opportunities for education and training, employment, jobs and business and improving access to services and information, all of which are aspirations of Council. The Federal Government is keen to ensure that Hope Vale community is involved in the design process to ensure that the online world can be accessed in a safe and responsible way. Considerations include:

- Identifying where the services should be located, and in which buildings;
- Scoping the hours of operation; and
- Determining controls around broadband access amongst the community.

The service has been implemented in several communities across Northern Australia, including Aurukun and Doomadgee.

- If we agree to participate in the program, it will be installed by the end of the year.
- The service is uncapped in terms of uploads and downloads for users.
- NBNCo will ensure that Miller's Estate and the new sub-division opposite the farm block, plus any other Council-owned community facilities outside of the town area, are included in the rollout plan.
- NBNCo will employ a local person as a Digital Champion in Hope Vale to assist with answering questions and helping people with technology-related questions. The employee would be based at the Indigenous Knowledge Centre.

Further information about the project is contained in Attachment D.

As Councillors are aware, the Mayor and Councillors participated in a poll to gauge the level of support for the project. The result of poll was unanimous support for the project. As an authorized representative of Council, I have written to NBNCo to advise of Council's support for the rollout of the project.

#### **Recommendation**

**That Council receive and note the information provided about the community-wide Wi-Fi project.**

#### **Item 8: Appointment to the Local Government Advisory Panel on State Land Matters**

For the information of Councillors, I have been appointed by the Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ) to the Local Government Advisory Panel (LGAP) on State Land Matters following an Expression of Interest process.

LGAP is a partnership between the Department of Resources (Resources), the LGAQ and representatives from local government, to inform and support changes to modernise Queensland's state land administration framework and place naming processes.

To achieve its purpose the LGAP will:

- Meet quarterly to facilitate an information exchange between Resources, the LGAQ, and representatives from local government on strategic policy and operational policy issues and their resolution that contribute to modernising the state land administration and place naming;

- Support capacity building for both Resources and local governments to ensure that best practice and continuous improvement guide the partnership to modernise state land administration and place naming in Queensland.

I participated in the first meeting of the LGAP during the current reporting period.

The main item of business was to consider the outcomes of the passing of the Land and Other Legislation Amendment Act (The Act) 2024. The purpose of the Act is to:

- Improve regulatory efficiency; and
- Ensure the administration of state land and the place naming framework remain contemporary and responsive to community needs.

A copy of PowerPoint delivered by the Department of Resources provides further information about the Act is attached at Attachment E.

The Terms of Reference were adopted by the Panel, a copy of which is attached to this report at Attachment F. Importantly, it is worth noting the following statement as to the scope of the Panel:

“LGAP will also provide a forum:

- To consider reforms to Deed of Grant in Trust (DOGIT) arrangements and other tenure matters in remote and discrete Aboriginal communities and Torres Strait Islander communities.”

I took the opportunity to brief Panel Members on the restrictions imposed by the DOGIT arrangements in Hope Vale and the disadvantage this causes for members of the community. There was strong support for progressing a review of the current DOGIT arrangements and to progress reforms.

### **Recommendation**

**That Council receive and note the information provided about Local Government Advisory Panel on State Land Matters.**

### **Item 10: CEO Verbal Briefing**

- 10.1 Blue Card Briefing.
- 10.2 Dental services in Hope Vale.
- 10.3 Leasing and property matters.
- 10.4 Asset Management.
- 10.5 Internal Audit.
- 10.6 Disaster Management Plan reviews.
- 10.7 Media and Comms Strategy.
- 10.8 DFV Mayoral Taskforce.
- 10.9 Local Buy Supplier Engagement Meeting (Cooktown)
- 10.10 Development of a council and regional masterplan for flood warning infrastructure



Lawrence Booth  
**Chief Executive Officer**  
 14 August 2024