

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

## COUNCIL REPORT

Meeting 16 February 2022

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### Item 1: Meetings Attended

- Mayor, Councillors and the CEO met with Hope Vale's Ministerial Champion, Hon Michael (Mick) de Brenni, Minister for Energy, Renewables and Hydrogen and Minister for Public Works and Procurement, in Hope Vale on 17 January 2022 and undertook discussions on various issues.
- Mayor and CEO participated in a Torres Cape Indigenous Council Alliance (TCICA) Inc. teleconference on 18 January 2022 to discuss the impact of COVID on the member communities, including LDMG and other local actions and strategies for impact minimization.
- Mayor, Councillors and the CEO attended the Council Meeting in Hope Vale on 19 January 2022.
- Mayor and CEO participated in a teleconference on 20 January 2022 with Queensland Mayors and CEOs hosted by the Department of Local Government and the Deputy Chief Health Officer, Dr Lynne McKinlay to discuss recent Health Direction for Critical Workers.
- Mayor and CEO participated in a teleconference on 25 January 2022 with Queensland Indigenous Council Mayors and CEOs hosted by Dr Chris Sara from the Department of Seniors, Disability Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships. The teleconference was arranged to provide the opportunity to hear from Dr John Gerrard, Queensland's new Chief Health Officer, and to ask him questions about the management of COVID-19.
- Mayor and CEO participated in an FNQ District Disaster Management teleconference on 28 January 2022 for a briefing on the COVID-19 situation across the TCHHS footprint including vaccination rates.
- CEO met with Kerry Lee Bird from Department of Seniors, Disability Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships on 31 January 2022 for an update on the Department's initiatives and funding arrangements.
- Mayor, Cr Bruce Woibo, Cr Barry Bowen, Cr Alison Michael, and the CEO attended the Youth Network Monthly Meeting on 1 February 2022 in Hope Vale mainly discussing the recent break-ins and fighting within the community.

- Mayor and CEO participated in a Torres Cape Indigenous Council Alliance (TCICA) Inc. teleconference on 2 February 2022 for an update from Allen Cunneen in relation to the Local Government Association's project dealing land tenure issues.
- Mayor and CEO participated in a Far North Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils (FNQROC) teleconference on 3 February 2022.
- Mayor and CEO participated in an FNQ District Disaster Management teleconference on 4 February 2022 for a briefing on the COVID-19 situation across the TCHHS footprint including vaccination rates.
- CEO participated in a teleconference with Paul Phillips, Indigenous Programs Manager Nth Qld, Queensland Police-Citizens Youth Welfare Association, on 7 February 2022, in relation to his advice that his association will be withdrawing its services from Hope Vale on 30 June 2022 due to the withdrawal of State Government funding.
- Mayor and the CEO attended a preliminary meeting at Cook Shire Council Chambers on 8 February 2022 to discuss the Cook, Hope Vale and Wujal Wujal Aged Care Services Project.
- Mayor and the CEO met informally with Ivan Deemal and Willie Gordon from Hopevale Congress in Cooktown on 8 February 2022 to offer Council's condolences for Mr Deemal's recent loss and to offer Council's participation in future discussions with Congress for the benefit of the Hope Vale community.
- CEO participated in a teleconference of the Regional Aged Care Services Working Group on 9 February 2022.
- CEO participated in a teleconference of the Cook Shire Local Disaster Management Group Meeting held on 9 February 2022.
- Mayor and CEO met with Felicia McLean and Clair Brown from Apunipima, Heather Schonrock and Graeme Port, Torres and Cape Hospital and Health Service, and Sgt Amit Singh, Queensland Police Service on 10 February 2022 in Hope Vale to ensure that systems are in place for assistance to vulnerable residents undertaking COVID-19 home isolation as well as arrangements for the enforcement of isolation requirements.
- Mayor and CEO participated in an FNQ District Disaster Management teleconference on 11 February 2022 for a briefing on the COVID-19 situation across the TCHHS footprint including vaccination rates.
- A number of other meetings were also held by the CEO in relation to various administration, organizational, staffing and tenure issues.

**Recommendation:**

**That Council note the meetings attended by the CEO.**

## **Item 2: LOCAL THRIVING COMMUNITIES (LTC)**

In 2016/2017 the Queensland Productivity Commission (QPC) undertook an Inquiry into service delivery in remote and discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. The Inquiry was in response to concerns expressed by Indigenous leaders that the level of investment in all services (Federal, State and non-government) was not delivering higher outcomes for members of their communities.

The QPC was asked to consider investment in remote and discrete Indigenous communities and what works well, and why, with a view to improving outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

In June 2018, the Queensland Government made a long-term commitment to work with the 19 remote and discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, their leaders and Mayors and other stakeholders to implement the intent of the reform agenda proposed by the QPC.

The Queensland Government has advised that it is committed to working with the state's 19 remote and discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to establish greater decision-making authority in service delivery and economic development through the Local Thriving Communities (LTC) reform and the establishment of LTC Committees.

At its meeting held on Wednesday 24 November 2021, (Item 8.3) Council considered the establishment of an advisory committee to provide advice to Council to guide its decisions relating to the implementation of the Queensland Government's Thriving Local Communities Initiative. Council resolved –

***“That this matter be held in abeyance until further discussions are completed.”***

An option that Council may wish to consider is to formalise this Committee as an interim “Advisory Committee” pursuant to Section 264 of the Local Government Act 2009. Accordingly, a draft Terms of Reference for the Interim Hope Vale Local Thriving Communities Advisory Committee is attached for Council consideration (Attachment A)

It is considered premature, at this stage, to be too prescriptive on the Committee's role, as it appears that the State Government is still bedding down the role of the LTC Committees throughout the State. Therefore, it is proposed that purpose of the Committee be - “The Committee shall provide advice to Council to guide its decisions relating to the implementation of the Queensland Government's Thriving Local Communities Initiative.”

This purpose will also enable the Committee to recommend to Council on expanding its Terms of Reference, as the State Government clarifies the role of LTC Committees.

### **Recommendation:**

#### **That Council**

- a) **Appoint the following advisory committee pursuant to Section 264 of the Local Government Regulation 2012 – Interim Hope Vale Local Thriving Communities Advisory Committee,**
- b) **Endorse the draft Terms of Reference for the Advisory Committee as attached to the CEO's report (Attachment A),**

- c) Pursuant to Section 245G of the Local Government Regulations 2012 (Advisory committees exempted from taking minutes), Council exempt the Interim Hope Vale Local Thriving Communities Advisory Committee from taking minutes of its proceedings, however, it must give Council a written report on its deliberations and its advice or recommendation, and
- d) Call for Expressions of Interest from the Hope Vale community for appointment as one of the 5 community members of the Interim Hope Vale Local Thriving Communities Advisory Committee.

### **Item 3: Cook, Hope Vale, and Wujal Wujal Regional Aged Care Services Project**

Mayor and the CEO attended a preliminary meeting at Cook Shire Council Chambers on 8 February 2022 to discuss the Cook, Hope Vale and Wujal Wujal Aged Care Services Project. This project aims to review opportunities for aged care and related services in the region.

Currently, all three Councils are involved either directly or indirectly in the provision of aged care services. Councils, to date, have worked on policy and service delivery matters individually and may even be competing for resources. Council's are aware that providing "the right" types of needs based services across the continuum of care and in large geographic areas to smaller populations is very challenging.

It was noted that some of the future aged care challenges that will need to be addressed, include –

- Independent living
- Commonwealth Home Support Package
- Respite Care
- Residential Aged Care
- Dementia support
- Dialysis
- Palliative Care
- Transport
- Cultural Appropriate Services
- Aged Care Workforce, including training, qualifications, accommodation etc.

The first stage of this project is to undertake consultation throughout the 3 local authorities.

It is then proposed to convene another meeting of the respective Mayors and CEOs and other stakeholders to consider the research/ consultation outcomes and identify where to from here.

#### **Recommendation:**

**That Council note the proposed Regional Aged Care Services Project and the proposed Community consultation within the three (3) shires.**

#### **Item 4: Torres and Cape HealthCare Commissioning Fund (TORCH)**

On 11 November 2021, Torres Cape Indigenous Council Alliance (TCICA) held a special Health Forum to provide an opportunity for the representatives from Queensland Health to present to the membership on the Torres and Cape Healthcare (TORCH) Commissioning Fund.

The TORCH project seeks to maximise existing investment and to innovate the way in which healthcare services are funded, contracted, and provided.

The ambition is to establish an independent entity responsible for commissioning health services across the region instead of this being done by Queensland Health, Commonwealth Health, National Indigenous Australians Agency and the Primary Health Network, which is creating duplication and fragmentation in service delivery.

Across the region 85% of service providers receive funding from at least two levels of government for healthcare services.

The significant health disparities, particularly for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, in the region means that not taking action to reform the system and improve health outcomes is not considered an option.

The project is aligned to the Hospital and Health Service boundaries which incorporates the LGAs of Aurukun, Cook Shire, Hope Vale, Kowanyama, Lockhart River, Mapoon, Napranum, Northern Peninsula Area, Pormpuraaw, Torres Shire, Torres Strait, Weipa, and Wujal Wujal.

TORCH is to be a whole of population approach to health care, but with more than 70% of the population identifying as First Nations' peoples in the Torres Strait and Cape York region, a place-based approach to changing health funding mechanisms will require First Nation leadership.

A Project Steering Committee has been established and consists of representatives of Community (TCICA Chair and TSRA), QAIHC (peak health body), Commonwealth Department of Health, Queensland Health, and National Indigenous Australians Agency.

The objectives of TORCH are clear, and provide the pathway for a commissioning entity:

- First Nations leadership and empowerment to Close the Gap
- A place-based approach
- Local & regional commissioning & decision-making
- Re-orienting local health systems to respond to evidence-based need
- Equity of health access, outcomes & experience
- Re-investment of efficiencies for innovation
- Accountability and trust with community
- Agreement on health outcome priorities

The project is an opportunity for communities in the region to influence decision-making and investment decisions in health through improved shared partnerships and effective service delivery.

In particular, it is proposed that local leadership mechanisms like Local Government Councils will have an opportunity to help design the mechanism for the commissioning entity to have legitimacy within the community, and to be accountable for health outcomes on the ground.

A proposal for options to progress will be put to Health Ministers in March 2022.

**Recommendation:**

**That Council**

- a) **Supports in principle the objectives of the Torres and Cape HealthCare Commissioning Fund (TORCH) and for a proposal to establish a single independent entity responsible for commissioning health services across the region to be progressed for Ministerial consideration in March 2022, and**
- b) **Endorse Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council as the locally elected representatives of the Hope Vale community to participate in the process of designing the mechanisms for community accountability, transparency, and decision-making structures of the entity**

**Item 5: Social Reinvestment Grant - Expression of Interest**

The Department of Seniors, Disability Services and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships (DSDSATSIP) will provide at least five communities with up to \$165,000 over 12 months to develop and implement a relevant Social Reinvestment initiative.

The Queensland Government has advised that Social Reinvestment is a different way of funding community initiatives. It focuses on the Queensland Government and remote and discrete Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities working together in equal partnership to improve the wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Social Reinvestment encourages communities to identify a local need or concern that they want to address and then implement local actions to address the issue.

Therefore, Council has submitted a proposal to the State Government to address and reduce youth crime and disengagement from local services. The submission also proposes community, family, and youth activity/events which would be scheduled throughout the year.

It was proposed that that the Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council would be the auspicing body for the funding with the Local Decision-Making body co-designing the services that will be delivered on the ground for the benefit of community members.

**Recommendation:**

**That Council notes the submission of the Expression of Interest for funding under the Queensland Governments Social Reinvestment initiative.**

**Steve Linnane**

**Chief Executive Officer**

**11 February 2022**