



Housing and Safe & Healthy Communities Committee Meeting

Minutes

Date: 10 October 2023

Time: 10.00am to 12.00nn

Venue: (VC) VMR 8 – 0299 165 402
Guest PIN - 6905#

1. Welcome & Quorum Confirmation (Chair)

Cr Keith Fell confirmed that all Committee Members were present and opened the meeting at 10.10am by welcoming Committee Members and TSIRC staff. The Chairperson also gave respectful acknowledgements to all traditional custodians across the nation and, particularly, throughout the length and breadth of Zenadth Kes.

2. Opening Prayer

Cr John Levi provided the opening prayer.

3. Attendance / Apologies

The following participants were in attendance:

Committee Members

Chairperson

Cr Keith Fell

Member

Cr Francis Pearson

Member

Cr John Levi – *by telephone dial-in*

TSIRC Officers

Executive Director - Community Services

Mr Dawson Sailor

Executive Director – Engineering Services

Mr David Baldwin

TSIRC Secretariat

Mr Darryl Brooks

Deputations

James Cook University, Healthy Ageing Research Team

Dr Eddie Strivens & Mr Torres Webb

CSIRO, Torres Strait Health & Biosecurity Mosquito

Dr Brendan Trewin & Mr Torres Webb

Project

4. Conflict of Interest (COI) – Declarable/Prescribed

No declarations were made by Members. The Chairperson requested that members be mindful throughout the course of the meeting to make any relevant conflict of interest declarations known as soon as possible, should any arise.

5. Confirmation of Draft Minutes of the HSHC Committee Meeting held on 8 June 2023

RESOLUTION:

Moved: Cr John Levi

Seconded: Cr Francis Pearson

The Committee confirms the Minutes of the HSHC Committee Meeting held on 8 June 2023 (with minor amendments) as a true and correct record.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

6. Action Items from Previous Meeting

The Committee noted the verbal update provided by the Executive Director Community Services on the status of action items from the June 2023 meeting, as well as for outstanding actions from previous meetings.

ACTION:

Executive Director Community Services to provide an update for the Committee out of session in relation to the blue phone review project (refer AI 6 from the February 2023 Committee Meeting), preferably through a Teams Meeting over the coming weeks also attended by the Executive Director Building Services and the Queensland Department of Housing (Ms Jacinta Mckewen).

7. COMMUNITY SERVICES: “Deadly for Diabetes” (verbal update)

The Executive Director Community Services advised the Committee that the “Deadly for Diabetes” deputation to the September 2023 Council was well-received and that Council was keen to progress the program, subject to supportive advice from this Committee.

A request for expressions of interest to trial the program has now been made across all Divisions, with Poruma and Ugar indicating a willingness to participate at this stage (and possibly three other Divisions are close to confirming).

Funding to roll out the trials is currently being sourced from relevant Health funding bodies and the Executive Director Community Services is now working on an implementation plan for the roll out, once funding is secured.

At the conclusion of the trials, this Committee will be in a position to submit relevant advice and recommendations to the Council.

8. ENGINEERING SERVICES: HF Radios

The Executive Director Engineering Services provided the Committee with the following verbal update:

- this week Austech is travelling to just about every Division to undertake testing of the HF Radios, as well as doing some work on the water and waste watch lavatory system. At this stage nearly all Divisions (Saibai, Kubin, Hammond, St Pauls, Boigu, Dauan, Iama, Warraber, Mabuiag, Badu, Poruma, Erub and Mer) are listed for inspection
- the inspections will cover testing and any minor repairs (as well as providing quotes for any minor repairs that cannot be attended to on the visit) and sending back to Cairns those that need more complex repairs. It is anticipated that tuners may be a problem, or inadequately trained staff to operate the system on ground.

The HF Radios are actually designed for long-range communications (i.e. Mabuiag to Thursday Island/Cairns/Edmonton) and not necessarily suitable for Island to Island communications.

The Information Reports provided for each Council meeting will include further updates in relation to this issue, including ongoing updates on the outcomes from the current work being undertaken by Austech.

The Chairperson requested that the Executive Director Engineering Services and the Executive Director Community Services ensure that adequate training be provided to officers responsible for the use of the HF Radio network, possibly widening the training to as many staff on ground as possible.

9. STANDING AGENDA ITEM – HEALTH MATTERS

The Executive Director Community Services provided the Committee with the following verbal update:

- Hammond Island Health Centre
 - Ongoing issue
- RN for Ugar
 - Resident Nurse now on Ugar (approximately since September 2023)
- Asbestos concerns within Communities
 - Ongoing issue. Matter not discussed.
- Major Infrastructures
 - Executive Director Community Services will need further clarification on which major infrastructures the Committee has in mind

10. STANDING AGENDA ITEM – ANIMAL MANAGEMENT MATTERS

- Unfenced/feral horses (St Pauls/Kubin Communities and Badu)
- Animal Management – Feral Dogs and Cats

➤ *The Environment and Health team were not in attendance to update the Committee on this standing agenda item.*

The Committee requested an update on a recent incident involving a horse gaining access to the airport tarmac at Kubin.

The Executive Director Community Services was able to confirm the incident. The Executive Director Engineering Services advised the Committee that the Operations Engineering Supervisor on Kubin (Robert See Kee) has advised that safety measures have now been put in place. However, there is no guarantee that similar incidents will not occur again in future.

The Executive Director Community Services advised that funds are currently not available to develop an effective and expedient solution to the issue of the feral horses. An appropriate level of funding will be required and development of options prior to full consultation with affected communities so that those communities are fully informed and are on board with any proposal, particularly around any proposed culling program.

The Committee requested that relevant data (including any incident reports) be put together by the Environment and Health team as a matter of urgency so that funding agencies can be effectively approached to provide the required funds as soon as possible to prevent any serious accidents, as the numbers of feral horses continues to grow out of control.

The Committee also requested that as many alternatives as possible be explored around resolving this issue (including involvement of the RSPCA, the Australian Defence Force, etc.).

ACTION:

1. Executive Director Engineering Services to ensure that an advisory message be sent to Cr Trinkoon indicating that appropriate safety measures are now in place following the incident (copied also to the HSHC Committee).
2. Executive Director Community Services to task the Environment and Health team to collect relevant data (including any incident reports) as a matter of urgency so that funding agencies can be effectively approached to provide the required funding as soon as possible to:
 - (a) undertake a proper and full consultation process with effected communities so that those communities are fully informed and are on board with any proposal, particularly around any proposed culling program; and
 - (b) undertake an eradication program, when required.
3. Executive Director Community Services to task the Environment and Health team to explore as many alternatives as possible around this issue (including involvement of the RSPCA, the Australian Defence Force, etc.).
4. Executive Director Community Services to provide the Committee with an update out of session prior to the next Committee meeting.

11. DEPUTATION: JCU Healthy Ageing Research Team

The Chairperson welcomed Professor (Dr) Edward Strivens and Mr Torres Webb from the Healthy Ageing Research Team (HART) at James Cook University (Cairns). Dr Strivens provided the Committee with an update on some of the current and upcoming HART projects, including:

Current Projects

- Healthy Ageing in the Torres Strait
 - aiming to develop a quality framework of best practice screening and assessment with a toolbox of resources to support healthy ageing that can be implemented at the community and primary health level in Torres Strait communities
- Social and Emotional Wellbeing Tools for the Torres Strait
 - aiming to develop more culturally appropriate screening tool for use in primary care centres across the Torres Strait

Upcoming Projects

- Strong Community, Strong Health: codesigning chronic disease prevention in the Torres Strait
 - aiming to develop tools for health professionals to support diet and physical activity
- Good Spirit Good Life in the Torres Strait
 - a study aimed at developing a quality of life tool specifically for older Torres Strait Islander people
- Caregiver Experience
 - a study to explore the experience of caregivers living in the Torres Strait, aiming to identify what works well and what supports are needed for carers

- Dementia Prevalence Follow-up Study
 - this study will follow up on a group of people who completed a health check (including memory and thinking) between 2015-18 to review participants and to help in understanding what keeps people healthy in body and mind as they age.

The Committee noted the presentation and thanked Dr Strivens for his attendance and presentation.

ACTION:

Executive Director Community Services to have further discussions out of session with the Healthy Ageing Research Team (HART) at James Cook University (Cairns) to brief the Team on progress in relation to TSIRC's Community Health Action Plan which is being developed with Queensland Health (Torres and Cape Health sectors on ground) with a view to streamlining approaches.

12. DEPUTATION: CSIRO (Torres Strait Health and Biosecurity Mosquito Project)

The Chairperson welcomed Dr Brendan Trewin and Mr Torres Webb to the meeting. Dr Trewin provided the Committee with an update on the CSIRO's Invasive Mosquito Elimination Program, including:

- latest initiatives to combat the Asian tiger mosquito (*Aedes albopictus*) and the Yellow fever mosquito (*Aedes aegypti*) which are responsible for the spread of dengue fever and are present in the Torres Strait.
- need to monitor more closely human movement, particularly from Papua New Guinea into the Torres Strait.
- development of new technologies to combat invasive mosquitoes
- the CSIRO prefers the utilisation of the 'self limiting mosquito system' (only non-biting sterile male mosquitoes are released) as this solution is effective on both species, has commercial potential and can be rolled out right across the region and throughout the Pacific
- a roadshow will be held in November 2023 and the TSIRC is invited to participate and meet the technology provider Oxitec (further details to be provided out of session)
- the technology provider will be in Cairns around 7-8 November 2023
- the technology does involve genetic engineering, so very strict regulatory requirements must be met before approval is given by the Australian Government
- support of the community is essential, particularly in relation to selecting field sites for the trial
- will need assistance from Council's Environmental Health workers on the project, including working in partnership with biosecurity on ground
- GBK will assist in facilitating community conversations on the project

The Chairperson suggested that potential sites such as Mer, Ugar, Masig and Dauan, Boigu and Saibai be approached to participate.

The Chairperson also recommended that outreach be undertaken with Papua New Guinea Treaty villagers to educate them in relation to the two mosquito species. Another concern is improper monitoring of the health status of Treaty visitors to the Torres Strait.

The Chairperson thanked the CSIRO for its important work in this field and extended the Committee's eagerness to work with the CSIRO on this initiative.

ACTION:

Chairperson to alert the next Council meeting (October 2023) about the need for tighter monitoring of the health status of Treaty visitors to the Torres Strait in the context of combating the spread of dengue and other potential diseases such as Yellow fever, Chikungunya and Zika.

13. General / Other Business (on notice)

No other matters discussed.

14. Next Meeting Date: 30 November 2023

The Committee noted the next meeting date of 30 November 2023.

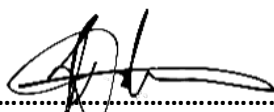
15. Closing Remarks & Prayer

The Chairperson closed the meeting at 12.20pm and Cr Francis Pearson delivered the closing prayer.

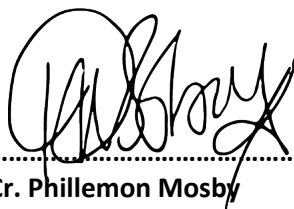
Cr Keith Fell
Chairperson
Housing and Safe & Healthy Communities Committee

10 October 2023

RATIFIED AT THE OCTOBER 2023 ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING.



Mr James William
Chief Executive Officer
Torres Strait Island Regional Council
Date: 24 October 2023



Cr. Phillemon Mosby
Mayor
Torres Strait Island Regional Council
Date: 24 October 2023