



## **Economic Growth Committee**

# **Minutes**

**Date:** 15 December 2023

**Time:** 10.00am to 12.00nn

**Venue:**

**Microsoft TEAMS Meeting**

Meeting ID: 417 972 878 534

Passcode: bq3cMS

**1. Welcome | Quorum Confirmation | Opening Prayer**

The Committee Chairperson (Cr Rocky Stephen) opened the meeting at 10.30am, noting that all Committee Members were present and welcomed Committee Members and staff.

Cr Conwell Tabuai delivered the opening prayer.

The Chairperson also made the following acknowledgements:

- Papa God for his continued blessing, guidance and protection for our communities and organisations;
- Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners of the Cairns region;
- Acknowledgements of Traditional Owners throughout Zenadth Kes and the communities and constituents that Council serves;
- All Elders with us, past, present and emerging leaders.

**2. Noting of Apologies**

There were no Committee Member apologies.

The following attendees were noted:

**Chairperson & Committee Members****Chairperson**

Cr Rocky Stephen

Member

Cr Conwell Tabuai

Member

Cr Jimmy Gela

**TSIRC Officers**

Acting Executive Director Financial Services

Ms Nicola Daniels

Executive Director Building Services

Mr Wayne Green – *left meeting at 12.25pm*

Executive Director Community Services

Mr Dawson Sailor

Acting Executive Director Corporate Services

Mr Gary Stevenson PSM

TSIRC Secretariat

Darryl Brooks

**Guest**

Division 2 – Dauan

Cr Torenzo Elisala (*for discussion in relation to AI 7*)

The Committee noted that the Executive Director Financial Services was currently on leave and formally welcomed the Acting Executive Director Financial Services (Ms Nicola Daniels).

**3. Conflict of Interest (COI) - Declarable/Prescribed**

The Chairperson invited Committee Members to make any relevant conflict of interest declarations.

**Cr Jimmy Gela** advised that he had a possible conflict of interest in relation to AI 14 (CDEP Proposal) owing to his PBC/GBK role.

**Cr Rocky Stephen** (Chairperson) advised that he had a COI and Material Personal Interest in relation to AI 13 (Enterprise Divestment and Licence Fee Waivers) as he and his Brother (Pau Stephen) own Brother Bear Cafe and Catering Service and their business submitted a formal expression of interest to TSIRC for the Ugar Community Hall Kitchen.

**4. Ratified Minutes of Meeting held on 27 October 2023**

The Committee noted the Ratified Minutes of its meeting held on 27 October 2023.

**5. Action Items from Previous Meetings (verbal update)**

The Acting Executive Director Financial Services provided the Committee with a verbal update on the status of action items from the previous meeting, as well as outstanding actions from other previous meetings. The Committee noted the update.

**6. Economic Development Strategy**

To be discussed at the January 2024 SARG Meeting.

➤ *Cr Torenzo Elisala (Division 2 – Dauan) dialled in to the meeting at 11.15am.*

**7. Ugar & Dauan Transport Business Case (verbal discussion)**

The Chairperson welcomed Cr Elisala to the meeting and thanked him for making time to discuss and contribute to the Committee's deliberations. Cr Elisala thanked the Committee for extending this invitation to him to participate and looked forward to contributing towards progressing this important issue.

The Acting Executive Director Corporate Services referred the Committee to the background papers provided which outlines a proposal to develop a business case for alternative and improved methods of transportation options on helicopter and ferry services for Dauan and Ugar Islands.

The Acting Executive Director Corporate Services reminded the Committee that a prior proposal from Lucid Economics (May 2023) and advised that Lucid Economics are aware that TSIRC has revised the scope of the project and are going back to market. There is therefore no obligation from Council to Lucid Economics with this project and that firm has expressed an interest in resubmitting a quote for the revised scope.

The Committee supported the new transport business case as proposed and requested that the following points be noted:

- Include options for alternatives around safety issues with prevailing winds in the area. Cr Elisala indicated that the current location of the new helipad site on Dauan is not ideal because of prevailing winds.
- Include options for improved service provision for any breakdowns associated with the ferry service (i.e. mobile mechanic)
- Explore options for governments and non-government agencies and departments to co-contribute to the project (similar to assistance being provided to Rebel Marine for the Hammond Island Ferry Service).

The Committee also supported the proposal by the Acting Executive Director Corporate Services that the following three consultants be invited to submit a quote on the proposal:

1. Lucid Economics (provided previous proposal in May 2023)
2. Emver Partners (consultants based on Thursday Island)
3. Synergies Economic Consulting (has done work in the Torres Strait)

The Chairperson thanked Cr Elisala for his contributions to the Committee's deliberations on this matter and extended him an invitation to participate again at the February 2024 Committee meeting when this matter is discussed again. Cr Elisala thanked the Committee for the opportunity to participate and contribute and emphasised that this project will make an incredible difference in the quality of life for smaller communities in the Torres Strait like Ugar and Dauan.

The Acting Executive Director Corporate Services advised that Committee that a broad timeframe for the next stages in this project are as follows:

- Jan 2024 – request for quote process (allowing 3-4 wks for consultants to put together a meaningful quote)
- Feb 2024 – receive submissions and take a decision (provided the funding available is sufficient to cover the quotes that are received)
- Feb 2024 – award the contract
- Apr/May 2024 – community consultations (not ideal for a community consultation process to commence in the lead-up to local government election period)

**RESOLUTION:**

*Moved: Cr Conwell Tabuai*

*Seconded: Cr Jimmy Gela*

**The Committee:**

- a) **supports the new Ugar and Dauan Transport Business Case as proposed and requests that the following points be noted:**
  - Inclusion of alternative options around safety issues with prevailing winds specific to the area;
  - Inclusion of options for improved service provision for any breakdowns associated with the ferry service (i.e. speedy access to a mobile mechanic)
  - Explore options for government and non-government agencies and departments to co-contribute towards the project; and
- b) **Notes that the following three consultants will be invited to submit a quote on the proposal:**
  1. Lucid Economics (provided previous proposal in May 2023)
  2. Emver Partners (consultants based on Thursday Island)
  3. Synergies Economic Consulting (has done work in the Torres Strait)

**MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**Action/s:**

Executive Director Corporate Services to provide an update at the Committee's February 2024 meeting.

**8. Economic Opportunities under Aged Care Funding (verbal discussion)**

The Executive Director Community Services advised the Committee that there is scope available under the Federal Department of Health Commonwealth Home Support Program (CHSP) funding to engage members of the community to undertake yard maintenance for aged care clients, with the possibility of extending that type of work onto Council facilities in order to create opportunities for community members to start their own business from such work.

The Executive Director Community Services and the Head of Community Services are currently preparing further information for presentation to the February 2024 Economic Growth Committee meeting.

**Action/s:**

The Executive Director Community Services to present an update at the February 2024 Economic Growth Committee meeting.

**9. BSU Performance Update (verbal discussion)**

The Executive Director Building Services provided the following update for the Committee:

- Currently reviewing maintenance agreements with our funding partners (rates and the mark-ups for the delivery of our services tool). Have engaged a consultant (Quantity Surveyor) to review our rates. That has been finalised and a meeting with Qbuild is planned for the w/b 18 December 2023 to discuss the revised rates;
- Sales for maintenance is currently \$1m ahead of schedule (compared to last financial year), however this is counteracted by home upgrades/ownerships where we are \$1m behind on sales. Have been meeting with our funding partners to discuss the release of our future program of works in order to advance opportunities over the coming months;
- The recent engagement of the Head of Building Services (Mr Evaness Hollingsworth) has developed a roadmap for the coming months to further streamline the processes of our delivery of services (i.e. reshaping current structures, upgrade IT systems, etc);

The Chairperson reaffirmed the Committee's support and appreciation for the work of the TSIRC Building Services Department.

**10. Indigenous Councils Funding Program (ICFP)**

The Acting Executive Director Financial Services advised the Committee that Queensland Department of State Development, Infrastructure, Local Government and Planning has allocated an additional \$26m has been allocated to Indigenous Councils in the 2023-24 financial year. This is a one-off allocation and the administration is currently engaging with Peak Services to lobby the Queensland Government for this to become an annual allocation.

The Committee supports this approach.

**11. MOVE INTO CLOSED BUSINESS****RESOLUTION**

Moved: *Cr Jimmy Gela*

Second: *Cr Rocky Stephen*

The Committee resolves to close the meeting to the public pursuant to section 254J of the *Local Government Regulation 2012* to allow the Committee to discuss items listed on the agenda under Closed Business and for the reasons outlined under those items.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**15. MOVE OUT OF CLOSED BUSINESS****RESOLUTION**

Moved: *Cr Conwell Tabuai*

Second: *Cr Jimmy Gela*

The Committee resolves to move out of closed business and resume in open business

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**16. CONSIDERATION OF MATTERS DISCUSSED IN CLOSED BUSINESS****12. Fuel Business Opportunities (verbal discussion)**

Not discussed. The Committee noted that the Chief Executive Officer will provide an update at the January 2024 SARG Meeting and a further updated be provided to the Committee at its February 2024 Meeting.

- *Cr Rocky Stephen declared his conflict of interest in relation to AI 13.*
- *Cr Conwell Tabuai proposed that Cr Stephen be allowed to remain present during deliberation of this agenda item, but refrain from voting. This proposal was supported by Cr Jimmy Gela.*

**RESOLUTION**

Moved: Cr Conwell Tabuai

Second: Cr Jimmy Gela

**The Committee agrees that Cr Rocky Stephen should remain present during deliberation of Agenda Item 13 (Enterprise Divestment Strategy/Policy), but shall refrain from voting on this matter.**

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

- *Cr Rocky Stephen remained present during deliberations, then departed the meeting at 1.15pm prior to endorsement of the resolution.*
- *Cr Conwell Tabuai chaired the meeting in the absence of Cr Stephen.*

**13. Enterprise Divestment Strategy/Policy (verbal discussion)****RESOLUTION**

Moved: Cr Jimmy Gela

Second: Cr Conwell Tabuai

**The Committee makes the following recommendations to Council:**

- 1. That Council resolve to cancel the divestment of the following enterprises and assets, due to the passage of time, surrender or abandonment, and due to the need to undertake a feasibility and sustainability analysis and develop a formal TSIRC Divestment Policy:**

- Boigu Motel/Guesthouse/ICC demountables
- Boigu Crab Farm
- Dauan Guesthouse
- Dauan Kiosk
- Erub Fish Freezer
- Erub Ocean View Lodge Accommodation
- Hammond Arts Centre Complex including nursery
- Kubin Horticulture
- Kubin Arkal Kaziw Childcare Centre
- Kubin Mrs Lizzie Nawia Motel
- Kubin Mualgal Minnaral Artists' Collective (Arts Centre Lot 73)
- Mabuiag Guesthouse/Motel

- Mabuiag Kiosk
- Mabuiag Donga Accommodation
- Poruma Sawadgee Donga Accommodation
- Poruma Kiosk
- St Pauls Old Childcare Centre
- St Pauls Mechanical Workshop
- Warraber Kiosk (Saloma Kaikai House)
- Saibai New Canteen
- Saibai Old Canteen
- St Pauls Nursery
- Ugar Community Centre Kitchen
- Warraber Guesthouse
- Warraber Motel/Resort
- Iama Kiosk
- Iama Kodakal Lodge
- Iama Sundowner Guest House
- Saibai Guesthouse
- Saibai Variety Store including gym
- Ugar Ferry Service including trailer
- Ugar Freezer

2. That Council direct Legal Services to notify previously approved applicants of the above resolution.
3. That Council direct Financial Services to engage a consultant to undertake a financial analysis of all non-divested enterprises and assets and to make recommendations to Council on the feasibility of asset divestment or retention. This will inform the development of Council's Divestment Policy and Enterprise Development Strategy.
4. That Council adopts a policy position of first option rights for previously approved divestees.
5. That a further report regarding existing completed divestments and divestments completed (lease pending) be submitted to the Economic Growth Committee and Council early in 2024.

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

- *Cr Rocky Stephen rejoined the meeting following endorsement of the above agenda item resolution.*
- *Cr Rocky Stephen resumed the Chair at 1.20pm.*

#### **14. CDP Proposal (verbal discussion)**

To be discussed at the January 2024 SARG Meeting.

**17. General / Other Business (on notice)**

Cr Conwell Tabuai requested that consideration be given to a review of the Councillor Remuneration and Reimbursement of Expenses policy to consider the payment of Sitting Fees from the Professional Development Fund for undertaking Committee-related activities.

**Action/s:**

The Executive Director Corporate Services to present an update at the February 2024 Economic Growth Committee meeting.

**18. Next Meeting Date: (TBC) 8 February 2024**

The Committee noted the next meeting date of 8 February 2024.

**19. Closing Remarks & Prayer**

The Chairperson thanked Committee Members and Administrative Staff for their attendance and contributions at the meeting today and throughout the year.

The Chairperson acknowledged the Executive Director Financial Services for her executive support to the Committee throughout 2023, as well as the contributions of her staff.

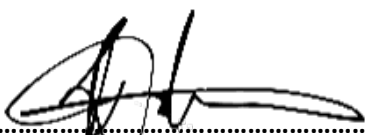
The Chairperson also thanked the Acting Executive Director Corporate Services for his contributions in assisting the Committee with advice and by expediting a number of outstanding matters.

The Chairperson also made special mention of Mayor Phillemon Mosby, who recognised economic development as a very high priority for the Torres Strait region and championed the establishment of the Economic Growth Committee to guide Council in its deliberations.

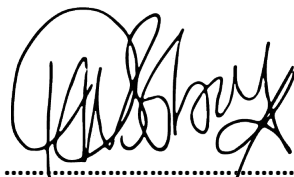
The Chairperson formally closed the meeting at 1.45pm, and Cr Conwell Tabuai delivered the closing prayer (asking for blessings to be extended to all Councillors, all TSIRC staff and all communities throughout the TSIRC footprint for the upcoming Festive Season and throughout 2024).

Cr Rocky Stephen  
Chairperson  
Economic Growth Committee

15 December 2023

**RATIFIED AT THE JANUARY 2024 ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING.**

Mr James William  
Chief Executive Officer  
Torres Strait Island Regional Council  
Date: 23 January 2024



Cr Phillemon Mosby  
Mayor  
Torres Strait Island Regional Council  
Date: 23 January 2024