



Strategic Advisory Reference Group Meeting

Minutes

Date: 6 June 2023

Time: 1.00pm to 4.00pm

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

1. Welcome (Chair)

Mayor Mosby opened the meeting at 1.15pm and welcomed Committee Members and TSIRC staff. The Mayor also gave respectful acknowledgements to honor both Torres Strait Islander and Aboriginal peoples and their connection to Country.

2. Opening Prayer

The Mayor provided the opening prayer.

3. Attendance / Apologies

The following attendances were noted:

Mayor & Committee Chairpersons

Mayor

Climate Change Adaption & Environment Committee
Economic Growth Committee
Governance & Leadership Committee
Housing and Safe & Healthy Communities Committee

Cr Phillemon Mosby
Cr Hilda Mosby
Cr Rocky Stephen
Cr Getano Lui (Jnr) – Deputy Mayor
Cr Keith Fell

TSIRC Officers

Chief Executive Officer
Community Services
Executive Director - Building Services
Acting Executive Director – Corporate Services

Executive Director – Engineering Services
Acting Executive Director – Financial Services
Executive Assistant to the Mayor
TSIRC Secretariat

Mr James William
Mr Dawson Sailor
Mr Wayne Green
Mr David Kempton (*left meeting at 2.15pm*)
Mr David Baldwin
Ms Nicola Daniels
Ms Trudy Lui
Mr Darryl Brooks

The Committee noted that the Chairperson of the Cultural, Arts, Land and Heritage Committee was not in attendance for the meeting.

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

Mayor Mosby requested that members make any relevant conflict of interest declarations and advise if any relevant legal proceedings were current pertaining to Committee business to be considered at the meeting. No declarations were made.

5. Confirmation of Draft Minutes of the SARG Meeting held on 4 April 2023

RESOLUTION:

Moved: Cr Hilda Mosby

Seconded: Cr Rocky Stephen

The Committee confirmed the Minutes of the SARG Meeting held on 4 April 2023.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

6. Action Items from Previous Meeting

RESOLUTION:

Moved: Cr Rocky Stephen

Seconded: Cr Hilda Mosby

The Committee notes the updates provided by the Chief Executive Officer and Executive Directors on action items arising from the previous meeting.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

An updated version of the action items is at Attachment A.

7. VERBAL DISCUSSION – Matters Arising from May 2023 Council Workshop

A. CORPORATE SERVICES (Mr David Kempton)

Top 10 Priorities document – currently repopulating the document based on discussions held at the Workshop, as well as reformatting the document for consideration at the June 2023 Council meeting.

Tenure Policy – to be formalised for consideration at the June 2023 Council meeting.

B. ECONOMIC GROWTH COMMITTEE (Cr Rocky Gela)

Currently reviewing priorities previously identified and will bring matters back to the November 2023 Workshop.

Economic Development Strategy Consultations – Poruma, Mabuig, Erub and Masig have already confirmed dates. Waiting for other communities to advise.

Overall, very pleased with the Workshop, its new and improved focus and its outcomes under the leadership of the Mayor and the Chief Executive Officer.

C. HOUSING AND SAFE & HEALTHY COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE (Cr Keith Fell)

Executive Director Building Services (Mr David Green) advised the Committee that a workshop will be held on Thursday Island on the Bluephone in the w/b 12 June 2023 and the Housing Investment Plan with key stakeholders. An update will be provided following that meeting.

Local housing plan - Currently discussing with QBuild about repairs and maintenance with a view to streamlining internal processes between the building team and the housing officers.

D. CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE (Cr Hilda Mosby)

The Committee will meet on 22 June 2023 to look at issues arising from the Workshop.

Cr Mosby advised that she was greatly encouraged to see the attendance of young students at the CHAS Workshop.

[Ratified @ August 2023 Council Meeting]

Executive Director Engineering Services (Mr David Baldwin) advised the Committee on the following:

- that TSIRC is likely to secure additional funding for works on the Seawall project. A figure of \$500,000 is currently being sought to add to either Warraber or Masig.
- CHAS Committee has been greatly encouraged by the Workshop and has instilled confidence in that Committee's decision-making around funding priorities.
- ED Engineering Services and the Chief Executive Officer met with the Department of Environment and Science (funding providers for CHAS). The Department is keen to help fund the closure study and design for Erub and potentially an audit on asbestos across the Torres Strait Islands. The Department is also happy to revisit the Warraber Transfer Station and potentially fund the pilot for Warraber (not the previous Pilot, but a far more advanced or robust) as well as a concrete waste processing plant somewhere in the region. The Department will also be funding an extension to the Waste Liaison Officer position.
- Marine issues: currently the Harbour Master and the District Director of TMR are due to visit Yam and have now visited, Boigu, Badu and Sabai to look at transport infrastructure. Visits to Erub and Masig are also planned.

Cr Lui encouraged continuing support for the Containers for Change initiative. There is a push for TSIRC take on the role of collection agent for the initiative, however current capacity to take on this role is limited and potential on-costs to Council will need to be clarified.

E. GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP COMMITTEE (Cr Getano Lui)

Cr Lui advised the Committee that he has been encouraged by developments to date in relation to the Masig Statement and the discussions held at the May 2023 Workshop. The TSIRC needs to maintain the momentum currently growing in the community in relation to driving the Masig Statement and the issue of 'regional governance' needs to be very clearly developed so that it can be communicated to the community and governments. The Deputy Mayor recently met with the inaugural Ambassador for First Nations People (Mr Justin Mohamed) on Thursday Island and presented him with a copy of the Masig Statement and urged him to hand a copy to the Minister for Foreign Affairs. The Ambassador was also reminded that border issues in the region remain a high concern and a review of the day-to-day compliance measures by officials on the ground.

F. MAYOR UPDATE

The Mayor thanked the Deputy Mayor for assisting him with meetings held on Thursday Island during the recent Cultural Festival. The TSIRC will now look to formalising its relationship with the Ambassador for First Nations in relation to key national priorities, such as the Voice to Parliament Referendum, Treaty issues (in addition to the Australia/Papua New Guinea Torres Strait Treaty) and the Masig Statement. The Mayor, Deputy Mayor and the ED Corporate Services to meet and prepare relevant correspondence.

[Ratified @ August 2023 Council Meeting]

A letter has been sent to the Premier of Queensland by Torres Strait local government leaders (TSIRC, Torres Shire Council and the TSRA) requesting that a coronial-type investigation be undertaken into the health system in the Torres Strait and to stand down the current Torres Strait Health Board owing to the unacceptable services being provided to the people of the Torres Strait region. The Queensland Opposition Leader (Mr David Crisafulli) – currently visiting the region – will meet with the three regional Mayors during the Indigenous Leaders' Forum in Cairns on 15 June 2023. The Mayors will then travel to Canberra in the w/b 19 June 2023.

Sandy Killick email re Masig Statement (email sent by Mayor to Councillors). Some very strong messaging/wording needs to be endorsed by the TSIRC on how to embed the Statement into the national debate. The Masig Statement needs to stand on its own, and not be overshadowed by current Voice to Parliament referendum or Path to Treaty agendas. A standalone strategy needs to be developed and implemented in order to encourage the Torres Strait Islander community to take ownership of the Masig Statement and also to embed the Statement into the arena of State and Federal Governments (including Opposition parties). The ED Corporate Services has prioritised the engagement of a strategist to prepare this and other high-level policies.

The Mayor requested that a finalised position on the Masig Statement (incorporating issues discussed at the May 2023 Council Workshop) be considered at the next SARG meeting prior to formal endorsement by the Council.

Regarding TSIRC/TSRA arrangements, the Mayor requested that a letter be sent to the Minister for Indigenous Australians to rescind the decision to have separate elections for the TSRA and the TSIRC needs to be followed up.

The Mayor requested advice on any follow-up on the letter sent regarding the Hammond Island Primary Health Centre.

Cr Keith Fell sought the Committee's support to ensure HS Radio services are maintained: the Torres Strait still dropping off-line and connectivity issues with the 4G continue making it imperative for HS Radio to be functioning well for emergency situations. Only two radios were recently working.

Service Provision Audit for the Torres Strait region (through DATSIP), in addition to the current audit infrastructure and capital works in the region. A similar audit was recently done for Mornington Island and the TSIRC will need participate in codesigning the scope of any audit to ensure it meets the TSIRC's requirements.

ACTION:

1. Executive Director Building Services (Mr David Green) to provide an update to Council on the outcomes of the workshop to be held on Thursday Island on the w/b 12 June 2023 regarding Bluephone and the Housing Investment Plan.
2. The Mayor, Deputy Mayor and the ED Corporate Services to meet and prepare relevant correspondence on formalising its relationship with the Ambassador for First Nations and to highlight Council's position in relation to key national priorities, such as the Voice to Parliament Referendum, Treaty issues (in addition to the Australia/Papua New Guinea Torres Strait Treaty) and the Masig Statement.

3. Regarding TSIRC/TSRA arrangements, the Mayor requested that a letter be sent to the Minister for Indigenous Australians to rescind the decision to have separate elections for the TSRA and the TSIRC needs to be followed up.
4. The Mayor requested advice on any follow-up on the letter sent regarding the Hammond Island Primary Health Centre.
5. Cr Keith Fell sought the Committee's support to ensure HS Radio services are maintained: the Torres Strait still dropping off-line and connectivity issues with the 4G continue making it imperative for HS Radio to be functioning well for emergency situations. Only two radios were recently working.
6. Service Provision Audit for the Torres Strait region (through DATSIP), in addition to the current audit infrastructure and capital works in the region. A similar audit was recently done for Mornington Island and the TSIRC will need participate in codesigning the scope of any audit to ensure it meets the TSIRC's requirements.

8. General / Other Business (on notice)

A. Freight/Transport Update from Cost of Living Summit

Discussions have recently been held with the Queensland Department of Transport and Deloittes regarding the \$64m budget commitment made by the Queensland Government for freight subsidy for the Torres Strait and NPA regions to clarify how this will be delivered. The TSIRC made it clear during those discussions that the community and the regions must be the ones to decide how the money should be spent – not the funding provider. Further updates will be provided to SARG and the Council as this matter progresses.

B. Horizon Airways

Cr Hilda Mosby advised that a new airline operator has started in the region and plans to base a plane at Horn Island and out at Masig at this stage. Cr Mosby has requested the new operators to write to the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer to introduce their product.

C. Start-up Businesses

Cr Hilda Mosby advised that she is advising community members who seek assistance with start-up businesses to write directly to the Chief Executive Officer in the first instance.

D. Decision regarding \$40-\$80m funding for upgrades on closed Jetties

Cr Keith Fell requested an update on the situation regarding closed jetties. The Mayor confirmed that currently 5 jetties in the region have been closed. The Chief Executive Officer advised that more work will need to be done to sign-off on an approved methodology for TSIRC to use to prioritise each case, as the funding available is simply not enough to fix the existing closed jetties. The organisation is mindful of escalating tensions between communities over how these limited funds will be prioritised.

E. Masig Statement

Cr Rocky Gela strongly encouraged members to drive the Masig Statement within their communities with a view to having a plan in place by the November 2023 Council Workshop.

[Ratified @ August 2023 Council Meeting]

F. First Councillors' Meeting (86th Anniversary to be observed on Badu)

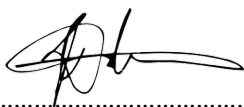
The Mayor advised that he will visit Badu in the near future to meet with community and establish a local working committee on-ground. Funding has been secured from the TSRA in relation to this issue.

9. Next Meeting Date: Tuesday, 4 July 2023 (1pm to 4pm)

The Committee noted the next meeting date of 4 July 2023.

10. Closing Remarks & Prayer

The Mayor closed the meeting at 3.00pm and Cr Keith Fell delivered the closing prayer.



.....
Mr James William
Chief Executive Officer
Torres Strait Island Regional Council
Date: 13/9/2023



.....
Cr. Phillemon Mosby
Mayor
Torres Strait Island Regional Council
Date: 13/9/2023

RATIFIED