MINUTES OF THE 135TH BOARD MEETING

MONDAY 08 April at 10:00am

Civic Reception Room, Spence Street, Cairns

REPRESENTATIVES:
- Cr Tom Gilmore, Mayor, Mareeba Shire Council
- Cr Bob Manning, Mayor, Cairns Regional Council
- Cr Jack Bawden, Mayor, Carpentaria Shire Council
- Cr John Kremastos, Mayor, Cassowary Coast Regional Council
- Cr Peter Scott, Mayor, Cook Shire Council
- Cr Trevor Pickering, Mayor, Croydon Shire Council
- Cr Julia Leu, Mayor, Douglas Shire Council
- Cr Warren Devlin, Mayor, Etheridge Shire Council
- Cr Mary Brown, Deputy Mayor, Hinchinbrook Shire Council
- Cr Ramon Jayo, Mayor, Hinchinbrook Shire Council
- Cr Ross Andrews, Mayor, Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council
- Cr Joe Paronella, Mayor, Tablelands Regional Council
- Cr Desmond Tayley, Mayor, Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council

CEO’S:
- Mr John Andrejic, CEO, Cairns Regional Council
- Mr John Kelly, Acting CEO, Carpentaria Shire Council
- Mr James Gott, CEO, Cassowary Coast Regional Council
- Ms Linda Cardew, CEO, Cook Shire Council
- Mr Bob Holmes, Acting CEO, Croydon Shire Council
- Mr David Munroe, Acting CEO, Etheridge Shire Council
- Mr Mark Stoermer, CEO, Douglas Shire Council
- Mr Peter Franks, CEO, Mareeba Shire Council
- Mr Justin Commons, CEO, Tablelands Regional Council

OBERVERS:
- Ms Jo Stephenson, DLGRMA
The meeting commenced at 10:00am.

Cr Tom Gilmore, Chair opened the meeting and acknowledged the Traditional Owners of the land on which we meet today, paying respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

2623 Apologies and welcome to guests

Apologies as noted and roundtable introductions conducted.
3.1 Mr Troy Smithells, Apps Specialist, Telstra

- Mr Troy Smithells provided a presentation on Developing app-based solutions for common Local Government problems utilising MAV (Municipal Association of Victoria) Hack 2 as an example re increased innovation and collaboration across bodies.

Key examples of projects that are now either in production or at pilot stage with MAV include:

- A chatbot for town planning (automated program)
- Disabled Parking Permits portal for digital transfer of permits
- Disabled Parking Bay Non-Compliance (digital app)
- Pop Up Waste Dump Sites (managing illegal waste dumping)
- Road Issues (integration with google or similar council road works etc)
- Indigenous Youth Mentoring (education and job network platform)

Process proposed for FNQROC Pilot Program:

- One (1) day Ignition Workshop designed to draw out challenges faced within FNQROC Councils
- Three (3) day Development Workshop (5 teams working together to accelerate shortlisted ideas)
- Output Presentation to determine how to progress agreed ideas and determine funding and advocacy bodies to support
- Telstra see FNQROC as a pilot group for the region

The Chair asked for comments from the floor:

- Is the concept to individual councils or collaboratively as a group and who is best representation is for councils? Collaborative approach agreed is best utilising an existing FNQROC Strategy or Visionary document as a starting point to identify regional issues/ideas (Example LGA of Tasmania)
- Highlighted Connectivity / Technology challenges, particularly for Western Councils
- Queried the opportunities to develop tourism focussed Apps. White labelling may be a solution, such as linking Western Councils to a Grey Nomad platform.
- Requested an indication of the cost structure. Telstra acknowledge that this is a new project for FNQROC and following initial consultations have agreed to find the funding for the first FNQROC event which would focus of Business Case building. Business cases have a nominal time and cost perspective traditionally valued at $80K + 6 months per case, which is why a 3-day event resulting in approx. 5 business cases (as with the MAV scenario) provides both a time and cost effective solution for councils. Difficult to allocate a value until outputs are identified, but the Chatbot Town Planning example resulted in 5 councils investing $10K each and the production pilot was $50k. No council could singularly fund, but when finances pooled across councils the solution was funded.
- Noted that the process includes linking local government with state government and/or corporate funding where needed for delivery stage.

MOVED: Cr Paronella
SECOND: Cr Pickering

*That FNQROC proceed with the pilot ‘hackathon’ subject to funding being received.*

CARRIED
Mr David Edwards, Projects Chief Executive, DITID

- Mr David Edwards provided a presentation on Adventure and Nature Based Tourism Opportunities (ANBTO) Program.

Key presentation points included:

- Following discussions in October 2018 with Councils about building critical mass of adventure tourism developments in FNQ, a SWOT Analysis was developed.
- Qld Government can assist in broadening the base of existing program from mainly walks to support other project types, priority on other adventure tourism projects and deliver projects in a timely manner to build industry confidence.
- Noted that recreation experiences need to appeal to locals and tourists alike. Example of growth of e-bikes in both Australia and NZ re trails/adventure tourism experiences and a move towards social media campaigns, rather than traditional marketing (very successful in NZ)
- Overview of the Program Control Group including an Interdepartmental CEO level committee designed to prioritise proposals, facilitate de-risking and advise on funding options
- 12 TNQ Opportunities highlighted with current 4 priority projects identified as:
  - Kuranda Rainforest Trails and Downhill Bike Track
  - Smithfield Mountain Bike Park Expansion
  - Atherton Forest Park Extension and Atherton Link Trails
  - Goldfields Trail (Babinda Boulders area)
- Good support from local Department offices, WTMA and TTNQ
- Recognised the need to develop an Adventure and Nature based Tourism Strategy (expanded beyond the Mountain Bike Strategy) with critical input from FNQROC
- DITID is working with existing products and assisting to minimise red tape issues to progress
- Seeking agreement to continue to work with FNQROC, continue to develop ROC based priority projects.

The Chair asked for comments from the floor:

- Is DITID getting involved in tourism marketing? Marketing is the responsibility of TEQ and TTNQ, with more resources/emphasis on social media marketing.
- Noted that there are more opportunities for walking tracks in the Daintree to Cooktown region which would encourage longer stays and increase visitation. Existing trails need expansion.
- Croydon Shire Council seek assistance from DITID to build a Business Case re Mountain Bike Trails
- Noted the importance to develop Outback tourism, outside of the traditional Reef & Rainforest marketing.
- Noted that TCICA are considering becoming a LTO for the Cape region, developing product (ie circuit of festivals), glamping opportunities, indigenous trails and the Cooktown 2020 event, which will need assistance with marketing. Cr Scott suggested presenting to TCICA
- Noted that government funding is allocated to building the core infrastructure, however private investment is required to develop the complimentary luxury product/experience. All infrastructure builds within a National Park go to tender.
- It was noted that FNQROC can invest in time/resources (not financial contribution) in relation to tourism development, but commitment is subject to current workloads.

The Chair invited Mr Edwards to engage one-on-one with councils at the conclusion of the board meeting.
Dr Nikola Stepanov provided a presentation explaining the role of the Integrity Commissioner working with Local Government.

Key presentation points included:

- Overview of Integrity Commissioner role and reporting relationship within Parliament.
- Key functions include providing advice on ethics and integrity issues (non-binding and provided in the public interest), maintain lobbyist register, raise public awareness and standard setting at the request of the Premier.
- Local Government advice based on local government changes (ie Belcarra). Main areas of concern include Conflicts of interest, Acceptance of Gifts and hospitality, the impact of influence and personal favours. Other areas include social media issues, use of confidential information, potential conflicts due to employment or business interests, material personal interests, etc
- Working with councils in providing workshops and downloadable Guides for Councillors and Meeting Aids to help guide councils on Duty to Report, Conflicts of Interest, Material Personal Interests and Personal Interests Official Responsibilities. Resources have been developed in conjunction with the Office of the Independent Assessor.

Ms Kathleen Florian provided an overview of her background leading into this new role with the Office of the Independent Assessor.

Key presentation points included:

- Overview of how the new system works in addressing complaints relating to Inappropriate Conduct, Misconduct and/or Corrupt Conduct and an overview of the assessment process
- When an investigation commences – councils will receive a letter that details the allegation and provides options to resolve, dispute, dismiss or progress for prosecution
- Overview of new act in handling complaints that are frivolous, vexatious or not made in good faith
- Overview of the Politicisation of complaints in preparation for the 2020 Local Government elections
- Assessment process commitment to 21 days with outcomes published to complete learning loop
- Investigations primarily will be handled by the Independent Assessor. Seeking additional resources to fast-track
- Use Guides for Councillors and Meeting Aids (see links above) to assist in developing standards within councillors and feed precedents feedback into council frameworks.
- Social media – not as big as Conflicts of Interest, but still a significant issue. Currently working with LGAQ in developing guidelines re social media (particularly around election times) and due for release in the coming weeks.

The Chair asked for comments from the floor:

- Concerns raised re frivolous complainants and the lack of prosecution to date under the old act. Advised there is an intention to publicise repeat complainants under the new act?
- Discussions re Conflicts of Interest (Regulation 175E). Councils need to make the decision on whether a councillor needs to leave the room or not. The philosophy “when in doubt, get out” does not allow councils to build standards.
- Advice provided by the Integrity Assessor can be shared with media re best standard – meet the expectations of the bulk of the community (not the loudest, most aggressive). Be transparent, develop consistent standards, justify decisions re conflicts of interest. Core messaging to councillors was to focus on making sure that they don’t leave themselves exposed in any way.
• Discussion re 500% rise in complaints and what triggered the trend? Primarily a result of accepting complaints direct (as opposed to LG), looking into a lot of corruption matters referred back and the development of a new agency. It is envisaged that this trend will peak leading up to the 2020 election and then reduce to a manageable level.

• Concerns raised re ATSI matter relating to Conflicts of Interest. Many issues focused around family relationships/matters (more complex with strong cultural ties), quorum issues and many councils involve councillors who are related. Trustee issues. Duplicated in Western Councils with smaller councils with strong family/business ties. Dr Stepanov advised that the office is currently undertaking a lot of work with indigenous issues and that these affected councils are often the first to seek advice and taking the lead on handling some Conflict of Interest issues. Keen to visit in region to understand specifics for FNQROC affected councils.

• Concerns raised by CCRC re the complexities of the Corporations Act, including obligations of a councillor and dual responsibilities, managing dual conflicts, councillor versus board director, etc. Dr Stepanov advised that these issues are assessed on a case by case scenario and councils are encouraged to seek advice. Dr Stepanov to engage with CCRC re specific query.

• Concerns raised re the small councils and business ownership re MPI challenges. It was suggested that Etheridge Shire (and other affected councils) detail 3-4 scenarios that are sending them out of the room and seek advice from the Integrity Commissioner moving forward.

• Concerns raised re dysfunction within communities re social/economic issues. Advised to always make decisions in the public interest. Crisis management / building community trust is about transparency and consistency.

ACTION: FNQROC Councils to extend an invitation to the Integrity Commissioner to discuss indigenous Conflict of Interest issues specific to their council

ACTION: CCRC to liaise direct with the Integrity Commissioner re advice relating to Corporations Act

ACTION: Cr Devlin to detail scenarios re MPI challenges and send to the Integrity Commissioner for advice

ACTION: FNQROC to circulate tabled Fact Sheets and Councillor Guides

ACTION: FNQROC to circulate all board presentations with minutes

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

2625 Confirmation of Minutes

MOVED: Cr Manning
SECOND: Cr Leu

That the minutes of the 134th FNQROC Board Meeting held on 11 February 2019 be confirmed.

CARRIED

BUSINESS ARISING OUT OF MINUTES

2593 Minute – T Goode (LGAQ) to provide FNQROC with a copy of the Workforce Report

Complete
2603 Minute – FNQROC to circulate TCICA letter re Pama Futures Reform Agenda with minutes

Complete

2605 Minute – ALL Council Members to provide feedback to D Irvine on the Regional Roads Planning and Expenditure Assessment (DRAFT) in relation to any additional information that needs to be includes

Feedback received from a number of Council Engineers to feed into the report

2606 Minute – L Rankine to advise Cr Bawden who he has been talking to at Carpentaria Shire re Asset Data in relation to the RRIS project

Complete

2586 & 2608 Minute – Agreed to hold over Cairns 2050 Shared Vision to April for endorsement and any questions to be directed to j.Andrejic@cairns.qld.gov.au

See Item 8.1

2616 Minute – D Irvine to make a deputation to the TTNQ Board to speak with FNQROC re growing Regional Tourism

In progress

2618 Minute – D Irvine to provide Letter of Support to maintain Cairns BoM office and not relocate to Brisbane (obtaining a copy of the CRC LOS)

Awaiting CRC Letter of Support to use as draft to develop letter from FNQROC

2619 Minute – D Irvine to follow up TMR regarding safety signage on the road to Yarrabah Council

D Irvine has followed up and waiting on response from TMR

ADVOCACY

2626 Advocacy update from member Councils

Nil noted

2627 Advocacy update from FNQROC

REPORTS: FNQROC Federal Delegation (12-14 Feb ‘19) + FNQROC Emergent Delegation (1-2 Apr ‘19)

As noted

FNQROC Mayoral State Delegation Planning (14-16 May 2019)

D Irvine provided an overview of preliminary planning and meeting schedule for the upcoming FNQROC Mayoral State Delegation to Brisbane (14-16 May 2019), noting that collateral will be developed similar to
the recent Federal delegation (but including those projects which currently do not have an ask) providing a snapshot of each identified priority and it will be the responsibility of each lead council to provide full briefs on each specific project/priority.

Cr Kremastos noted that due to the World Rafting Championship he will only be attending meetings on Wednesday 15th May.

**STRATEGIC OPERATIONAL PLAN**

2628  Navua Sedge Select Committee Update (Board directed project)

T Sydes provided an update on the preliminary meetings as held by the Navua Sedge Select Committee.

- The Select Committee is comprised of 9 representatives from LG and 3 from State and members have been selected based on their shared knowledge, experience and expertise in the management and impacts of Navua Sedge.

- The initial 2-day sessions were held 19-20 March with subject experts and key stakeholders providing presentations. Feedback to date is that the forum has been very valuable dedicating conversations to a singular issue.

- Outcomes will be compiled and submitted to the FNQROC Board for discussion and consideration.

**ACTION:** T Sydes to update on Navua Sedge Select Committee outcomes at June Board meeting

2629  RRIS Update re DRAFT Tourism Road Network

D Irvine provided an update on the DRAFT Tourism Road Network component of the Regional Road Investment Strategy (RRIS) project.

**ACTION:** FNQROC to circulate RRIS DRAFT Tourism Road Network report electronically with minutes

2630 RRIS Funding Update and Decision

D Irvine provided an overview of the current status of the funding of the RRIS project and discussed a number of alternative funding options for consideration and endorsement by the FNQROC Board.

It was agreed that the pulling of funding by TMR was extremely disappointing, however due to the importance of the project and the strength the findings will provide to road advocacy for the region, FNQROC should take ownership and fund the project.

**MOVED:** Cr Scott

**SECOND:** Cr Paronella

“That FNQROC fully fund the FNQ Regional Road Investment Strategy from its reserves.”

**CARRIED**
DISCUSSION TOPICS

2631 (2586 +2608) Cairns 2050 Shared Vision: Seeking FNQROC support

Cr Manning noted that following advice from consultants to produce a visionary document such as the Cairns 2050 Shared Vision, it provided a resource to use as a building block towards a City Deal and there was more chance of success if cities and regions are united.

MOVED: Cr Paronella
SECONDED: Cr Kremastos

That FNQROC endorsed the Cairns Regional Council 2050 Shared Vision.

CARRIED

2632 TTNQ – Regional Tourism Organisation (RTO) Boundary Changes

D Irvine provided background information relating to the tabled Briefing Paper in relation to the Regional Tourism Organisation Boundary Changes as proposed by TTNQ.

It was highlighted that this item requires commentary from the affected FNQROC Western Council members whom to date had not been directly consulted with by either TTNQ or Outback Qld Tourism Association (OQTA).

Whilst the change may fit the Outback footprint, concerns were raised re Cairns being the main tourism gateway (ie Cairns to Broome, Cairns to Kurumba) and the need to merge the Outback into the current Reef and Rainforest branding.

Agreed that the matter had been clumsily handled and further consultation with all parties was required to discuss in a positive manner the broad opportunities of the region.

ACTION: FNQROC to facilitate a meeting with TTNQ (Pip Close) and Outback Qld Tourism Association (OQTA) (Peter Homan) and the four (4) affected councils to discuss the boundary realignment proposal.

MOVED: Cr Bawden
SECONDED: Cr Devlin

That FNQROC does not support a boundary change for Etheridge, Croydon and Carpentaria at this stage due to a lack of consultation with the affected councils.

CARRIED

CORRESPONDENCE

Noted

FNQROC POLICY REVIEW

Nil

FNQROC REPORTS AND MOU

Nil
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

2633  Profit and Loss and Balance Sheet Financial YTD

MOVED: Cr Leu  
SECOND: Cr Pickering

That the Profit and Loss and Balance Sheet Reports for the financial year to date be accepted.  
CARRIED

ATTENDANCE & MINUTES OF MEETINGS

2634  Meetings Attending by Executive Officer (28 Nov – 15 Mar)

Noted

2635  FNQROC Advisory Committee Minutes (20 Jan – 20 Mar)

Noted

2636  Confidential Meeting Minutes (20 Jan – 20 Mar)

Noted

2637  LGAQ POLICY EXECUTIVE UPDATE

L Hannan provided an overview of the tabled LGAQ Policy Executive Update, including the following updates post LGAQ Special General Meeting (02 April):

• Following LGAQ advocacy and social media campaign centred on opposing the introduction of compulsory preferential voting and proportional representation, the State Government announced on 1 April 2019 that it would wind back the far-reaching changes to local government electoral arrangements.

• In summary, the Government intends to still introduce compulsory preferential voting, but only for all mayoral elections and councillor elections in divided councils. There will be further consultation on proportional representation with the aim to introduce partial PR for undivided councils at the 2024 elections. Dual candidacy is now off the table. Expenditure caps and public campaign funding will not apply to the 2020 elections; there will be further consultation with the aim to have them in place for the day after the 28 March 2020 election.

• The Special General Meeting of the LGAQ membership held in Brisbane on 2 April 2019 adopted 10 resolutions opposing the Government’s proposals and putting forward an alternative expenditure cap proposal.

• The resolutions had resounding unity and support:

  1. Oppose Compulsory Preferential Voting: 98% support
  2. Oppose Proportional Representation: 99% support
  3. Oppose Dual Candidacy: 96% support
  4. Oppose Government-imposed Expenditure Caps: 86% support
  5. Support LGAQ expenditure Caps: 92% support
6. Support regulation of Third Party Expenditure: 98% support
7. Oppose public funding of Council Elections: 99% support
8. Oppose reduction of mayoral power to direct staff: 82% support
9. Oppose removal power of mayor, deputy or committee chair to appoint senior executive staff: 92% support
10. Call on Government to abide by the same rules they set for councils: 83% support

- LGAQ’s ongoing campaign is a Colmar Brunton poll commissioned by the LGAQ following the Government’s proposals in early March that showed more than 70 per cent of Queenslanders are satisfied with the current system for electing mayors and councillors. The poll also found that most Queenslanders rated local councils more trustworthy than either the federal or state governments. The poll surveyed more than 1200 people across Queensland between 28 February and 5 March.
- The changes the Government still intends to implement in time for the 2020 local government elections will form part of a Bill which is expected to be introduced into the Queensland Parliament in the coming weeks.
- The LGAQ will continue to consult on the draft Bill and regulatory reforms as allowed and will consult with LGAQ’s CEO Advisory Group (16 members). No firm date as yet, but LGAQ obtain a copy of the Draft (subject to some confidential consultations).

The Chair asked for comments from the floor:
- Noting that the statements that came out of the LGAQ Special General Meeting very strongly opposed what was been proposed, it was asked if there anything FNQROC should be doing in the interim to keep the pressure on the Government?
- Discussion re the power in providing a collective unified statement from FNQROC signed by each member council Mayor. Cr Scott requested we included TCICA in any correspondence. Cr Bawden also requested NWQROC be included. Noted timeline of 2 weeks.
- Queried what feedback had been received by the Premier from the public, any support swelling from the ground.
- Discussion re utilising social media platforms to inform the general public to clearly demonstrate how the changes will affect them.
- Queried if we need to gain support from local State Members?

**ACTION:** L Hannan to send public responses/emails to Premier re “Hands-off our Council” campaign

**ACTION:** Ms Irvine to draft a letter to the Premier regarding proposed Local Government Reforms and seek interest from TCICA and NWQROC to be included.

**MOVED:** Cr Leu
**SECOND:** Cr Manning

*That FNQROC write to the Premier expressing our views regarding the proposed Local Government Reforms with each individual Mayor to sign (using electronic signatures). That FNQROC also invite TCICA and NWQROC to be included in the letter.*

**CARRIED**
2638  LGAQ Support for Small and Remote Councils
Not discussed

2639  FNQROC Long Service
Cr Gilmore and the board thanked Travis Sydes for 10 years’ service with FNQROC

2640  Next Meeting
The Chair advised the next meeting will be held on the 17th June 2019 in Cooktown and noted that accommodation blocks had been made by FNQROC and will be circulated with the minutes.

Meeting Close:  1:02 pm

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Cr Tom Gilmore
Chair
### Action Items

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minute Number</th>
<th>Action</th>
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<td>CRC, J Andrejic</td>
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