

Minutes

Meeting No	17
Meeting Name	FNQROC Economic Development Advisory Group
Date	17 May 2022
1000	10.00 – 12.00pm
Venue	Committee Room, Level 3, Cairns Regional Council and via 'Go To' virtually

Attendees

Emma Tunnock	Douglas Shire Council
Katrina Houghton	Economy ID
Nicole Van Beuningen	Tablelands Regional Council (<i>online</i>)
Virginia Berry	DSDILGP
Sam Doyle-Wiaczek	Cairns Regional Council
Lainie Poon	RDATN
Angelo Finocchiaro	Tablelands Regional Council
Darlene Irvine	FNQROC
Paula Power	FNQROC

Apologies

Ellen Cox	Cairns Regional Council
Sonja Johnson	RDATN
Belinda Hutchinson	DSDILGP
Glenys Pilat	Mareeba Shire Council
Jessica Fealy	Mareeba Shire Council

1 WELCOME AND ROUNDTABLE INTRODUCTIONS

The meeting commenced at 10.00am.

2 ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

Nil

3 PRESENTATION – KATRINA HOUGHTON, ECONOMY.ID

K Houghton provided an overview of data from the Economy.id portal for Far North Queensland and showcased the best ways to bring up specific data for your region.

Key notes from presentation:

- Agriculture sector performing well.
- Transport – impacts have been felt throughout regional Queensland.
- Investments down in regions. Timing of projects crucial – 5-10 year infrastructure plan recommended.
- Consumption spending – could be higher. Demand hasn't fallen, the supply isn't there.
- Positive jobs growth across the region
- Overseas migration – down 14,366 Can make a big difference to the economy. Loss of overseas migrants has slowed.
- Domestic growth strong in regional Queensland. Less people leaving Queensland which in turn effects the housing market.
- Regional Queensland gained in trend of migration.
- Time for councils to think about what's happening in economic development.
- FNQROC area stable growth since 2017 just below state average of 2%
- Cairns has performed very well since 2011.
- Industry value add – health care and social assistance has driven the recovery.
- Agriculture and construction above state average.
- Education – loss of international students which is an important component of regional economy.
- Exports fallen by over \$130m - food production and domestic exports.
- Employment by industry 10,000 jobs added to region's economy since 2015.
- Healthcare main driver 2009 to 2021 and driver for FNQROC region.
- Breakdown for council areas – Katrina looking at this quarterly data.
- SQM Research can provide total property listings – ie. can enter postcodes in portal. Good for drilling down for vacancy rates and housing sales time on the market.
- Residential vacancy rates in Cairns – 0.6% and is happening across all regional areas – noting TRC is 0.1%
- TTNQ Tourism Data – useful tool for regions to compare. Lots of work done in this area. Using the portal, you can select regions visited and multiple destinations – rolling average back to 2000.
- The next release of the Census data will be July/August which will include migration data. Will be a good insight into community changes. First year where southern states were in lockdown.
- Financial stability will be key challenge. Councils to have a greater role in circular economy.
- Issues for all councils, managing housing affordability, rising prices, rental shortages, displaced people.

Action: K Houghton to forward SQM Research link.

Questions from the floor

- Census data J – accessible by July/August period. ABS have joined a couple of categories, so could look different.
- October/November – more employment data coming from ABS. Waiting to see what the format looks like.
- All Census data should be available by the end of the year.
- Housing.ID – FNQROC has purchased a regional package which will go down to Local government level. Glen Capuano from Economy.id will train FNQROC councils. Will have access to drill down into suburbs for councils wishing to do so and where it maybe beneficial (Cairns and potentially Mareeba, Tablelands, Cassowary and Douglas) – cost will be ~\$7,500.

4 GENERAL BUSINESS / EMERGING ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

FNQROC – Darlene Irvine

- **Housing id** - D Irvine advised that FNQROC has purchased housing.id for the region. More granular information is available for some member councils (Cairns, Mareeba, Tablelands and Cassowary) for an additional cost of \$7,500 each if they wish.
- **FNQROC State Delegation** - D Irvine advised that the Board will be undertaking a State Delegation next week. At this stage we have 22 meetings with Ministers, Shadow Ministers and local members. The key advocacy points are:
 - A new modern FNQ Regional Plan which also includes Croydon and Cook Shires
 - Roads Maintenance Backlog of \$902mil
 - Kuranda Range Road
 - Etheridge Agricultural Precinct
 - Water and Waste Infrastructure projects
 - Housing
 - Waste in National Parks
 - Digital Communication
- **FNQ Regional Plan** - D Irvine advised that it is highly likely we will be the next cab off the rank for a new Regional Plan. It hasn't been announced by the Minister as yet, but the State staff have been working with us and advised as much. We have one chance every 12 years or so to get this right. She envisions that this time round all technical committees should be involved, particularly this one as economic development is at the forefront of new plans.
- **Regional Waste Management & Resource Recovery Strategy** – D Irvine advised that the tender had been released and a recommendation will be made by the Advisory Committee on Friday (20th).

DSDILGP – Virginia Berry

- Continuing to work on the Cairns Marine Precinct
- Working with Industry Capability Network on four major projects in the region, Kaban Wind Farm, Glencore Aurukun Bauxite program and Cairns Tropical Enterprise Centre (CTEC) to deliver ICN Profile Improvement and Capability Statement workshops.
- State Development regular Tendering (21 June 2022) and Capability Statement Workshop (14 June) will be held next month with a tailored workshop for Indigenous business scheduled for 5 July to coincide with NAIDOC week.

RDTN – Lainie Poon

RASN – Regional Arts Network

- Currently seeking to fill the roles of Regional Manager and Regional Officer with closing date for applications is 18 May 2022 with appointment of an Officer in the Cape or Torres to follow.
- Objective of the program is to deliver local arts services across the region that enhance cultural vitality, advance regional development, build artists' capabilities and create thriving communities.

LIAS - Lakeland Irrigation Area Scheme

- Currently at Milestone #7 and on track to complete DBC in September 2022.
- Settled on preferred dam size and distribution system.
- Report will also deliver an additional larger option for expansion if appetite present.
- Currently working with stakeholders across Federal and State Government to pro-actively position the project and understand regulatory requirements going forward.

Compost for a Farming Future

- Report now complete as of 15 May 2022
- In summary, findings have been very popular and confirm benefits of compost
- It is clear that that industry and farmers will need strong Government support to develop and transition to new/different farming practices, and to develop a strong flow of feed stock to support transformation in industry.
- Potential benefits to GBR is reduction of run-off and recommendation includes large-scale on-farm trials to test various crops.

FIAL / TNQ Regional Food Network Cluster

- Handover of cluster from RDTN to be completed at end of this May.
- Cluster has been established, board appointed and cluster activated.
- They will continue to grow and develop their strategy and activities to grow membership and industry participation including reinvigoration of brand 'Taste Paradise'.

Etheridge Agricultural Precinct

- Continuing to explore options and support ESC in advocacy efforts with Federal and State Governments.

TEDS – TNQ Economic Development Plan

- Continuing high-level engagement efforts with State to tighten framework and understand how RDTN can value-add to the review of the FNQ Regional Plan.

Action: L Poon to investigate whether regulatory information (such as PFAS) was looked as part of the Compost for Farming Future findings and when it will be released.

Tablelands Regional Council – Angelo Finocchiaro

- Considering incentive policy for affordable housing and industry
- Working on new Economic Development Strategy.
- Mountain Bike - Crankworx. Expansion plan.
- Agriculture – ongoing engagement with industry.
- Costa Group and Bega invested in region.
- Tablelands have had a significant growth over the last 12 months.

Action: A Finocchiaro to forward Housing affordability /diversity Strategy to FNQROC.

Cairns Regional Council – Sam Doyle-Wiaczek

- New [Economic Development Strategy 2022-2026](#) adopted in November 2021
- [Renew Cairns](#) have secured 5 vacant premises for pop shops in the CBD (four open, one to open imminently). Follow [Renew Cairns' Facebook](#) page for updates.
- The [Smart Green Economy](#) work with EY is expected to produce a report for phase 3 mid-year.
- World Trail are working with Council to produce a concept plan for Smithfield mountain bike trail expansion. Concept is expected mid-year.
- Council in partnership with TTNQ have secured the [Crankworx](#) mountain bike world tour event for October. Cairns is now on the tour circuit which includes Innsbruck (Austria), Whistler (Canada), and Rotorua (New Zealand).

Douglas Shire Council – Emma Tunnock

- *Do It In Douglas* – launched in February as a platform to showcase and promote business in the Douglas Shire, and encourage business growth and investment [Do It In Douglas](#) (2) [Do It In Douglas | Facebook](#)
- Investment Prospectus for the Douglas Shire – In progress with the target audience of high level entrepreneurs and investors. The Investment Prospectus will be integrated into Do it In Douglas.
- Key themes for current Economic Development opportunities in our Shire include expansion of our tourism and agriculture sectors and promoting and helping to facilitate key innovative projects in our region, ie. Daintree Bio Precinct and CocoNutz.
- Working on Localised Mental Health Initiatives to support businesses and community services as they continue recovery.
- Recent tour of the Shire with the team from FNQ Food Incubator Hub to help encourage growth and scale in our micro food businesses.

5 NEXT MEETING

The next meeting has not been set and will be advised shortly.

D Irvine thanked everyone for their contributions.

Meeting Closed at 12.20pm.

Actions

#	ACTION	PERSON
4.1	L Poon to investigate whether regulatory information (such as PFAS) was looked as part of the Compost for Farming Future findings and when it will be released.	L Poon - RDATN
4.2	A Finocchiaro to forward Housing affordability /diversity Strategy to FNQROC.	A Finocchiaro - TRC