



**Torres Strait Island**  
REGIONAL COUNCIL

**MINUTES**

**SPECIAL MEETING**

**FRIDAY 5 AUGUST 2016**

Please find attached Minutes of the above meeting held on Friday 5 August 2016 10.43am-11:10am in the Community Hall at Saibai

## **FRIDAY 5 AUGUST 2016**

### **Present**

Cr Fred Gela, Mayor  
Cr Keith Fell, Deputy Mayor, Division 4 – Mabuiag Island  
Cr Torenzo Elisala, Division 2 – Dauan Island  
Cr John Levi, Division 7 – St Pauls Community at Moa Island  
Cr Mario Sabatino, Division 8 – Hammond Island  
Cr Getano Lui Jnr, Division 9 – Iama Island  
Cr Ted Nai, Division 12 – Masig Island  
Cr Bob Kaigey, Division 15 – Mer Island  
Ms Dania Ahwang, Chief Executive Officer (CEO)  
Ms Helen Tarrant, Executive Assistant (EA) (Minutes)

### **Apologies**

Cr Dimas Toby, Division 1 – Boigu  
Cr Laurie Nona, Division 5 – Badu Island  
Cr David Bosun, Division 6 – Kubin Community at Moa Island  
Cr Clara Tamu, Division 10 – Warraber Island  
Cr Francis Pearson, Division 11 – Poruma Island  
Cr Rocky Stephen, Division 13 – Ugar Island  
Cr Patrick Thaiday, Division 14 – Erub Island

1. **10:43am-10:48am**                      **Opening Prayer and Welcome**

Cr Lui opened the day's proceedings in prayer.

**One Minute's Silence**

There was a minute silence to pay respect to ancestors and elders who have gone before.

The Mayor welcomed family and staff to the meeting as well as Cr-elect Akiba and Councillors. The Mayor acknowledged the families of Saibai and invited the community to engage with Councillors. The Mayor introduced the Councillors present.

The Mayor noted the quorum present for the Special Meeting and welcomed bala Keri to the official Swearing In ceremony.

The Mayor recognised staff present and noted apologies from absent Councillors noting their warm good wishes for Cr-elect Akiba.

2. **10:48am-10:52am**                      **Apologies**

**RESOLUTION**

*Moved Cr Fell, Seconded Cr Levi*

*That Council accepts the apologies from Crs Toby, Nona, Bosun, Tamu, Pearson, Stephen and Thaiday for their absence at this meeting.*

**MOTION CARRIED**

3. **10:52am-11:02am**                      **Declaration of Office conducted by Ms D Ahwang, Chief Executive Officer**

The CEO invited Cr-elect Akiba to make his Declaration of Office. The CEO welcomed Cr Akiba to the Torres Strait Island Regional Council.

*I, **Keri Akiba**, having been elected as a Councillor of the Torres Strait Island Regional Council, declare that I will faithfully and impartially fulfil the duties of the Office, in accordance with the local government principles under the Local Government Act 2009, to the best of my judgment and ability.*

All present applauded and cheered. Cr Akiba signed his declaration as did the CEO.

Cr Akiba joined the Councillors at the table and acknowledged the previous Councillor, his predecessor, and commended his positive influence on this community. Secondly, he thanked Mr Herbert Warusam as runner up and acknowledged him as a future leader.

Cr Akiba noted he would serve only one term. He is a member of the PBC and acknowledged the chair, Mr Paul Kabai.

Cr Akiba continued and noted that he and the community need to try and think outside of the square and work with the TSRA representative. Cr Akiba felt the community needed more direction noting that harmony is key to the way forward for the community.

The Mayor then addressed the meeting.

4. **11:02am-11:10am**                      **Address by the Mayor, Cr Fred Gela**

The Mayor welcomed family and staff, acknowledged Traditional Owners of the land and Councillors both returned and newly elected. The Mayor thanked the CEO and staff for their hard work and support and recognised the Editor from the Torres News.

The Mayor welcomed Cr Akiba to Council and noted he was not new to this role due to his previous role with the Island councils. New legislation had made things a little different including increased regulatory responsibilities.

The Mayor noted it was his third term in office but the first time a Councillor had taken their Declaration of Office in his community and our local government region.

The Mayor congratulated Cr Akiba and noted our commitment as a Council to work with Cr Akiba and support him to ensure our constituents get the best possible outcome.

The Mayor noted that engagement between the community and Council was important to realise the vision of the community – even if that means a change of direction.

The Mayor reiterated the fact that Cr Akiba will need support of the community and of Council.

The Mayor reminded all present that Cr Akiba is here to represent the people that voted for him and those who did not. He is a representative of the region. Cr Akiba's responsibility is to safeguard the best interests of the whole community, recognising that every person in the community matters.

The Mayor noted both he and his Councillors look forward to working closely with Cr Akiba.

The Mayor acknowledged all the other stakeholders in the community including the PBC.

The Mayor reiterated his welcome to Cr Akiba and confirmed our commitment to work shoulder to shoulder to get the best outcome for the community.

The Mayor noted the many challenges faced from outside of the community and outside of the region and the unity required within the community to enable those challenges to be faced.

The Mayor noted the community role in keeping their Division Councillor on his toes in a supportive and constructive way.

The Mayor encouraged the Saibai community to support Cr Akiba and to get behind him with their support.

All present applauded the Mayor.

The Mayor asked all present to be upstanding and Cr Fell closed the meeting in prayer, blessing all Councillors and the community and blessing lunch.

5. **Meeting Close**                      **The meeting closed at 11:10am**
6. **Next Meeting**                      **24 and 25 August 2016, Poruma**