STRATEGIC ACTION REFERENCE GROUP (SARG) STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING

4 DECEMBER 2024

AGENDA

Time:	1.00pm to 4.00pm
Venue:	Committee Meeting Room, Level 3, 111 Grafton Street, Cairns
	Microsoft (TEAMS) Meeting ID: 449 999 757 665
	Passcode: PrZsia

ORDER OF BUSINESS

1.00pm

A. WELCOME & QUORUM CONFIRMATION | ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS | OPENING PRAYER | OBSERVANCES

B. APOLOGIES

C. CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS

1. **CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES (25 OCTOBER 2024)**

    1.1. **Action Items from Previous Meetings**

2. **MAYORAL ITEMS** *(verbal discussion)*

    2.1. **State Government Update**

    2.2. **Governance & Leadership Risk Management | What are the lessons learnt from the past seven months? Councillors, Chairs roles, etc**

    2.3. **Advisory and Standing Committee Priorities | What are the three Priorities | Which one is identified as "Look, Listen & Adapt" Project & Reporting System**

    2.4. **SARG 2025 Planning Session | Confirm date for our first SARG scrum next year**

    2.5. **Blue Security & Safe Region | Service Model & Terms of Reference**

    2.6. **Masig Statement Strategic Action Register | Sandy Killick (Democracy Matters)**

    2.7. **Torres Strait & Northern Peninsula Area Regional Organization of Councils (TS&NPAROC) | $300k Budget & Regional Priorities**

    2.8. **18 x Months Regional Autonomy Transition Ready Plan | Seeking Endorsement of the Draft Plan ($100k)**

3. **CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORTS**

    3.1. **TSIRC Advocacy Framework**

    3.2. **TSIRC Community Advocacy Statements – Boigu, Dauan, Erub & Poruma**

    3.3. **2025 SARG Meeting Schedule**

4. **BUILDING SERVICES DIRECTORATE**

    4.1. **TSIRC Social Housing Strategy 2024**

5. **COMMUNITY SERVICES DIRECTORATE**

    Nil.

6. CORPORATE SERVICES DIRECTORATE

      6.1. **Draft Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use Policy**

7. ENGINEERING SERVICES DIRECTORATE

      Nil.

8. FINANCIAL SERVICES DIRECTORATE

      Nil.

9. RESOLUTION TO CLOSE THE MEETING TO THE PUBLIC

10. COMMUNITY SERVICES DIRECTORATE/BUILDING SERVICES DIRECTORATE

      10.1. **Quickstarts Island Extension Program**

      [Reason for Closed Discussion: these matters involve negotiations relating to a commercial matter involving the local government for which a public discussion would be likely to prejudice the interests of the local government].

11. RESOLUTION TO RETURN THE MEETING TO OPEN DISCUSSION

12. CONSIDERATION OF MATTERS DISCUSSED IN CLOSED SESSION

13. MATTERS ARISING

14. NEXT MEETING – TBA

4.00pm   **15. CLOSE OF MEETING & PRAYER**

DIRECTORATE: *Corporate Services*
AUTHOR: *Executive Director Corporate Services*

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES (25 OCTOBER 2024)

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION:

The Standing Committee confirms the Minutes of its meeting held on 25 October 2024.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Section 254F(4) of the *Local Government Regulations 2012* requires that at each local government meeting, the minutes of the previous meeting must be confirmed by the councillors or committee members present.

Interested Parties/Consultation:

N/A

Background / Previous Standing Committee Consideration:

The previous SARG Standing Committee meeting was held on 25 October 2024.
Section 254(6) of the *Local Government Regulation 2012* requires that a copy of the minutes of each local government must be made publicly available by 5pm on the tenth day after the meeting is held. To meet these compliance requirements, a copy of the draft Minutes from the last meeting were circulated to the Executive Leadership Team for input prior to being posted on the Council website.

Following confirmation of the Minutes by the Standing Committee, the confirmed Minutes will replace the draft Minutes on the Council website.

A copy of the confirmed Minutes will also be submitted to the next Council meeting for noting.

COMPLIANCE / CONSIDERATIONS:

Statutory:	Section 254F(4) of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*
Budgetary:	N/A
Policy:	N/A
Legal:	N/A
Risk:	Council breach of its Statutory requirements above.
Links to Strategic Plans:	TSIRC Corporate Plan 2020–2025 *(Bisnis Plan)* Delivery Pillar One – People *(Bisnis – Pipol)* Outcome 4: We are a transparent, open and engaging council. ➢ 4.2 Evolve Council's communication channels and community's access to information.
Masig Statement:	N/A
Standing Committee Consultation:	N/A
Timelines:	Standard Procedure following at each Standing Committee Meeting

Other Comments:

N/A
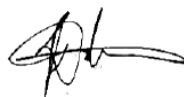
Recommended: Recommended:

S. Andres

Susanne Andres   James William
Executive Director Corporate Services   Chief Executive Officer

ATTACHMENTS:

Draft Minutes of the SARG Standing Committee Meeting held on 25 October 2024.

STRATEGIC ACTION REFERENCE GROUP (SARG) STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING

25 OCTOBER 2024

MINUTES

Time: 1.00pm

Venue: Committee Meeting Room, Level 3, 111 Grafton Street, Cairns
Microsoft (TEAMS) Meeting ID: 452 580 280 897 | Passcode: YskRaT

PRESENT:

Mayor/Chair	Cr Phillemon Mosby
Chair - Economic Growth Advisory Committee	Cr Rocky Stephen
Chair - Environment & Climate Adaptation Advisory Committee	Cr Kabay Tamu
Chair - Governance & Leadership Advisory Committee	Cr Dimas Toby
Chair - Housing, Families and Safe & Healthy Communities Advisory Committee	Cr Keith Fell

OFFICERS:

Chief Executive Officer	Mr James William
Executive Director Community Services	Mr Dawson Sailor
Executive Director Corporate Services	Ms Susanne Andres
Executive Director Engineering Services	Mr David Baldwin
Executive Director Financial Services *– left meeting at 3.00pm*	Ms Hollie Faithfull
Executive Assistant to the CEO *– left meeting at 2.20pm*	Ms Jessica Conway
Executive Assistant to the Mayor *– left meeting at 2.20pm*	Ms Trudy Lui
TSIRC Secretariat	Mr Darryl Brooks

APOLOGIES:

Deputy Mayor *– on leave*	Cr Ranetta Wosomo
Chair - Culture, Arts, Land & Heritage Advisory Committee *– prior commitment*	Cr Chelsea Aniba
Executive Director Building Services	Mr Wayne Green

A. WELCOME & QUORUM CONFIRMATION | ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS | OPENING PRAYER | OBSERVANCES

At 1.05pm, the Mayor welcomed Committee Members and staff to the meeting, noting that a quorum of members was present.

The Mayor made the following acknowledgements:
- Our Heavenly Father for his awesome wisdom, knowledge, understanding, favour and blessings throughout our lives;
- The Traditional Custodians throughout Zenadth Kes and the communities and constituents that Council serves; and
- All Elders – past, present and emerging.

The Mayor also conveyed to those members of the Torres Strait Islander community – throughout the homelands and on the Australian mainland – who may be observing Sorry Business at this time, the thoughts and prayers of the Committee.

The Mayor invited participants to observe a minute of silence for remembrance purposes, especially those going through the processes of Sorry Business.

Cr Keith Fell delivered the opening prayer.

B. NOTING OF APOLOGIES

The Mayor advised that he has received apologies for the Deputy Mayor (Cr Ranetta Wosomo) and Cr Chelsea Aniba (Chair - Culture, Arts, Land & Heritage Advisory Committee).

#SSC24-28/2024-10/B

CR STEPHEN / CR TOBY

The SARG Standing Committee accepts the apology of Cr Ranetta Wosomo and Cr Chelsea Aniba for the 25 October 2024 Standing Committee meeting.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

C. CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS

The Mayor invited attendees to table any prescribed or declarable COI matters. No COI declarations were made. The Mayor requested that Committee Members advise of any COI declarations should they arise throughout discussions.

The Mayor also invited attendees to advise of any legal matters that would prevent members from participation in today's meeting. No matters were declared.

1. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES (14 AUGUST 2024)

#SSC24-28/2024-10/1

CR TOBY / CR STEPHEN

The SARG Standing Committee confirms the Minutes of its meeting held on 14 August 2024.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

1.1. ACTION ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

The Chief Executive Officer (Mr James William) spoke to this item. The update was noted by the Standing Committee.

1.2. ACTION ITEMS FROM FORMER STRATEGIC ADVISORY REFERENCE GROUP (SARG) STANDING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Chief Executive Officer (Mr James William) spoke to this item advising that a review of these action items will be provided at the December 2024 Standing Committee meeting.

2. MAYORAL ITEMS

2.1. Council Workshop (4-14 November 2024, Cairns)

The Mayor advised that he and the Chief Executive Officer are locking in the final parts of the agenda for the November 2024 Council Workshop.

This work will assist Council to prepare strategically on how to move forward with its Advocacy Priorities post-State Government elections on 26 October 2024.

Particular sessions planned for Councillors during the upcoming Workshop will include:

- Improvements/Standardisation for Community Information Sessions across Divisions for consistent messaging on strategic matters;

- Days 1 and 2 (4-5 November 2024) will be focussed on:

  - TS&NPA ROC engagement moving forward in relation to Blue Security (water and Treaty issues)

  - Torres Strait Coalition (TSRA and TS&NPA ROC) to provide an update on regional governance/regional assembly matters, as well as the independent health review;

- LGAQ discussions (particularly Peak Services) will be held on <u>Day 4</u> to provide training on COI, confidentiality, dual roles, policy development cycles, etc. to enable Councillors to legally undertake their duties;

  > *Cr Toby recommended that LGAQ Updates/Sessions/Training/Refreshers be a standing item for each Council Workshop.*

- The Masig Statement Action Plan (including each Divisional Taskforce, funding submission to TSRA and the 90th Anniversary of the Maritime Strike Exhibition in Brisbane being organised by the Queensland Museum);

- Navigating Native Title Matters and DOGIT Responsibilities. The Council Workshop will consider a refocus around Council developing MOUs with individual PBCs for each Division to strengthen Council's strategic leadership in the region, as well as to allow Council to deliver progress in relation to the high on—ground needs and priorities for 'shovel ready' communities - particularly in relation to critical needs such as housing. In addition, such an arrangement will assist in 'empowering' local PBCs in undertaking their own role within the Division.

- Treaty Matters:

  - using the 50th Anniversary of the Torres Strait Treaty (1975-2025) as an example of self—governance/regional governance and how it should be/could be reshaped over the next 50 years

  - standardising Prior Approval Requests across the region in response to current regional priorities

  - review legacy issues associated with the Torres Strait Treaty (fishing zones, etc.)

- Transitional Action Plan (TAP) discussions, with Mr Scott Mason (CEO LG Services Group) to deliver an in—depth update (including costings, operational commitments/requirements, messaging to the community on TAP, etc.).

3. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

3.1. General Update *(verbal)*

The Chief Executive Officer (Mr James William) spoke to this item covering key issues such as:

- the November 2024 Council Workshop currently being the main focus for Council's administrative arm

- preparations are under way to brief the incoming Government on the TSIRC 11 x priorities and the challenges currently facing Council

- the Comprehensive Assets Valuation is currently underway

- the Operational Investment Plan and the Asset Investment Plan will be explored further at the November 2024 Council Workshop, including financial sustainability for Council (i.e. water losses on Badu currently costs Council $750k annually due to poor and ageing infrastructure)

- Starlink has been installed in all Divisional Offices. Cabling issues in buildings has nothing to do with Starlink and the Executive Director Corporate Services will take the matter of issues currently being experienced on Mabuiag on notice.

- Seaswift analysis has been completed and the Chief Executive Officer will be travelling to Brisbane on 28 October 2024 to have discussions with Seaswift on these matters and a further update will be provided at the November 2024 Council Workshop.

4. BUILDING SERVICES DIRECTORATE

Nil.

5. COMMUNITY SERVICES DIRECTORATE

5.1. 1st Quarter Report – Housing, Families and Safe and Healthy Communities (HFSHC) Advisory Committee

#SSC24-28/2024-10/5.1

CR TOBY / CR TAMU

The Strategic Action Reference Group (SARG) Standing Committee:

1. **notes the 1st Quarter Report submitted by the Housing, Families and Safe & Healthy Communities (HFSHC) Advisory Committee for the period July-September 2024 and endorses the report for consideration by Council; and**

2. **recommends that Council endorse the appointment of the HFSHC Advisory Committee Chairperson as Council's representative on the Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries' Animal Management Taskforce.**

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

6. CORPORATE SERVICES DIRECTORATE

6.1 Media Policy

#SSC24-28/2024-10/6.1

CR STEPHEN / CR TAMU

The Strategic Action Reference Group (SARG) Standing Committee notes the Council Media Policy.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

6.2 1st Quarter Report – Economic Growth Committee

The Executive Director Corporate Services (Ms Susanne Andres) spoke to this item. The Standing Committee noted the 1st Quarter Meeting Minutes submitted by the Economic Growth Committee.

7. ENGINEERING SERVICES DIRECTORATE

The Mayor acknowledged the ongoing work underway by the Engineering Services teams.

The Executive Director Engineering Services briefly updated the Standing Committee with the following:

- the November 2024 Council Workshop to include discussion around the Marine Infrastructure Program (including a recap on the Australian Government funding which is targeted for Saibai, Dauan and Boigu) and an update on the Coastal Hazard Adaptation Strategy;

- Water security issues indicate that 2024 will be worse than 2015 (currently there are 5 communities on Level 4 restrictions and another 2 which are very close to Level 4). In good news, the Erub Water Reservoir asset renewal work is almost complete and similar projects on St Paul's is next (or possibly already underway) and the tanks on Erub or St Paul's will be transferred to Poruma in the interim.

8. FINANCIAL SERVICES DIRECTORATE

Nil.

9. MATTERS ARISING

(a) Travel/Accommodation Logistics for November 2024 Council Workshop

The Mayor sought an update on travel and accommodation and T/A arrangements. The Chief Executive Officer will send out advice to Councillors as soon as possible on Monday (28 October 2024).

(b) Telstra Facilities

Cr Kabay Tamu requested that a formal request be made to Telstra to review its facilities across the region in view of the recent incident on Warraber. The Mayor advised that he will follow up with the TSRA as this issue rests with the Australian Government (Telstra) as a service provision matter.

(c) Garbage Trucks for Divisions

Cr Keith Fell sought an update on the roll-out of garbage trucks for the Divisions, as he has observed that the ongoing delays are impacting staff on ground as a result of them having to manually collect garbage bins.

The Executive Director Corporate Services (Ms Susanne Andres) advised that the status of the roll-out is presented in the monthly Corporate Services Information Report to Council, and the current delays are from the Gold Coast City Council who need to hold these vehicles for use as they await delivery of their new fleet.

(d) QFleet Matter

Cr Keith Fell sought an update on the QFleet matter.

The Executive Director Corporate Services (Ms Susanne Andres) advised that the Financial Services Directorate is reviewing the matter as there is currently no budget available.

(e) Councillor Leave

The Mayor advised that the Deputy Mayor will be on leave until 4 November 2024. The Mayor will be taking leave in December 2024. The Mayor also requested Committee members to advise if they are taking leave over the upcoming December/January period.

10. NEXT MEETING – 4 DECEMBER 2024 (Microsoft TEAMS)

Noted by the Standing Committee.

11. CLOSE OF MEETING & PRAYER

The Mayor thanked Standing Committee members and officers for their attendance and contributions throughout the meeting. The Mayor formally closed the meeting at 3.25pm and delivered the closing prayer.

MINUTES CONFIRMED – 4 December 2024	
……………………………………………	……………………………………………
Cr Phillemon Mosby	James William
Mayor	Chief Executive Officer
Torres Strait Island Regional Council	Torres Strait Island Regional Council
Date: 4 December 2024	Date: 4 December 2024

	STRATEGIC ACTION REFERENCE GROUP (SARG) STANDING COMMITTEE MEETING **ACTION ITEMS**	*[as at 25 October 2024]*

Agenda Item	Action	Action Area	Current Status
October 2024 Mtg AI 1.1 Action Items Update	Cr Fell requested that discussion take place on superannuation and other long service matters for Councillors.		Discussion to occur during the November 2024 Council Workshop, including an opportunity for TSIRC to make a formal submission to the Queensland Local Government Remuneration Commission.
Aug 2024 Mtg AI 1.1 Action Items Update	Chief Executive Officer to review/update the Action Items from the former Strategic Advisory Reference Group (SARG).	CEO	CEO committed to have the action items list for the former SARG Committee updated for the December 2024 Committee meeting.
Aug 2024 Mtg AI 3.3 2024 SARG Meeting Schedule	Chief Executive Officer to provide details on the budget and costings for each SARG meeting.	CEO	To be discussed during the November 2024 Council Workshop.

Agenda Item	Action	Action Area	Current Status
Feb 2024 Mtg AI 6 Committees Review	Executive Director Corporate Services to include as an attachment into the briefing paper "Committees Review" for the March 2024 Ordinary Council Meeting the table prepared by the Mayor and SARG Members following the January 2024 SARG meeting.	ED Corporate Services	Completed.
Jan 2024 Mtg AI 5 Action Items	Chief Executive Officer to provide Mayor with a copy of all action items arising from future SARG Committee meetings, as well as Trustee Council and Ordinary Council meetings within the standard 10 day deadline used for posting of draft Minutes.	CEO	Completed.
Jan 2024 Mtg AI 5 Action Items	Executive Director Corporate Services to prepare a letter to the Australian Ambassador for First Nations People (Mr Justin Mohamed) seeking support to champion TSIRC's aspirations in relation to matters such as Regional Governance, Treaty, Native Title (DOGIT), the Masig Statement and other key strategic initiatives.	ED Corporate Services	Not yet started. *(Link to AI 7 of June 2023 Mtg)*
Jan 2024 Mtg AI 8 Corporate Services: Elphinstone Matters	1. Executive Director Corporate Services to prepare a brief for the upcoming Economic Growth Committee Meeting which includes the original business case for Elphinstone. 2. Executive Director Corporate Services to prepare a brief for the February 2024 Ordinary Council Meeting providing Council with an update on the Elphinstone asset.	ED Corporate Services	1. Postponed. Unable to be discussed at Committee meeting due to time constraints 2. No update. The Elphinstone matter sits with the CEO.

Jan 2024 Mtg AI 13 Corporate Services: Enterprise Divestment	Executive Director Corporate Services (in consultation with the Economic Growth Committee) to prepare a brief for the February 2024 Ordinary Council Meeting in relation to Council's Enterprise Divestment Policy.	ED Corporate Services	Matter held over for incoming Council. Committee has not yet discussed. Waiting for Trustee Policy to be finalised
Jan 2024 Mtg AI 19 Treaty Management Issues	Chief Executive Officer to prepare communication with DFAT's Treaty Liaison Office to formalise TSIRC concerns in relation to Treaty issues, specifically the current situation on Saibai Island and other matters.	CEO	
Jun 2023 Mtg AI 7 Matters Arising from May 2023 Workshop	1. 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. 2. 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.	1. ED Corporate Services 2. CEO	1. To be completed. Correspondence to now focus on self-determination for Torres Strait Islander people, as well as Treaty issues, the Masig Statement and native title matters. *Refer AI 5 of Jan 2024 Mtg.* 2. Outstanding.

| 7 Mar 2023 Mtg

AI 8

General/Other Business | (1) Write to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade regarding the following matters:
    • Movement under the treaty
    • Unauthorised visits.
    • Overstayers
    • Policy and Border Force concerns.

(2) Write to Premier Anastasia Palaszczuk regarding the Joint Ministerial Advisory Committee for the One Boat Regional Governance.

(3) Write to the Torres Strait Regional Authority regarding
    • TSIRC objection to the establishment of the Regional Infrastructure Advisory Committee (RIAC).
    • Follow-up to Major Infrastructure Program MIP 7 list that was provided approximately 18 months ago. | CEO / ED Corporate Services | CEO advised Jan 2024 SARG Mtg that he will review the status of actioning on these issues. |

REGIONAL AUTONOMY - 18 X MONTHS TRANSITION READY PLAN

Kapu Kut Councillor Colleagues (TeamTSIRC),

I trust you've all had an awesome and productive day.

Here's some light reading and reflection, please feel free to critic on this document and welcome to provide feedback.

Please be advise that this document will be going to the December SARG Meeting next week Wednesday 4th December 2024 prior to come to full Council Ordinary Meeting in December 2024.

I originally circulated this document on Monday 4th November 2024 prior to our joint regional leaders forum earlier in the month but have not receive feedback back to date.

In terms of the Regional Autonomy aspiration (ubi) please consider the following questions when reviewing this document.

- Do you have knowledge about Regional Autonomy?

- Have you been informed about the Regional Autonomy?

- Can you explain Regional Autonomy to your community and community stakeholders?

- Can you discuss the Regional autonomy and link it back to the Maritime Strike and the First Islander Councillors Conferences and to the Masig Statement?

- Do you know what the Regional Autonomy (Assembly) structure looks like?

- How was the decision make made of the choice of the structure?

- Do you know where the structure will sit under? Which legislation?

- Do you know why that particularly legislations was chosen?

- Do you know how members that will be elected into the Regional Assembly body?

- Do you know how the members are going to be elected?

- Do you know what will change in the eligibility to for will be compared to the current process?

- Do you know why this long standing aspiration have not been achieved or progressed?

Wa sar job and mandate blo TSRA for lead this agenda por gabmarn, but youmi mus make sure we sabe wanem all tok about especially make sure youmi pamle lor pless sabe wanem this move e about, bambai we late akami.

The good book e speak youmi lor Habakkuk 2:2 | The Lord answered me and said, "Write the **vision** and **make** it **plain** upon **tablets**, that **he** may run that readeth it.

Youmi as leaders blo pless youmi nations must gad vision, mus writeh clearer path for youmi people so all look, read and run with it.

If you've answered no to any of the above question then please make sure we capture this inside of the above 18 x months action plan.

Mina exciting time and great season ahead of youmi, youmi born for this season for make are difference.

Youmi one team who achieves together.

Koema Eso,

MM
Cr. Phillemon Mosby | Mayor

One Boat Regional Governance discussion

Nov 3 and 4, 2024

Meeting purpose

For TS Mayors and TSRA Chair to agree on the best way to secure commitment from the Queensland Crisafulli government in support of One Boat regional governance.

Where are we now?

By the end of 2024 there will have been three significant elections impacting on the people of the Torres Strait – local government, Queensland government and TSRA. This series of elections means that there are new representatives in each body, therefore new relationships need to be established. Also, the One Boat Regional Governance strategy needs to be shared with State government counterparts.

At this point in time, the people of the Torres Strait have a clear vision for regional governance and self-determination. It is expressed by the Masig Statement. Presenting the Masig Statement to Premier Crisafulli and his Ministerial colleagues is also an opportunity to invite the Queensland government to adopt a 'Look, libsten and adapt' approach to working with the people the Torres Strait and to understand that the Masig Statement is the product of many generations of community-based governance, eg 2018 TSRA Regional Assembly Transition Plan

While Commonwealth and State governments have made commitments to One Boat Regional Governance in the past, the Crisafulli government has an opportunity to accelerate regional governance, *IF* it chooses to do so.

The commitments of the Crisafulli government in its first 100 days can be found here: https://online.lnp.org.au/first-one-hundred-days.

Where do we want to be by the end of November 4th/5th meeting of TS representatives?

To have:

1. A plan to secure Queensland government commitment, engagement and resources for a "One Boat" Regional governance action plan (see draft below).
2. Reached agreement on the five key messages that will help the Crisafulli government understand why a One Boat Regional Governance is the best option for the unique context of the Torres Strait region and people.
3. Developed an 18-month action plan setting out the actions that will help progress are One Boat governance including the roles of local, regional and state bodies and the contributions they will make.
4. Agreed who is best placed to drive the relationship building discussions with the new Premier and Ministers.

This 18-x plan would need to work collaboratively with all key parties in the timeline in accordance with the projects Terms of Reference (TOR) would need to be developed and signed by both the State and Commonwealth Government.

Regarding the Commonwealth we would need to be mindful of the upcoming Commonwealth Election (TBC) as this will significantly determine how our proposed timeline and project will operate.

The Transition Action Plan would need to be developed through phase. Some suggested first steps that can be discussed amongst Regional Assembly Reform Committee members.

Proposed 18 x month Action Plan

The first 9 x months stage will inquire into the report on appropriate governance arrangements for the TS&NPA region.		
The first 9 x months will be from January 2025 – September 2025.			
The RARC will consider and make recommendation on sustainable and robust governance arrangement that:		
Build leadership momentum and consensus for Regional Autonomy Agenda.	1	Interim Regional Assembly Reform Committee (RARC) to regroup and have a refresher session on past dialogues, engagement and reports. Review all the work commissioned to date (there is a lot of work) to pick items for workshopping. It is suggested that we work backwards (i.e., what are we wanting to achieve, is it feasible, would the community support it and what could it look like?). RARC would workshop ideas and decide on the best structure along with potential other contingencies remembering the concept would need to be accepted by Community and both Cwth & State Parliament.	Monday 4th & Tuesday 5th November 2024 (TS NPA ROC) Wednesday 19th November 2024 (TSRA) Board Meeting May 2025 Regional Leaders Forum Coincide with TSIRC Workshop in Cairns

	2	Establish Regional Governance Reform Committee (RARC)	Consult & Develop ToR for RGRC and seek endorsement Tuesday 5th November 2024 (TSI&NPA ROC) Draft RGRC ToR to be tabled for endorsement. Wednesday 19th November 2024 (TSRA) Board Meeting RGRC formalise TOR December 2024 | January 2025 RGRC confirm Community Engagement schedule 2025. By end of Jan 2025
	3	RGRC attain legal advice in governance | TSRA Lead.	Monday 30th January 2025. (TSRA) Monday 19th May 2025 Regional Leaders Forum Coincide with TSIRC Workshop in Cairns
Engage with relevant parliamentary committee ascertain support and next step. Now (ASAP)	1	RARC to engage with the relevant State and Federal Ministers. A letter needs to be sent reinstating the regions unmet long-standing aspiration to	Letter to be sent by TSRA on behalf of the RARC by 30th December 2024. Letter to flag the need to establish a parliamentary committee be sent to the responsible ministers at both state and commonwealth.

		Australia Prime Minister and Qld Premier. LNP Member for Cook David Kempton MP Minister for ATSI Fiona Simpson MP ALP QLD Senator Senator Nita Green MP Indigenous Affairs Minister Malarndirri McCarthy MP LNP Member for Leichhardt Warren Entsch MP	Interim Parliamentary Committee established by Monday 19th May 2025. Familiarize bipartisan supports that have been obtain in the past.
	2	Engage opposition Government Support. State ALP Federal LNP	Letter to be sent by TSRA on behalf of the RARC by 30th December 2024.
	3	RARC confirm engagement schedule with Parliamentary Committee	By the first TSRA Board Meeting

Consider and make recommendation on sustainable and robust governance arrangement that	1	Identify and unpack what structure was recommended or discussed by previous leadership to be lobbied with Government? What were recommended to be kept as well as to be changed and why? Identify and determine what support we are seeking from either State or Fed's or both.	RARC to develop standard presentation for each LG's to engage with their respective Councils and consitutes for conslutation and awareness. By done by Janurary 2025. Community survey to be circulated. Market to address outcomes from the community survey.
	2	RARC to re-engage with regional stakeholders and community to inform them of the proposed changes. RARC how do we bring people onto this boat? How do we re-kindled the flame, the passion and aspiration? How do we keep previous membership of leadership part of this journey?	RARC to host Regional Leaders Forums RARC to strategies to gain mainland islanders suppport. Forum in May 2025. RARC to engage with Masig Statment Divisional Taskforce.
	3	RARC to engage with Parliamentary committee	RARC to engage with State Ministers. RARC to engage with Cwth Ministers and Oppisition.

Reduce administrative layers and processes across Local, State and Federal government.	1	Establish partnership between TSI Coalition & State Government/Federal Government Department, NGO's	Monday 4th Nov 2024 | 1st Mtg 30th January 2024 | 2nd Mtg Mtg RGRC meet with Heads of State/Feds Depts 20-30th May 2025 | 3rd Mtg Elected Members Workshop
	2	Service agreement (sa) validation/reporting on progress of KPI of SA	Friday 25th July 2025 RGRC to meet with the relevant ministers/DG to review and propose a new service agreement.
	3	Government Service Audit with State/Commonwealth	Thursday 1st May – 31st July 2025 Identify what services and programs can be delivered by the community controlled (NGO).
Maximize resources directed to grassroots service delivery and essential to life infrastructure.	1	Identify current regional projects/service providers (audit)	TS Coalition to under Regional Service Provider Audits.
	2	Review MIP and implement improvement plan	TSRA | RIAC to review current funding agreement / co-contribution from State/Feds. Each entity to report on lesion learnt
	3	Establish and operate RIAC	

Ensure that models considered cede greater autonomy of government to the people of the Torres Strait region in determining governance, policy, administration and funding priorities in the region.	1	Identify what & how the model considered cede greater autonomy	Friday 23rd August 2025 8thAnniversary First Island Councillors Conference
	2	Develop leadership community awareness/education resources/session	TSRA lead /facilitated by RARC Members Janurary 2025
	3	Create leadership forums/circle/consultative committee	5 x Yarning Session/Circle | Cluster Based have at least one before May 2025 but have at least 2 x per year.

The second 9 x months stage of the Regional Governance Reform Committee.			
Identify and recommend changes to federal and statement legislations.	1	Engage constitutional lawyers to review previous and current work.	
	2	Identify what changes need to occur with the state/federal legislation.	
	3	Develop joint deputation schedule and engagement with the relevant ministers.	
Recommend machinery of government required to establish the Torres Strait Governance model.	1	Torres Strait Coalition to have clearer	
	2		
	3		
Identify resources for the transition and functioning of the recommended Torres Strait Governance.	1		
	2		
	3		
	1		

The Operational path to the recommended Torres Strait Governance model.			
	2		
	3		

Notes

That the Queensland Government resources and engage in an 18 x months "One Boat" Regional governance Reform Committee (RGRC). The RGRC is to undertake the inquiry in two stages. The first 9 x months stage will familiarise and refresh the previous report on appropriate governance agreement for the Torres Strait & Northern region and the second 9 x months will be to dialogue and implement the transition plan in partnership with Government.

The regional assembly is assembling one Government and mapping out the schedule of transition to an electorate and finally territory. Progressing to have one regional statutory body of government with local, state and commonwealth powers, functions and resources conferred on to it.

Establish a New Government in the form of a Special Legislative Regional Assembly with both Federal and State powers, function and resources concurred upon it to administer State and Commonwealth Policies, Program and Services.

At the 2014 Leaders Forums the Prime Minister had the ability to confer State and Federal Departmental Functions to further the Social, Economic or Cultural Development under 124A Sub Section 1 of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Act 2005 upon the Torres Strait Regional Authority.

Alignment of relevant Commonwealth authority including Torres Strait Treaty. The Federal Minister, in writing, approves their performance by the TSR of a function expressly conferred on the TSRA by law of a State or internal Territory Section 142 B Aboriginal and Torres Strait Act 2005. e.g. Torres Strait Treaty interdepartmental Committee chaired by TSRA. All Public Sector Funding Line appropriation, Grant Subside and base funding to vested in the new entity. State and Federal funding and resources to be divested in the administration of this body along with all savings from elimination of duplications.

Aim to establish the Body leading up to being completed for 2027 when we celebrate 90 years of the First Island Councillors conference and before the next Local Government Election in 2028.

DIRECTORATE: Office of the CEO
AUTHOR: Interim Executive Advisor to the CEO

TSIRC ADVOCACY FRAMEWORK

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION:

The Standing Committee:

- **agrees to review and provide feedback on Council's Advocacy Framework;**
- **endorses the Advocacy Framework for implementation into Council operations; and**
- **determine whether the Framework is to be included in Council meeting papers.**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

An Advocacy Capability Plan was initiated by Council to improve Council's overall approach to advocacy, driver accountability and outcomes such as an increase in funding to improve Council's revenue position and overall financial sustainability.

Part of the capability plan was to develop an Advocacy Framework that provides Council with the 'how' we are going to advocate. This framework will cover off on the various approaches to advocacy, covering how we will advocate our Top 11 strategic priorities as well as our operational advocacy. This will identify roles and responsibilities, treatment strategies for emerging issues and the tools and resources available to progress our advocacy agenda. This framework is not a static document, it will continue to be developed and changed over time.

Interested Parties/Consultation:

- Council Executive Team

Background / Previous Standing Committee Consideration:

In the August 2024 meeting, SARG determined that Council's Advocacy Policy should be supported by an Advocacy Framework to strengthen and formalise Council's approach to advocacy. The Advocacy Policy was drafted and submitted for the October 2024 Council Meeting. The policy was unanimously resolved and adopted at that same meeting.

The Framework has now been developed to outline the process by which Council undertakes its advocacy activities, aligned to our aspirational vision of 'Advancing our unique region to be Sustainable, Prosperous and Liveable for all of our Communities', which aligns to the Masig Statement.

The framework has been developed to ensure that our advocacy efforts generate support for projects and policies that deliver the social, health, cultural, infrastructure, education and transport outcomes that our community needs and deserves.

The framework provides a method for assessing advocacy issues and opportunities in a way that is community-driven, evidence based, realistic, and demonstrates consideration for the long-term risk and sustainability of Council, and most importantly our community's health, wellbeing and resilience.

Importantly, the framework is aligned to the three core principles adopted in the Advocacy Policy, evidence-based, transparent and pro-active.

COMPLIANCE / CONSIDERATIONS:

Statutory:	• *N/A*
Budgetary:	Advocacy Manager role will have a direct budget impact that needs to be considered.
Policy:	TSIRC Advocacy Policy
Legal:	N/A
Risk / Risk Mitigation:	
Links to Strategic Plans:	TSIRC Corporate Plan • People Bisnis - Pipol • Sustainability Bisnis - Mekem las long • Prosperity Bisnis – Pruitpul
Masig Statement:	Aligns to the Masig Statement
Advisory Committee Consultation:	*N/A*
Timelines:	

Other Comments:
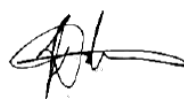
N/A

Recommended: Approved:

Jessica Buxton

Jessica Buxton   James William
Interim Executive Advisor to the CEO   Chief Executive Officer

ATTACHMENTS:

A – Draft Advocacy Framework

Advocacy Framework

Purpose

The purpose of this Framework is to outline the process by which Torres Strait Island Regional Council (Council) undertakes its advocacy activities, aligned to our aspirational vision of 'Advancing our unique region to be Sustainable, Prosperous and Liveable for all of our Communities', which aligns to the Masig statement.
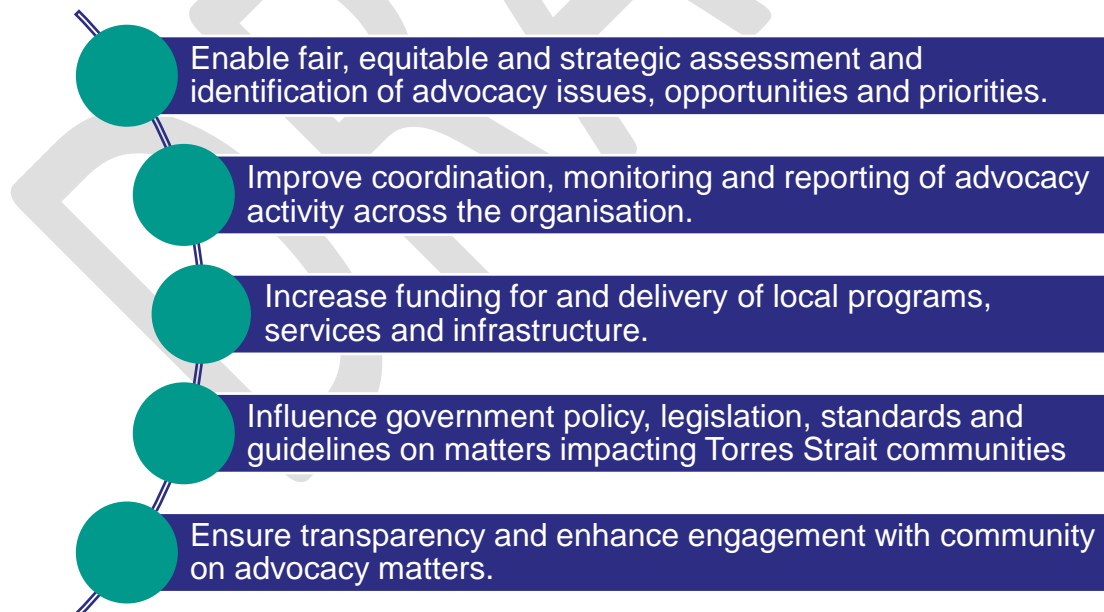
The framework has been developed to ensure that our advocacy efforts generate support for projects and policies that deliver the social, health, cultural, infrastructure, education and transport outcomes that our community needs and deserves.

The framework provides a method for assessing advocacy issues and opportunities in a way that is community-driven, evidence based, realistic, and demonstrates consideration for the long-term risk and sustainability of Council, and most importantly our community's health, wellbeing and resilience.

The Framework intends to ensure the Local Government Principles are considered and adhered to when making decisions about advocacy efforts, whilst being leveraged to influence and inform decision makers.

Objective

The objective of the Framework is to enable council to strengthen the planning, coordination and efficiency of our advocacy efforts, in order to maximise opportunities for success and to deliver the best possible outcomes for our communities within the Torres Strait. This is achieved through the following goals.

Enable fair, equitable and strategic assessment and identification of advocacy issues, opportunities and priorities.

Improve coordination, monitoring and reporting of advocacy activity across the organisation.

Increase funding for and delivery of local programs, services and infrastructure.

Influence government policy, legislation, standards and guidelines on matters impacting Torres Strait communities

Ensure transparency and enhance engagement with community on advocacy matters.

Principles

This framework is aligned to the principles set out in Council's Advocacy Policy, detailed below.

- Evidence-based - Council will only discuss and agree to advocacy priorities following extensive research and analysis of the issue/s.

- Transparency - Council will inform the community on agreed advocacy priorities to raise awareness of local issues.
- Pro-active - Council is taking a pro-active approach to influence policy making on behalf of the community.

Practically, these three core elements can be reflected by supporting behaviours, ensuring we uphold and adhere to these guiding principles in all our advocacy activities.

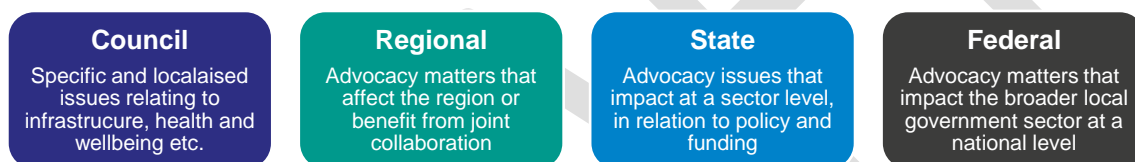| Evidence based	Transparent	Pro-active
• Our advocacy priorities reflect the needs, aspirations and expectations of our community • Our advocacy priorities are supported by research and data, and aligned to existing policies and strategies • We will represent our communities most pressing needs and areas of disadvantage whilst also embracing opportunities that will deliver the greatest benefit to a specific location • Our advocacy priorities are linked to one or more of Council's strategic objectives • We advocate with a clear set of priorities and with a strong message that positions us as a known and trusted council, and a partner that other agencies and government want to work with.	• We are open and transparent about our advocacy objectives and strategic priorities • We will ensure our processes and decisions are open and pro-actively shared with all stakeholders,enabling our community to understand and support our advocacy efforts • We will have clarity of purpose through identifying clear community needs, which align to our Vision • We will regularly communicate the ongoing activities and outcomes of our advocacy efforts to our community and other stakeholders • We will celebrate our advocacy successes and acknowledge contributions where it is due.	• We take a strategic and coordinated approach, that values innovation and seeks to address multiple issues at once • We will work collaboratively with partners, individuals and organisations, whose interests and capabilities support our organisational objectives • We are apolitical in our advocacy, and work with all sides of politics to achieve strong outcomes for the community • We will ensure our advocacy is flexible and responsive to emerging issues and stakeholder feedback. • We will adjust strategies as new information arises, by listening to, and addressing, the concerns of our community and key stakeholders. • We will ensure our advocacy remains relevant, timely and impactful.

How we advocate

Broadly, there are several ways on how we advocate to achieve outcomes for council and the communities we represent. These include but are not limited to the following activities:

- Making representations to State and Federal Ministers, local Members of Parliament (MPs), government agencies, and election candidates.
- Promoting local services and programs requiring external funding through election periods, budget processes, grant funding rounds etc.
- Collecting and identifying local level data to articulate service provision and infrastructure gaps.
- Seek the provision of State and Federal programs locally e.g. mental health services and community health programs.
- Seek external funding opportunities to fast-track delivery of community outcomes.
- Facilitate community engagement activities to better understand what is important to our local communities.

- Build relationships and develop partnerships with other public, private and non-for-profit organisations and stakeholders to deliver priority projects and initiatives.
- Participate in joint advocacy campaigns with strategically aligned partners, including peak bodies, regional organisations and those councils that have similar challenges and/or geographical context.
- Make submissions to inquiries and other forums to influence policy, legislation, standards and guidelines e.g. Council submission into the Federal Governments inquiry into Local Government Sustainability.
- Development of advocacy campaigns and communications materials to support our efforts.
- Elevate our advocacy priorities and amplify the concerns of our community through the media and other channels.

Networks and levels of engagement

Council advocates individually as a council, as well as through joint advocacy at a regional i.e. Far North Queensland Region of Councils (FNQROC), state i.e. Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ) and national i.e. Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) level. Council also undertakes joint advocacy through organisations with common interests and priorities i.e. Torres Cape Indigenous Council Alliance (TCICA).

Council	**Regional**	**State**	**Federal**
Specific and localaised issues relating to infrastrucure, health and wellbeing etc.	Advocacy matters that affect the region or benefit from joint collaboration	Advocacy issues that impact at a sector level, in relation to policy and funding	Advocacy matters that impact the broader local government sector at a national level

Individual advocacy enables Council to represent issues of concern that are specific to our region and community, as well as positioning ourselves effectively in a competitive funding environment. There can be instances where an issue impacts councils at a regional or state level, but council determines to advocate independently due to the competitive nature of certain funding rounds. Noting this, council may also participate in the broader advocacy campaign of that issue, to both leverage the voice of the many as well as amplify the message using impact statements, stories and case studies specific to the Torres Strait.

Joint advocacy involves developing relationships and building partnerships around a shared concern, common interest or opportunity, enabling the delivery of a stronger message, potential access to a bigger pool of advocacy resources and subject matter experts, and improves cut-through with key decision-makers.

- At a regional level this generally means working collaboratively with councils situated in FNQ through TCICA, FNQROC along with the LGAQs Indigenous Leaders Forum (ILF) which is focused specifically on strengthening the advocacy position of First Nations councils across the state. This enables TSIRC to increase its advocacy output through a broader network, creating effective and efficient advocacy campaigns on agreed regional positions and priorities.
- At a state level, advocacy is typically aimed at the Queensland State Government and TSIRC is generally providing a supporting advocacy role through the membership with LGAQ. This will be through providing impact statements, case studies, testimonials, support letters and working collaboratively with the state on the broader advocacy agenda for local government. Examples of advocacy at a state level include waste management, water security, housing etc.

- At a national level, advocacy campaigns typically are those that are influencing the federal government in relation to legislative and funding challenges. Formed alliances and advocacy opportunities at a national level support outcomes and investment in national policy and infrastructure.

> *The state and national campaign restoring Federal Assistance Grants to 1% of total taxation revenue is an example of a state and regional led advocacy campaign, whilst being a strategic advocacy priority for the Torres Strait (Priority 5). In general, council will provide a 'supporting advocacy role' through providing case studies and examples of cost shifting and impacts to community. Noting this, the allocation methodology is led by the state and council is typically competing with Queensland councils for a larger share of the funds, and therefore needing to advocate as an individual council in conjunction with the broader campaign.*

Generally, with joint advocacy, efforts are led by the peak bodies or regional organisations and council will play a supporting role. However, Council may also choose to establish and lead joint advocacy on issues of interest, such as Priority 6 Regional Governance, where several councils hold mutual concern and are not adequately supported by an existing peak body or other joint advocacy effort.

The decision to advocate individually or collectively through coalitions should consider:

- the relevance of the issue or opportunity at regional, state or federal levels
- the alignment of priorities with prospective partners and allies
- efficiency and effectiveness (influence and resources of advocacy partners)
- increased political interest through an activated broad base of local governments
- The below illustrates our advocacy partners at a local, regional, state and federal level (this list is not exhaustive). These partners can also be targets of advocacy campaigns, depending on the issue.

Local	Regional	State	Federal
• Local businesses • Residents and community groups • Prescribed Body Corporates (PBCs) • Mura Kosker Sorority Ltd • Meriba Ged Ngalpun Mab • GBK • Various Community groups – ie Youth; Women; Men; Elder Group; Church; Sporting Teams	• Torres Cape Indigenous Council Alliance • Far North Qld Region Of Councils • Education Qld – Tagai Campus • Qld Health – Tropical Public Health Unit • Qld Health – Torres & Cape Health Hospital Services • Torres Shire Council • Northern Peninsula Area Regional Council	• Local MPs, Minister and Premier • Local Government Association of Qld • Indigenous Leaders Forum • Transport Main Roads • Dept. Local Government • Dept. Environment & Science • Qld Reconstruction Authority • Qld Treasury Corporation • Qld Investment Corporation • Dept. of Treaty, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Communities and the Arts. • Health & Wellbeing Qld • Dept of State Library Qld • Dept of Tourism Innovation & Sport • Dept of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forrestry • Qld Biosecurity • Dept. of Housing	• Local MPs, Minster and Prime Minister • Torres Strait Regional Authority • Australian Local Government Association • National Disaster & Recovery Agency • National Indigenous Australians Agency • Dept. of Home Affairs • Dept. of Defence Australian Army • Dept of Communities, Housing and Digital Economy • DATSIPD • Australia Border Force • Dept of Education (Commonwealth) • Dept of Health (Commonwealth) • Australia Post • Services Australia

Roles and responsibilities

There are four essential tools used when undertaking effective advocacy. These are leveraged and work together in a coordinated manner to plan, deliver, evaluate and refresh our advocacy priorities, approaches and tactics. It is important to understand the role and responsibilities of each part of the organisation in relation to advocacy.

	Role	Responsibility
Research & Policy Development	- Planning for the long-term need and impact on community and environment - Building an evidence base of what is needed and the potential outcomes - Assessing the state & federal political landscapes	**Coordination & facilitation** - ELT member aligned to the advocacy priority - Advocacy Manager **Subject matter expertise** - Managers - Council officers
Community & Partner Engagement	- Understanding community sentiment - Community engagement, activation and campaign collaboration with key stakeholders - Developing partnerships with aligned organisations, sharing of resources and information	**Planning & facilitation** - Council officers - Advocacy Manager **Engagement** - Mayor, Councillors & CEO - ELT - Advocacy Manager - Council Officers
Government Relations	- Key decision-makers and government engagement - Understanding priorities and concerns of both sides - Building productive and strong relationships over the long term	**Ministers, Shadow Ministers & Director Generals** - Mayor, Councillors & CEO - ELT - Advocacy Manager **Government agencies** - CEO/ELT - Advocacy Manager - Managers - Council officers
Media & Communications	- Building & delivering communication campaigns - Amplifying messaging through media channels - Monitoring and influencing public conversation - Managing brand and reputation	**Planning & facilitation** - Communications - Advocacy Manager **Spokespeople** - Mayor, Councillors & CEO

Our approach to advocacy

Advocacy is a changing landscape, and therefore our approach needs to be strategic, agile and responsive due to the largely political nature of parties that we are advocating to. Our approach needs to:

1. not only have a voice, but a voice with impact where it is most needed.
2. work collaboratively with all levels of Government as well as local community groups and representative bodies.
3. recognise where the elected leadership of Council can offer the most significant advantages and recognise instances where involvement from other organisations might provide greater benefits. In these instances, our role may shift towards supporting and collaborating with these entities.

Our approach to setting advocacy priorities, regardless of category, will follow the advocacy cycle of; **Identify, Research, Prioritise, Advocate, Evaluate**. This will allow us to set key directions that will influence and direct our approach to advocacy, while strengthening our effectiveness at a community and organisation level. Our strategy is underpinned by our 5 Year Corporate Plan and annual Advocacy Action Plan. This ensures that community and key stakeholders are at the heart of our advocacy.
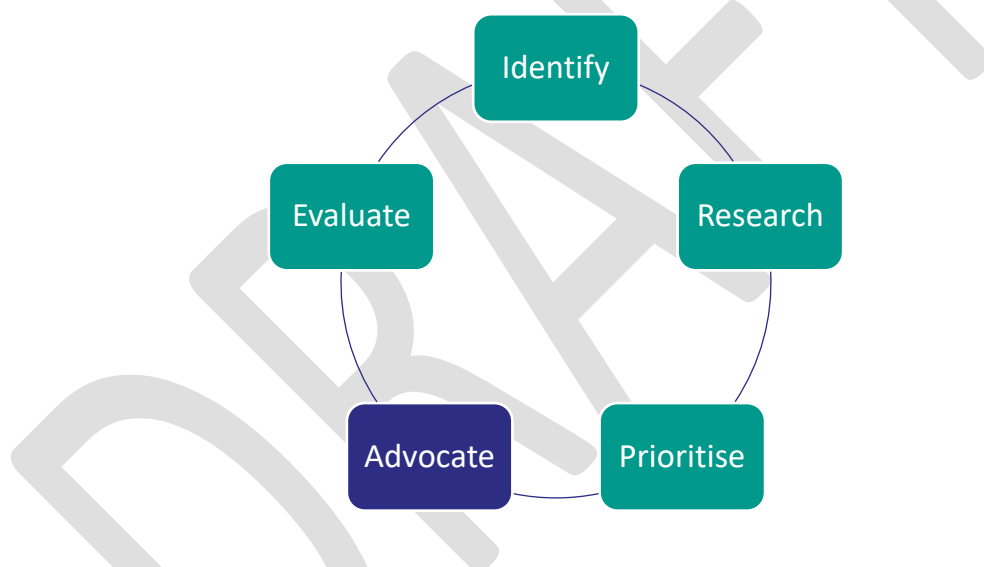
Advocacy has been defined into the following two categories.

1. Strategic Advocacy

These are our overarching strategic priorities that form council's main advocacy agenda. Twice yearly, during formal councillor workshops, our advocacy agenda will be discussed and prioritised. The Advocacy Process Cycle is followed and top strategic priorities are identified and developed into Council's annual Advocacy Action Plan.

2. Operational Advocacy

There are two types of operational advocacy, these are 'New and Emerging Issues and Opportunities' and 'Out of Session and/or Urgent Advocacy Requests'.

a) New and emerging issues and opportunities

At any time, an advocacy opportunity or issue can be identified by various stakeholders including community members, elected representatives, council officers, external agencies

such as a government department and other related stakeholders including organisations such as FNQROC, TCICA or another local government.

These matters will follow the Advocacy Process Cycle, however they are to be tabled with the Strategic Action Reference Group (SARG) following the 'Identify' stage, prior to any significant resource output is expanded as an initial Stage gate 1 decision making point. This ensures that operationally council are working cohesively with councils' strategic vision and does not unintentionally deviate time and resources into activities not endorsed by council.

Stage Gate 1 Decision
SARG to determine if Advocacy matter is progressed.

The 'identify' stage will include providing a preliminary New/Emerging Advocacy Quick Request Form (Annex A) which addresses the initial advocacy assessment criteria. This report will be prepared by the relevant business unit, aligned to the advocacy item and submitted to the CEO for inclusion on the SARG agenda.

When these matters are discussed at SARG, a decision will be made whether to continue to pursue, through the research stage and can be put on the upcoming councillor workshop agenda for further discussion and decision. If the matter is deemed to need advocacy support sooner, SARG can determine whether the matter should go before a council meeting for resolution or whether a special meeting is needed for determination (depending on urgency).

b) Out of session and urgent advocacy requests

On occasion there will be matters that arise that are generally operational and simple advocacy requests or requiring an urgent response. Typically, these advocacy requests need council to providing a supporting role, as opposed to a leading role. Examples of these types of advocacy matters may include;

- Letters of support for community or local representative groups that are needed within a tight deadline.
- Advocacy support to a representative organisation such as TCICA, LGAQ, FNQROC etc where the matter is deemed urgent and an immediate response is required by council.

In this instance that these types of matters meet the below criteria, the CEO can authorise minor advocacy support in conjunction with the Mayor, with all councillors to be notified via email at earliest convenience. This could be in the form of letters of support, video testimonial or approved quotes by council.

1. The request directly aligns to Council's 5 Year Corporate Plan and annual Advocacy Action Plan.
2. The request does not require any unbudgeted funds or resources to support the matter.

These types of requests require the New/Emerging Advocacy Quick Request Form (Annex A) to be completed.

TSIRC Advocacy Process Cycle
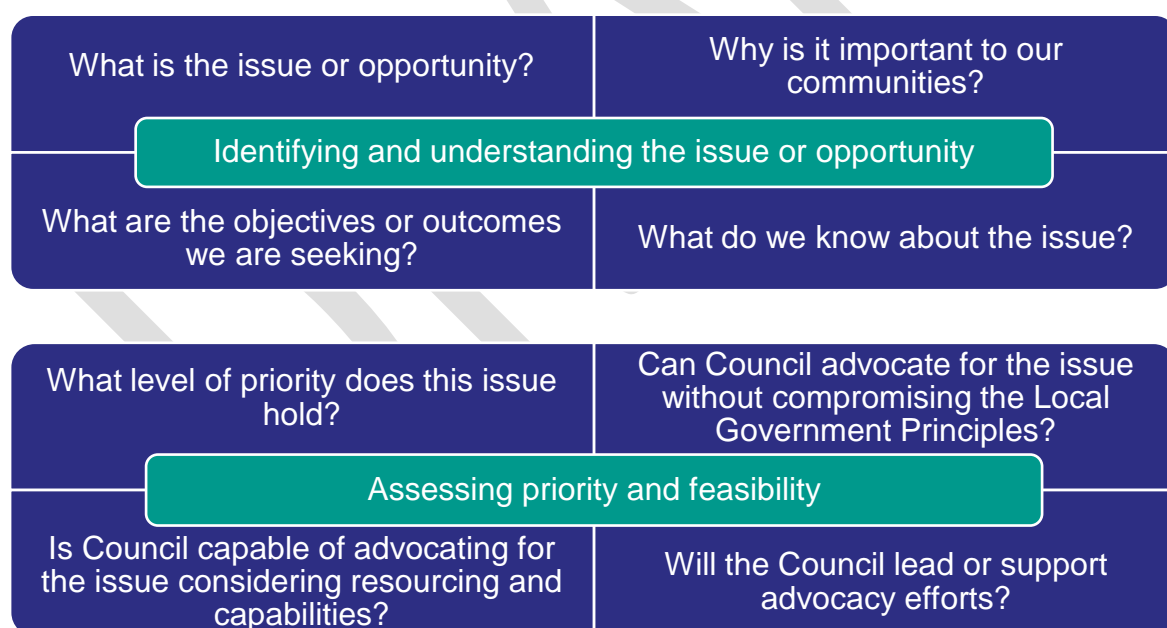
Advocacy Identification
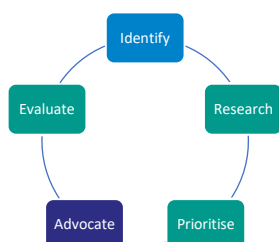
In this step, the issues that need to be advocated to different levels of government or other stakeholders will be identified. The identification process involves identifying current and emerging opportunities, trends and issues.

In determining if Council should establish an advocacy position on a particular issue (and its relative priority), a range of matters will be considered including how significant the impact of the issue is on the community, the impact and integration of a proposed advocacy position on existing policy, positions and Advocacy Action Plan, and the relevance of the issue to Council's Corporate Plan and other strategic plans.

There are two main themes in the identifying stage;

- Identifying and understanding the issue or opportunity
- Assessing priority and feasibility

The following questions help in evaluating and determining the appropriateness, importance, and feasibility of advocacy efforts by Council. The questions guide the process by identifying and understanding the issue or opportunity and assessing priority and feasibility. This ensures a thorough and strategic approach to advocacy, aligning efforts with Council's advocacy principles and capacity to support, while addressing community needs.

What is the issue or opportunity?	Why is it important to our communities?
Identifying and understanding the issue or opportunity	
What are the objectives or outcomes we are seeking?	What do we know about the issue?

What level of priority does this issue hold?	Can Council advocate for the issue without compromising the Local Government Principles?
Assessing priority and feasibility	
Is Council capable of advocating for the issue considering resourcing and capabilities?	Will the Council lead or support advocacy efforts?

For the matter to be progressed, New/Emerging Advocacy Quick Request Form (Annex A) will need to be completed and submitted to the CEO to be tabled at SARG, as part of the normal meeting cycle.
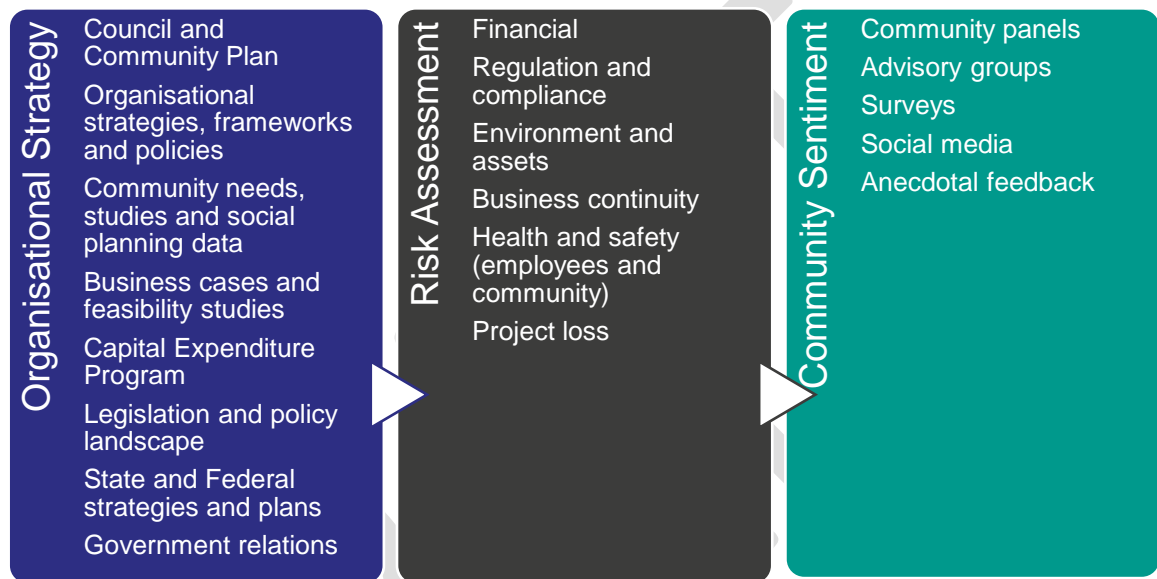
Advocacy Research
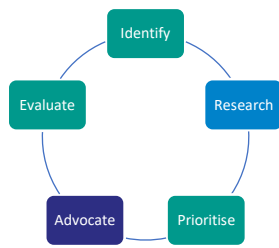
Our advocacy priorities are informed by a range of factors, including our existing strategies and the evidence and data underpinning them.

Following endorsement by SARG to progress an advocacy matter, the Corporate Services division will undertake a comprehensive assessment and prepare a draft advocacy position paper.

There are several strategic inputs that should be considered when undertaking an assessment on an advocacy matter. These include;

Organisational Strategy	Risk Assessment	Community Sentiment
Council and Community Plan	Financial	Community panels
Organisational strategies, frameworks and policies	Regulation and compliance	Advisory groups
Community needs, studies and social planning data	Environment and assets	Surveys
Business cases and feasibility studies	Business continuity	Social media
Capital Expenditure Program	Health and safety (employees and community)	Anecdotal feedback
Legislation and policy landscape	Project loss	
State and Federal strategies and plans		
Government relations		

Depending on the complexity, the assessment may result in a detailed business case, which may include feasibility, investment logic mapping, options analysis, community impact statements, community consultation, surveys, financial considerations, risk assessments etc.

Based on the assessment, Council Officers will draft an advocacy position paper and a recommendation on the Council's advocacy position will be made. The draft advocacy position paper will include a holistic consideration of the issue, including implications for Council, and as a minimum should clearly articulate:

- The issue/problem/opportunity and its relevance to the Torres Strait Islands communities
- The proposed solution/action required (based on the evidence) and how that addresses the issue/problem/opportunity
- The third party (Federal Government, Queensland Government, Other) Council is seeking support from, and the particular action sought (policy, investment or service)
- The level of Council support to be provided as part of the overall investment or services delivery

This paper would be tabled at a council meeting for discussion and resolution and could be determined to be debated at the next Councillor Workshop session.

Advocacy Prioritisation

Advocacy priorities expressly state our primary 'ask', the key 'requests and demands' that we will voice to government for the duration of councillors' terms. This approach helps us identify gaps, necessary actions, and areas requiring more extensive research and community engagement for effective advocacy on any issue.

These priorities change from year to year, shaped by community needs, the political climate and shifts in importance in the local and regional environment.

Events like natural disasters, public health crises, leadership changes, cabinet shuffles and new ministerial appointments can influence these changes.

This proactive approach ensures that Council continues to improve our inclusiveness, liveability, sustainability, culture, and governance over the long term.

There are several key questions we need to consider when determining our strategic advocacy priorities, as well as emerging and new advocacy opportunities and issues.

- Does it align with our 5 Year Corporate Plan and our community aspiration's?
- Does it contribute to addressing significant risks or challenges faced by Council or our community?
- Is there research and evidence to support the focus on the priority area?
- Is there alignment with political cycles and priorities of other levels of government?
- Is there a likelihood of securing funding or support?

The below criteria will be used to determine prioritisation, inline with the principles outlined in this framework and is dynamic to allow for shifts in community needs and pollical environments. This should enable Council to identify any gaps and actions that would result in more effective advocacy on any given issue.

For example, areas requiring more comprehensive research and community engagement in order to develop a clear and persuasive case that can be pitched to government.

Prioritisation Criteria

Clear Evidence	The advocacy 'ask' is clear and articulate – based on a well-defined project or service need and supported by evidence.
Political Alignment	The advocacy 'ask' aligns with state and federal strategies, priorities, agendas and concerns.
Community Needs	There is strong need in the community and potential for positive impact on social and economic wellbeing.
Strategy & Legislation	The issue/opportunity aligns to council's role, strategic priorities i.e. Corporate Plan and applicable legislation.
Risk	If no action is taken, the risk to community, environment, infrastructure and Council significantly increases.

Impact Assessment Criteria

Council has a very broad remit and works across many important issues. Given this, we cannot advocate on all things equally, or at the same time. Defining our advocacy priorities means we can elevate a clear and achievable set of 'asks' consistently and persuasively, channelling resources into the areas that require it most.

By using our resources in this strategic way, we can increase the likelihood of cut-through with decision-makers, and in turn, demonstrate to the community that we understand and act upon their concerns, and deliver results. Understanding the level of effort and engagement needed is important in determining the resources required and the extent of stakeholder engagement necessary.

	Description	Resourcing

Tier 1 (Top Priorities)	• High impact issue / opportunity.
	• Clearly defined asks at a project (funding/policy) level.
	• Significant measurable impact on community.
	• Strong political alignment.
		• Requires high level of strategic support from 'Advocacy Manager' and executive.
		• Needs a formal advocacy plan, inc.
		  ○ stakeholder mapping
		  ○ community engagement, comms and key messaging
		  ○ issues/reputation management

Tier 2	• High impact issue / opportunity. • Broad asks at project level. • Broad sense of community impact. • Good political alignment.	• Requires advisory support from 'Advocacy Manager' • Potential executive support on government relations • Potential partnership liaison • Comms and community engagement
Tier 3	• Moderate impact issue / opportunity. • Can be supporting issue raised by advocacy partners. • Broad sense of community impact. • Some or low political alignment.	• Requires guidance from 'Advocacy Manager' • Potential coordination on government relations and/or supporting agenda for advocacy partners • Comms and community engagement.

> Councils Top 11 Priorities that form the Annual Advocacy Action Plan would typically sit in the Tier 1 level, each priority needs a formal advocacy plan and can be long lead time issues to overcome, requiring ongoing strategy and advocacy

Advocacy Implementation

Advocacy planning details the strategies, supporting tools and materials that are needed to develop and execute an effective advocacy campaign and/or platform, for both short term and longer-term durations.

These may involve developing strategies specific to an issue and/or opportunity and the level of detail needed will depend on the complexity of the issue.

The following advocacy tools are leveraged to support Council in its advocacy activities.

Advocacy Action Plan

The Advocacy Action Plan (AAP) is a published document broadly detailing each of the Top Strategic Priorities and their associated asks from state and federal governments, along with other key stakeholders. The AAP includes key information about our communities and unique place. The AAP is reviewed following any changes made to the Top Strategic Priorities.

Community Advocacy Statements

Given the uniqueness of the Torres Strait Island communities with regards to geographical context and challenges and opportunities across the 14 islands, 15 individual Community Advocacy Statements will be developed. These statements outline the unique challenges and issues faced by the communities and directly link to the broader Advocacy Action Plan which covers the entire region.

Strategic Priority Advocacy Briefs

Advocacy Briefs will be developed for each of the Top Strategic Priorities. Each brief will comprehensively detail the following.

- Consistent messaging that frames the advocacy priority as a relevant issue with clear and realistic asks.
- Outlines the tools and resources needed for effective advocacy.
- Key stakeholder mapping and their roles in the advocacy process.
- Planned timelines with clear objectives, engagement activities and communications schedule.
- Resource allocation (both people and budgetary) for required activities while taking into consideration resource availability and project length.
- Any potential risks identified for each advocacy campaign, and mitigation strategies.

Advocacy Campaign Briefs

For those New and Emerging advocacy issues and/or opportunities that have been through the consultation process and resolved by council to support as Tier 3, simple Advocacy Campaign Briefs (Annex B) will need to be prepared. If the matter is Tier 2 or higher, a Strategic Priority Brief is generally needed.
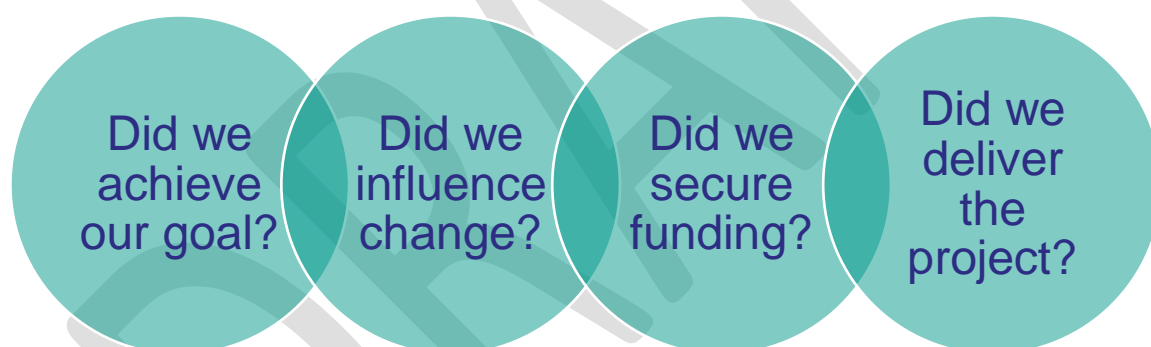
Advocacy Evaluation

Understanding the effectiveness of our advocacy program is challenging and measuring this takes time as successful advocacy for change can take years to materialise.

The success of our advocacy can be dependent upon unpredictable events and plans may have to be adjusted often to account for circumstances beyond our control.

Through a longer-term outlook, we will consider emerging opportunities, threats, and identify new and innovative approaches as to how we message our need for change. Considering our actions collectively and through ongoing collaboration, our advocacy may result in strengthened partnerships, improved policies, or legislative change.

We will regularly communicate the outcomes of our advocacy efforts to our community and other stakeholders. This will be through council meeting reports, along with using supporting channels such as our media and communication tools.

An advocacy register will be maintained by council, including all Strategic and Operational Advocacy issues and opportunities that council has endorsed to support (whether by leading or supporting the advocacy matter). These will be assessed each year to measure and understand the effectiveness of our advocacy. There are four key measures that need to be considered, when reviewing the outcomes of our efforts.

Did we achieve our goal?   Did we influence change?   Did we secure funding?   Did we deliver the project?

During this assessment, Council's advocacy priorities will be reviewed to address evolving matters in our social and political contexts. Each year, an annual review will include:

- A summary of Council's advocacy activities and campaigns, and what has been achieved.
- An assessment of the key barriers to success and recommendations for improvement.
- An assessment of new and emerging issues and opportunities.
- A review of key priorities, taking into consideration new evidence, data and insights.

This will be reported in Council's Annual Report and in preparation for the November councillor workshops. In addition, our Advocacy Framework will be reviewed within each term of Council to ensure it is meeting the needs of the Council and our communities.

New/Emerging Advocacy Quick Request Form (Annex A)

This quick assessment tool is to be used in conjunction with councils Advocacy Framework as part of the 'Identify' stage.

Advocacy issue or opportunity	<insert text>
Requesting party	<insert text>
Date of request	<insert text>
Does this advocacy issue/opportunity align with councils Top 11 Strategic Priorities?	<insert text>

The following questions will help council gain an understanding of the advocacy request and support council to prioritise and determine what type of resources are needed to support or lead this advocacy item.

1. Identifying and understanding the issue or opportunity

What is the issue or opportunity?	<insert text>
Why is it important to our communities?	<insert text>
What are the objectives or outcomes we are seeking?	<insert text>
What do we know about the issue?	<insert text>

2. Assessing priority and feasibility

What level of priority does this issue hold? *Tier 1,2 or 3 and why?*	<insert text>
Is Council capable of advocating the issue considering resourcing and capabilities?	<insert text>
Can Council advocate without compromising LG Principles?	<insert text>
Will the Council lead or support advocacy efforts?	<insert text>

Other comments for consideration in support of this request

> <insert text>

Author and issued by:

Name
Position / Title
Torres Strait Island Regional Council

Recommendation/Decision

Consider whether this request needs to go to a council meeting for resolution or to the next councillor workshop for discussion/debate. Does this request meet the criteria for 'Out of Session/Urgent Requests, for CEO Approval'? Note. If approved 'Out of Session/Urgent Request', Mayor and Councillors to be notified as an information only as soon as practical.

CEO Decision/Recommendation	Date	xx/xx/xx
<insert text>		

SARG Decision/Recommendation	Date	xx/xx/xx
<insert text>		

Council Decision/Recommendation	Date	xx/xx/xx
<insert text>		

Recorded in Advocacy Register: Yes / No

Register No: AR2024001

Advocacy Campaign Plan Template (Annex B)

This template is to be completed for Tier 2 and 3 Advocacy Campaigns (where a formal advocacy plan is not required) and is to be used in conjunction with councils Advocacy Framework.

Campaign Overview

Campaign Name	<insert text>
Advocacy Issue statement	<insert text>
Requesting party	<insert text>
Date approved by Council	<insert text>
Does it align with councils Top 11 Strategic Priorities and/or 5 Year Corporate Plan?	<insert text>
Does the issue align with the Masig Statement?	<insert text>
Is Council Leading or Supporting the advocacy initiative?	<insert text>
Is there a budget associated with this advocacy initiative and if so how much?	<insert text>

Outline below the objectives of this advocacy campaign.

<insert text>

What are the main goals Council is aiming to achieve? *What would be considered success? Is this funding for a project, improved service delivery, change to legislation etc…*

<insert text>

Target Audience

Who are we trying to influence? *This could be the main decision maker i.e. Queensland State Government (which department and/or Minister etc), Federal Government, it could also be community.*

<insert text>

Who are our supporters? *These are the people/organisations/stakeholders who can help amplify our message.*

<insert text>

Key Messaging

Core Message *our main message we want to communicate*
Supporting Information *key evidence and data that will support our core message*
Call To Action *what do we want to our audience to do*

Campaign Tactics and Strategies

What tools will Council leverage to support this Advocacy campaign and what is the timing/deadline?

These could be letters of support, use of social media, case studies and video stories, engagement of media (press releases/interviews etc), organisation of events such as a community meeting etc.

Advocacy Tool	How will this be used?

Key Stakeholders and Partners

Who are the organisations or individuals who can help with this advocacy item? Who are the potential groups that may be against this initiative? How will we engage and collaborate with our partners?

These could be other councils in the region, advocacy groups, industry partners etc.

Stakeholder	How we will engage, collaborate and/or partner?

Budget and Resources

What are the materials needed, who do we need to support the producing of these materials and what are the associated costs (has there been a budget approved by council).

These could include costs for flyers, banners, graphic design, video production, media advisors etc.

Type of Resource	Budget Estimate

Campaign Timeline

What are the tasks that need to be undertaken, who is responsible for the action item and what are the deadlines and checkpoints of key deliverables.

Action Item	Responsible	Due Date

Campaign Evaluation

How will we measure success of the campaign and how will we gain feedback from our target audience and key stakeholders including supporting partners. This could be through surveys and anecdotal feedback, as well as what was achieved - did we achieve our goals?

Key Measures
Feedback Loop

Prepared and issued by:

Name
Position / Title
Torres Strait Island Regional Council

Recommendation/Decision

This plan is to be submitted to the CEO, along with the advocacy brief for review, prior to being included in council meeting papers or the bi-annual councillor workshops as part of the prioritisation process.

CEO Decision/Recommendation	Date	xx/xx/xx
<insert text>		

Council Decision/Recommendation	Date	xx/xx/xx
<insert text>		

DIRECTORATE: Office of the CEO
AUTHOR: Interim Executive Advisor to the CEO

COMMUNITY ADVOCACY STATEMENTS – BOIGU, DAUAN, ERUB & PORUMA

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION:

The Standing Committee:

(a) **agrees to review and provide feedback on final draft Community Advocacy Statements for Boigu, Dauan, Erub and Poruma;**

(b) **agrees to continue to support the development and finalisation of all 15 Community Advocacy Statements; and**

(c) **recommends that Council accept the final draft Community Advocacy Statements for Boigu, Dauan, Erub and Poruma and that that all 15 Community Advocacy Statements be finalised for endorsement at the February 2025 Council meeting.**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

An Advocacy Capability Plan was initiated by Council to improve Council's overall approach to advocacy, drive accountability and outcomes such as an increase in funding to improve Council's revenue position and overall financial sustainability.

Part of the capability plan was to develop an Advocacy Action Plan for the region to outline Council's Top 11 Priorities. During the discussion on this decision paper at the Council meeting held in October 2024, it was determined that Community Advocacy Statements would be developed for each community as an additional advocacy artefact to further support Council's advocacy agenda.

Interested Parties/Consultation:

- Council Executive Team
- Representative Councillors for Boigu, Dauan, Erub, Poruma, Saibai and Masig.

Background / Previous Standing Committee Consideration:

Community Advocacy Statements are being developed for all 15 communities within the Torres Strait. Attached are a number of statements that are in final design draft, following consultation with the Councillor attached to the respective community.

The purpose of the Community Advocacy Statements are to strengthen the advocacy capability of Council, in recognition the uniqueness and complexities of the Torres Strait communities. This will enable Council to be more effective with its advocacy agenda, being able to articulate the challenges faced and respective needs at an individual community level, whilst advancing the agenda for the region.

Completed (including design) final draft Community Advocacy Statements are attached for Boigu, Dauan, Erub and Poruma. *Note: Both Saibai and Masig are in final draft and being designed by the Communications team.*

These Community Advocacy Statements are intended as e-publications.

COMPLIANCE / CONSIDERATIONS:

Statutory:	N/A
Budgetary:	N/A
Policy:	TSIRC Advocacy Capability Plan & Advocacy Action Plan
Legal:	N/A
Risk / Risk Mitigation:	
Links to Strategic Plans:	TSIRC Corporate Plan • People Bisnis - Pipol • Sustainability Bisnis - Mekem las long • Prosperity Bisnis – Pruitpul
Masig Statement:	N/A
Advisory Committee Consultation:	N/A
Timelines:	All 15 Community Advocacy Statements to be completed by February 2025.

Other Comments:

N/A
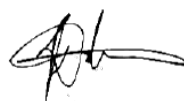
Recommended:	Approved:
Jessica Buxton	
Jessica Buxton Interim Executive Advisor to the CEO	James William Chief Executive Officer

ATTACHMENTS:

A – Community Advocacy Statement – Boigu
B – Community Advocacy Statement – Dauan
C – Community Advocacy Statement – Erub
D – Community Advocacy Statement – Poruma

Torres Strait Island
REGIONAL COUNCIL

COMMUNITY **ADVOCACY STATEMENT**
BOIGU ISLAND

liveable • sustainable • accessible

Our Boigu

Boigu Island is the most northerly inhabited island of Queensland and Australia. It is part of the top-western group of the Torres Strait Islands. The mainland of Papua New Guinea is only 6km away from Boigu. Most of the island is subject to extensive periodic flooding, and as a result, the community township is built on the highest ground. The interior of the island is sparsely vegetated, and mainly swampland. The coast is fringed by mangroves, which act to protect against the island's sand and mud from sea erosion. The waters surrounding the island are an important habitat for dugongs.

Our People

We lead very traditional, simple lives strongly connected to our culture, land and sea. We practice our culture through traditional dancing and song as part of our daily way of life, and celebrating at community events ensuring that we continue to educate our youth, and our culture and traditions are not lost.

In 2024, Bio Cultural Landscape Profiles were developed to preserve and transmit traditional language and ecological knowledge for future generations. These documents capture knowledge, educate, and preserve our language which we speak daily, and we can use these to continue to share our traditional knowledge of land, air, and sea with our people

Key Stats

Population
Approx. **270** residents

Employment
xx

Local Dialect
Kalaw Kawaw Ya

Economy
Commercial Fishing
Tourism

OUR BIGGEST CHALLENGES

Access for and to our community

Access to and from Boigu is on fixed wing aircraft via Horn Island. Flights operate 6 days a week and reliance on a safe and well-maintained air strip is critical to ensuring access to the island.

- Boigu is an access point for Dauan Island community and therefore is critical in terms of providing accessibility to neighbouring islands.

- Boigu's needs funding to reseal our runway, ensuring continued and safe operations for our community.

Sea access on Boigu is reliant on having well maintained jetties, mooring points and channel access. Our channel provides our community with marine access inland from island shores and critical to ensuring essential supplies into our community.

Inadequate funding for channel dredging effects our ability to access the island via boat, preventing adequate water supply for our desalination plant - essential for potable water, it restricts food and essentials being able to be supplied into our community, as well as impacting the opportunity to create jobs.

Channel dredging for us is as important for road maintenance for any land-based council area. Our channels are our roads in and out of community.

We need funding to dredge our channel due to the large build-up of sediment, making the channel impassable. We are impacted by sediment and wash out from the rivers of Papa New Guinea, filling our channels and making them inaccessible.

This is impacting our opportunity to grow our commercial fishing opportunities, it impacts our food security and it impacts our potable water supply.

- Boats are not able to offload their catch and have a limited window to access during the high tide.

- We can only receive sea freight on a Wednesday and not only are we paying exorbitant costs to obtain fresh fruit and vegetables, meat and dairy, it is typically over 3 weeks old when we finally get to consume and quite often completely ruined.

- The inlet for the desalination plant is situated in the low tide and during the dry season our water is having to be turned off because the amount of sediment built up in the channel is making it impossible for the inlet to operate.

Any delay caused by issues with the vessels, other islands, weather etc result in no access to the channel when the vessels finally arrive.

The condition of our roads

Many community roads are not able to have works funded as they are not gazetted roads. Funding is currently restricted to 'like for like' which means as soon as there is weather, the renewed road is washed away due to no resilience/betterment funding. Local knowledge is not being taken into consideration when maintaining roads.

- Our community and esplanade roads have degraded to a point of being unsafe and unusable and immediate funding is desperately needed for rectification so our people can access essential services.

- This is presenting a health and safety risk to our community. Even the simplest tasks of having our garbage removed cannot be done and community members and council workers are having to push 80-90kg garbage bins 20 minutes up the road to be emptied. We want to keep our community and environment clean and are doing so to the detriment of our health because our roads are unusable.

- The lack of reliable water due to the problems with the desalination plant can result in the limited funded road projects being delayed and pushed into the wet season, costing us even more to maintain our roads, resulting in even less being able to be completed.

Our housing crisis

The rate of homelessness in the Torres Strait is 300 per 10,000 persons compared with 43.2 per 10,000 for Queensland.

On Boigu, we don't have enough social housing to support our community. We need 15 houses constructed over the next 10 years to support the most vulnerable in our community suffering from homelessness, domestic violence and health related issues.

- 2 homes are needed for Priority One: Homeless, Child Safety, Health, Disability and Domestic Violence
- 12 homes are needed for Priority Two: Overcrowding
- 1 home is needed for Priority Three: Return to Community

Available land with connection to essential services, such as water, sewer and electricity, is critical to be able to deliver new homes. In a lot of circumstances, this also requires removal of old properties, most of which are contaminated with Asbestos.

Protecting our borders

We are the gateway to northern Australia and our community regularly puts our lives on the line to protect Australia from the entry of pests and diseases, illegal fishing, illegal immigration and drug smuggling. There is limited presence of Border Force and Bio Security, and the officers that are stationed have no powers to stop this from happening.

We need the Australian Government to take border security in our region seriously and keep our community safe.

Managing our waste

Our waste facility is overflowing and requires a new site. As a result of the overflowing facility, Boigu experiences illegal dumping of waste outside of the facility which is harmful to health of the environment and people. We care about our environment and need funding to build a sustainable waste facility and develop alternative solutions to transfer waste out of the community.
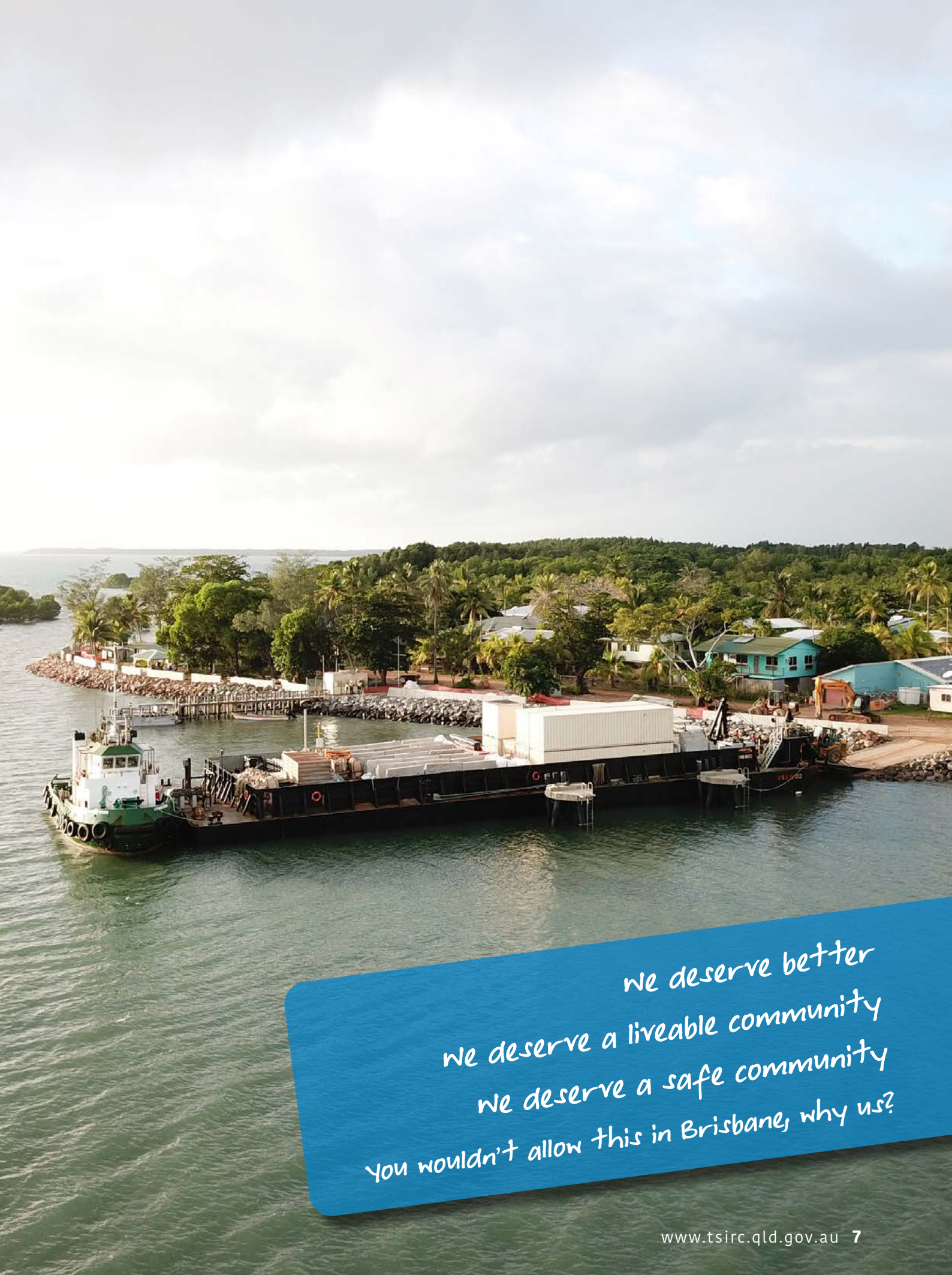
Our community meeting points

Our community hall is nearing end of life and becoming unsafe for community to gather, hold recreational activities, social events, school activities and we have nowhere else to go. The building is well over 20 years old and was built with materials that are not adequate to sustain our environment. We need funding for our community hall to be renewed.

Access to safe & reliable water

On Boigu our water is provided by a desalination plant, which should provide unlimited water supply. Only when it works. The rest of the time our people do not have access to water. During the dry season, our water is typically turned off for most of the day, and only able to operate between hours such as 7am and 9am, 5pm and 9pm – dependant on the tides. This impacts the health and wellbeing of everyone on Boigu, our mental and physical health is suffering.

Channel dredging and dropping the inlet would fix this and then our community would have water security. We need funding to fix this.

Building our economy

Our environment is pristine and the potential for economic development is significant, through commercial fishing and tourism. We need help to build the infrastructure to support our community to be self-sustainable and thrive. We have many opportunities to build and grow a sustainable economy on Boigu but we need to make it simpler.

- Currently there is small business loan funding available through TSRA, however accessing this to start up a small business such as a commercial fishing operation is virtually impossible due to the complexity of the application where you need a business degree to understand the process, creating unnecessary barriers for our community to overcome.

Reduce the red tape and make it simpler so we are not held back.

We deserve better

We deserve a liveable community

We deserve a safe community

You wouldn't allow this in Brisbane, why us?

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COMMUNITY **ADVOCACY STATEMENT**
DAUAN ISLAND

liveable • sustainable • accessible

Our Dauan

Dauan is a small island west of Saibai and close to the Papua New Guinea border. Mount Cornwallis is the highest peak in the Strait, rising to nearly 300 metres. This is also the State's most northerly granite peak and is actually part of the Great Dividing Range. Our community is built along the narrow coastal lowland, backed by steep granite peaks. Our soil is relatively fertile and supports local family gardens. We are noted for our cool, freshwater permanent springs and the surrounding waters yield abundant fish. Our community is serviced by boat, barge and helicopter and the closest airport is on Saibai, 6km to the northeast.

Our People

We have a strong and vibrant community, with a focus on our culture and working towards creating harmony between our cultural values and western values. We want our children to have a better future, by building a strong economic future and educating our children to be qualified to contribute to community. We want to attract investment and build industry using our natural resources to create a safe and liveable community for future generations.

Key Stats

Population
Approx. **250** residents

Employment
xx

Local Dialect
Kalaw Kawaw Ya

Economy
xx

OUR BIGGEST CHALLENGES

Access for and to our community

Dauan does not have its own landing strip for fixed wing aircraft which means accessibility is only by helicopter and sea. Council, through TSRA have a subsidised helicopter transport scheme but this is only serviced once per week.

- There is no guarantee for community members using this service that they can return the following week and therefore no security in terms of when they are able to return to community to family etc.

- If community was to access helicopter charter directly this would cost approx $3000 per charter.

- There is also no guarantee that the service will even be available once per week, inclement weather can impact but also other organisations etc needing access to community will take precedence.

The other transport option is via personal boat and this is dependent on whether you can land at Saibai or Boigu. If those islands are not safe to land this option is not possible.

In the past there was a ferry service to community, however the channel access and jetties became a safety concern for the operators due to lack of maintenance and funding.

- We need funding for our jetty to be renewed so that our people can land safely.

- We need funding for our barge ramp to be renewed so that we can receive vital supplies into our community.

- We need mooring dolphins to be replaced so that we can access our jetty safely.

The condition of our roads

Many community roads are not able to have works funded as they are not gazetted roads. Funding is currently restricted to 'like for like' which means as soon as there is weather, the renewed road is washed away due to no resilience/improvement funding. Local knowledge is not being taken into consideration when maintaining roads.

- Lack of road access is impacting access to housing etc. Examples include ambulances trying to access homes to respond to a medical emergency and cannot drive to home due to road being impassable.

- Another example, repairs and maintenance to homes takes long periods of time as the trades people cannot bring heavy materials to houses, they would have to walk material approx 500 meters uphill to access a house. This can include homes that have lost power or water (i.e. essential services). Hot water systems for elderly residents, roofing materials to fix holes created by bad weather etc.

Our housing crisis

The rate of homelessness in the Torres Strait is 300 per 10,000 persons compared with 43.2 per 10,000 for Queensland.

On Dauan, we don't have enough social housing to support our community. We need 22 houses constructed over the next 10 years to support the most vulnerable in our community suffering from homelessness, domestic violence and health related issues.

- 3 homes are needed for Priority One: Homeless, Child Safety, Health, Disability and Domestic Violence.
- 7 homes are needed for Priority Two: Overcrowding.
- 11 homes are needed for Priority Three: Return to Community.

Managing our waste

Our waste facility is overflowing and ....

We care about our environment and need funding to build a sustainable waste facility.

Access to safe & reliable water

Our water source is compromised, our infrastructure is deteriorating and failing, and we don't have water security, which is vital to the safety and wellbeing of our community.

- We need funding for our lagoon cover to be replaced to protect our main water source.
- We need funding for our water infrastructure to be maintained as we are losing too much water.

We deserve better
We deserve a liveable community
We deserve a safe community

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COMMUNITY **ADVOCACY STATEMENT**
ERUB ISLAND

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Our Erub

Erub Island is an island formed by volcanic action and situated in the eastern section of the Torres Strait, near the Great Barrier Reef and just south of the Bligh entrance, 260km north of Cape York and 60km south of Papua New Guinea. The island has many hills and good vegetation, composed mainly of lava and ash which has formed rich soil.

Erub was once home to a thriving yet dangerous pearling industry from the 1800s through to the 1900s and has a foothold in the identity of modern Islanders thanks to an event that happened 150 years ago at Kemus. On the northern side of the island, an ex-Peruvian slaver ship known as the Surprise sailed into Treacherous Bay on July 1, 1871. This historical landing shaped Islanders across the Strait, and today this event is reason enough for celebration. A celebration known as the Coming of the Light.

Our People

The effective community language is Brokan (Torres Strait Creole), though many people still speak the traditional language, Meriam Mir. Erub's seafaring heritage has traditions in elaborately carved and decorated canoe, carved objects and intricately made dance costumes and weaponry. The old ways are held close, wanting to keep traditional practices alive, locals still use traditional rock fish traps and singing and drumming is a regular way of life for community.

Historically, Erub relied on strong trade links and relationships with the people of Papua New Guinea and south to Cape Yok. Today, Erub Arts creative practice continues to evolve through collaboration and cross- cultural exchange. Erub is internationally recognised for their woven ghost net artworks and the artist, part of the collective that gather and cleans the nets to repurpose them into artworks, draw their inspiration from the surrounding ocean and reef. Artworks in Ghost Net, ceramics, screen printing, linocuts and drawings on paper are held in International and National collections.

Our economy is largely driven by commercial fishing. We have an abundance of Cray, Mackerel, Trevally, Trout and Sea cucumbers that we have established export markets for, but without reliable and safe transport we are held back from growing our economy and our future.

🌐 **Erub Arts**

Key Stats

Population
Approx. **400** residents

Employment
xx

Local Dialect
Erub Mer

Economy
Commercial Fishing
Arts

OUR BIGGEST CHALLENGES

Access for and to our community

Access to and from Erub is on fixed wing aircraft via Horn Island. Flights operate 6 days a week and reliance on a safe and well-maintained air strip is critical to ensuring access to the island.

Sea access on Erub is reliant on having well maintained jetties, mooring points and channel access. Our jetty is debilitated and can no longer be used as a point of access for our community. Barge ramps provide a similar role to jetties, but also act as access points barges carrying larger materials and critical supplies. Without barge ramps that are fit-for-purpose, barges may be forced to find alternative ways to dock, increasing safety risks for both workers and residents.

- We need funding for our jetty to be renewed so that our people can land safely.

- We need funding for our barge ramp to be renewed so that we can receive vital supplies into our community. Our barge ramp needs to be rebuilt in a safer location and fit for purpose so that barge vessels can land and the ramp is not impacted by the rough seas as it is currently on the open side of the break wall.

This is impacting our opportunity to grow our commercial fishing opportunities; it impacts our food security and we can go months without delivery of essential supplies and food.

- By the time we receive fresh fruit and vegetables, they are almost perished, we generally have no more than 4 days to consume before they go bad and we will not be able to get more until the next vessel arrives.

- In some instances, the Seaswift vessel has tried to land its barge three times in one week but due to safety and the condition of our infrastructure they turn away. We continue to go without food and supplies.

- Our local fishermen cannot offload their catch until a barge arrives safely. This means the product can be spoiled and our fisherman don't get paid.

Our channel provides our community with marine access inland from island shores and critical to ensuring essential supplies into our community.

Inadequate funding for channel dredging effects our ability to access the island via boat and this restricts food and essentials being able to be supplied into our community, as well as impacting the opportunity to create jobs.

Channel dredging for us is as important for road maintenance for any land-based council area. Our channels are our roads in and out of community.

We need funding to dredge our channel due to the large build-up of sediment, making the channel impassable.

Any delay caused by issues with the vessels, other islands, weather etc result in no access to the channel when the vessels finally arrive.

The condition of our roads

Many community roads are not able to have works funded as they are not gazetted roads. Funding is currently restricted to 'like for like' which means as soon as there is weather, the renewed road is washed away due to no resilience/betterment funding. Local knowledge is not being taken into consideration when maintaining roads.

- The reconstruction of Erub road to the airport is urgently needed as it poses a danger to users with potholes and water buildup. Our vehicles are constantly damaged, let alone trying to navigate the road during an emergency. Being a main access road, connecting the Health Centre to the Airport, this is unacceptable and we demand funding to fix this road.

Our housing crisis

The rate of homelessness in the Torres Strait is 300 per 10,000 persons compared with 43.2 per 10,000 for Queensland.

On Erub, we don't have enough social housing to support our community. We need 9 houses constructed over the next 10 years to support the most vulnerable in our community suffering from homelessness, domestic violence and health related issues.

- 4 homes are needed for Priority One: Homeless, Child Safety, Health, Disability and Domestic Violence
- 3 homes are needed for Priority Two: Overcrowding

Available land with connection to essential services, such as water, sewer and electricity, is critical to be able to deliver new homes. In a lot of circumstances, this also requires removal of old properties, most of which are contaminated with Asbestos.

Our community meeting points

Our sports stadium needs to be replaced, it is well beyond end of life and has deteriorated to a point that it deemed unsafe to use due to the structural integrity of the roof.

Where do we go during emergency weather events? Our only choice is to go up the hill and hope for the best as we have no safe evacuation point for community, no SES or disaster resilience infrastructure capability.

Our kids have nowhere to go to play sports, nowhere to graduate, we are no longer able to hold our annual sports carnival, a tradition that we had teams from as far as Boigu attend. We can no longer hold our church rallies, an important cultural religious custom for our community – so many community social and cultural gatherings are being lost because we have nowhere to hold them.

Managing our waste

Our waste facility is overflowing and requires a new site. As a result of the overflowing facility, Erub experiences illegal dumping of waste outside of the facility which is harmful to health of the environment and people. We care about our environment and need funding to build a sustainable waste facility and develop alternative solutions to transfer waste out of the community.

Access to safe & reliable water

Our water network is over 30 years old and wasn't built for our environment and is degraded needing constant repairs. We have elderly community members having to wait for days for water, typically without water a couple of times a month and up to 2 nights on each occurrence. We need funding to fix our water infrastructure.

Building our economy

It is simple. Fix our barge ramp, make it safer for vessels to land so our fisherman can offload their catch and get paid. Fix our jetty so our community can access with their boats. Provide the infrastructure so our people can have purpose.

We have many opportunities to build and grow a sustainable economy on Erub but we need to make it simpler.

- Currently there is small business loan funding available through TSRA, however accessing this to start up a small business such as a commercial fishing operation is virtually impossible due to the complexity of the application where you need a business degree to understand the process, creating unnecessary barriers for our community to overcome.

Reduce the red tape and make it simpler so we are not held back.

We deserve better

We deserve a liveable community

We deserve a safe community

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COMMUNITY ADVOCACY STATEMENT
PORUMA ISLAND

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Our Poruma

Poruma Island is a coral cay island in the central island group of the Torres Strait, located 130km north east of Thursday Island. It is a narrow coral island approximately 1.4km long and 400m wide, bounded by shallow, fringing coral reefs. The island is reasonably flat with most of the land between 5m and 7m above sea level except along the southern side of the island where sand dunes rise up to 12m in height. The village is located on the coastal strip to the west of the airstrip. Land to the north and east of the airstrip is undeveloped, except for a solid waste depot. The vegetative landscape of Poruma is characterised by vine forests and dune grasslands.

Our People

We share deep connections with the Warraber community, which is 32km away by boat and if either island is affected, the impact is felt by the other. Our ancestors used to collect our water from Warraber as Poruma did not have any natural water source. We value our social connection, and togetherness is important to our people. You can often see us fishing, yarning, laughing and playing music and you will always see us doing this together. We practice traditional island dancing, our language and traditional games as a daily way of life so our culture is not lost. Poruma is an area of significant cultural heritage value to the Traditional Owners and the community. Many sites are not recorded and are only known to the Traditional Owners. Plants, animals and birds are essential to the wellbeing of the community as they are frequently associated with cultural significant activities and events.

Key Stats

Population
Approx. **210** residents

Employment
xx

Local Dialect
Kulkalgau Ya dialect
of Kala Lagaw Ya

Economy
Commercial Fishing
- Crays and Sea cucumbers
Potential Tourism

OUR BIGGEST CHALLENGES

Access for and to our community

Access to and from Poruma is on fixed wing aircraft via Horn Island or by sea. Flights operate 6 days a week and reliance on a safe and well-maintained air strip is critical to ensuring access to the island.

• Poruma needs funding to reseal our runway, ensuring continued and safe operations for our community.

Sea access on Poruma is reliant on having well maintained jetties, mooring points and channel access. Our channel provides our community with marine access inland from island shores and critical to ensuring essential supplies into our community.

Our jetty is run down and in need of urgent replacement, we also need funding for mooring dolphins so that marine vessels are not damaged when they access Poruma.

Inadequate funding for channel dredging effects our ability to access the island via boat, it restricts food and essentials being able to be supplied into our community, as well as impacting the opportunity to create jobs.

Channel dredging for us is as important for road maintenance for any land-based council area. Our channels are our roads in and out of community.

• We need funding to dredge our channel due to the build up of sediment in the channel.

The lack of dredging means we don't have food security and it is also impacting our opportunity to grow our commercial fishing opportunities. The boats turn away as they cannot access the channel.

• Fishing boats are not able to offload their catch and have a limited window to access during the high tide.

• We can go weeks without essential supplies including food to be delivered, which means weeks without fresh fruit and vegetables.

• The shelves in our shop can be bare from week to week. They have to overorder to ensure there is enough to keep us going. This only works for non-perishables.

• Our dinghies cannot access during low tide, which means our community cannot even gather food from the ocean.

Our housing crisis

The rate of homelessness in the Torres Strait is 300 per 10,000 persons compared with 43.2 per 10,000 for Queensland.

On Poruma, we don't have enough social housing to support our community. We need 7 houses constructed over the next 5 years to support those community members that are suffering from overcrowding and others that want to return to Poruma that cannot as there is no housing available.

- 4 homes are needed for Priority Two: Overcrowding

- 3 home is needed for Priority Three: Return to Community

Available land with connection to essential services, such as water, sewer and electricity, is critical to be able to deliver new homes. In a lot of circumstances, this also requires removal of old properties, most of which are contaminated with Asbestos.

Managing our waste

Our Sewerage Treatment Plant needs to be replaced as it is deteriorated to a point of failure.

We care about our environment and need funding to build a sustainable waste facility and develop alternative solutions to transfer waste out of the community.

Access to safe & reliable water

Our lagoon fencing needs to be replaced to ensure our water stays protected. Our reservoir and pump station needs to be upgraded so that we can continue to have water security for our community.

Building our economy

Employment is a challenge at Poruma, with very little job opportunities resulting in community members having to leave their homes and community to find work.

Our environment is pristine and the potential for economic development is significant, through commercial fishing and tourism.

We have an eco-tourism resort (Poruma Island Resort) sitting empty because we cannot get funding or investment to get this up and running.

- This resort ran for 10 years and was a much-needed tourism destination in the Torres Strait.

- This was closed x years ago due to inadequate management – the resort was not managed by our community.

We need funding to resurrect, which will in turn create at least seven much needed jobs for our community and will improve our island economy.
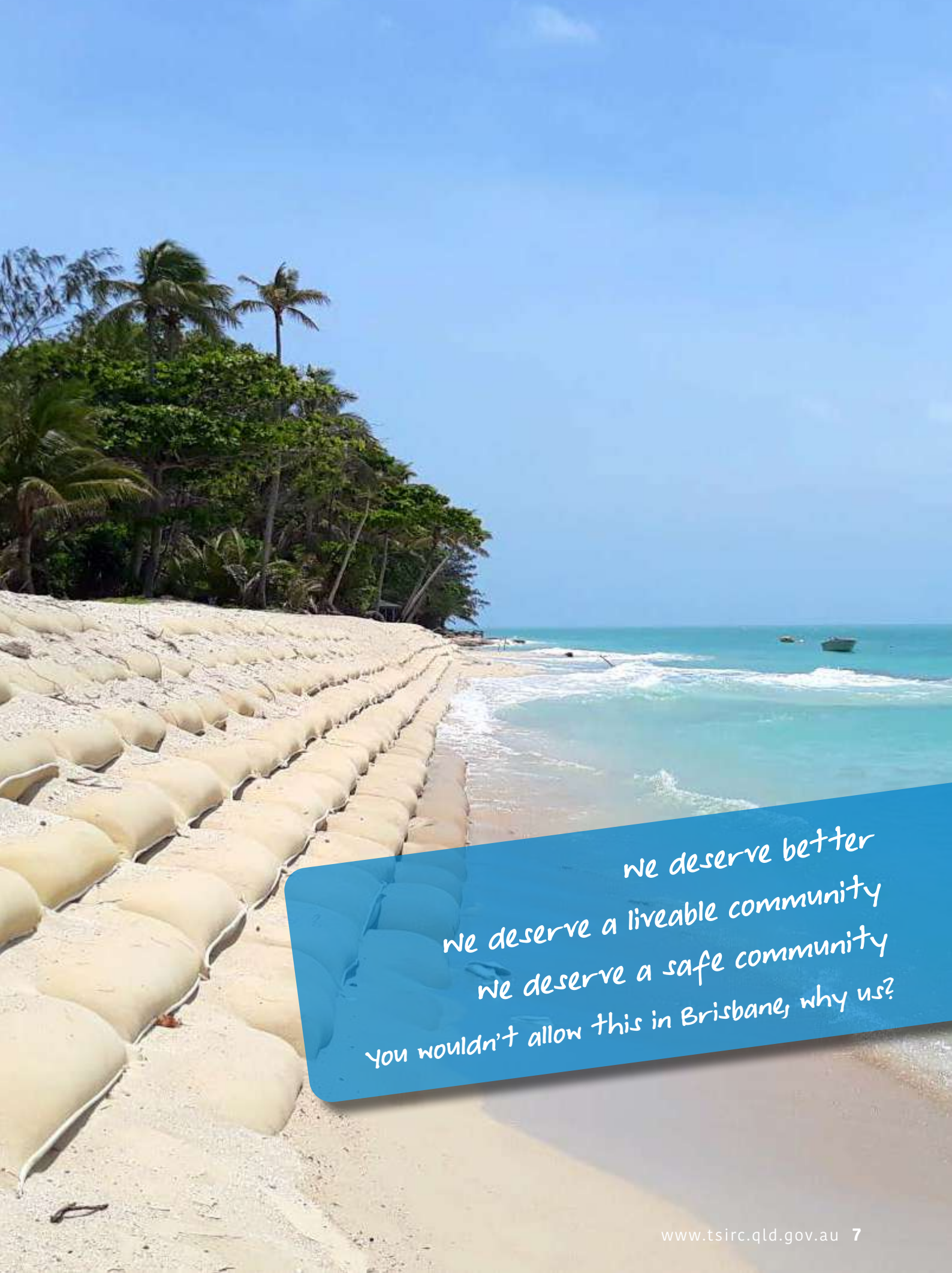
We deserve better

We deserve a liveable community

We deserve a safe community

You wouldn't allow this in Brisbane, why us?

www.tsirc.qld.gov.au

DIRECTORATE: Office of the CEO
AUTHOR: Chief Executive Officer

2025 SARG MEETING SCHEDULE

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION:

The Standing Committee, in accordance with paragraph 7.1 of the Committee's Terms of Reference:

(a) **rescinds paragraph (a) of Resolution #SSC24-28/2024-08/3.3;**
(b) **agrees that the annual Standing Committee meeting schedule be realigned to the cycle proposed at** Attachment B **of this report; and**
(c) **in accordance with Section 254(B) of the** *Local Government Regulation 2012*, **adopts the following meeting schedule for 2025:**

- **15 January 2025 (Microsoft TEAMS);**
- **5 March 2025 (Microsoft TEAMS);**
- **9 May 2025 (Cairns);**
- **9 July 2025 (Microsoft TEAMS);**
- **3 September 2025 (Microsoft TEAMS); and**
- **7 November 2025 (Cairns).**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Section 254B of the *Local Government Regulation 2012* requires that Council and Standing Committee meetings be published at least once a year and again when there are any changes made to the meeting dates. The annual schedule of meetings is normally advertised on the local government's website.

This paper proposes a schedule of meetings for 2025, as well as an updated strategic annual calendar cycle for meetings of the Standing Committee going forward.

Interested Parties/Consultation:

- Mayor

Background / Previous Standing Committee Consideration:

In accordance with its TOR, the Standing Committee is required to meet every two months (3 x virtual meetings and 3 x face-to-face meetings) and two of the face-to-face meetings **must** be held in the lead up to Council's annual workshops which are historically held in May and November. Face-to-meetings are subject to budget availability.

At its inaugural meeting in August 2024, the Standing Committee endorsed a cycle for when SARG meetings are to be held (Attachment A). It is proposed that the cycle of meetings be adjusted to align more strategically to meet the quarterly reporting timelines set by Council for its Advisory Committees. A copy of the proposed new annual SARG meeting cycle is at Attachment B.

The following Standing Committee meeting dates for 2025 are submitted for endorsement by the Standing Committee:

- 15 January 2025 (Microsoft TEAMS);
- 5 March 2025 (Microsoft TEAMS);
- 9 May 2025 (Cairns);
- 9 July 2025 (Microsoft TEAMS);
- 3 September 2025 (Microsoft TEAMS); and
- 7 November 2025 (Cairns).

Council's Advisory Committees will then be able to plan their annual meeting schedules around the SARG meeting dates.

COMPLIANCE / CONSIDERATIONS:

Statutory:	• *Section 254B of the Local Government Regulation 2012*
Budgetary:	Face-to-face meetings are subject to budget availability.
Policy:	SARG Terms of Reference (endorsed July 2024)
Legal:	N/A
Risk / Risk Mitigation:	Annual schedule of Standing Committee meetings to be posted on Council's website following endorsement.
Links to Strategic Plans:	Corporate Plan 2020-2025 (Bisnis Plan) People - Outcome 4: We are a transparent, open, and engaging Council. Sustainability - Outcome 8: We manage Council affairs responsibly to the benefit of our communities.
Masig Statement:	N/A
Advisory Committee Consultation:	*Advisory Committees will determine their annual meeting schedule around the annual SARG meeting schedule.*
Timelines:	Annual schedule of Standing Committee meetings required for publication on TSIRC website.

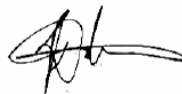**Other Comments:**

N/A

Recommended:

Susanne Andres
Executive Director Corporate Services

Recommended:

James William
Chief Executive Officer

ATTACHMENTS:

A – SARG Resolution #SSC24-28/2024-08/3.3 (meeting cycles)
B – Proposed New Annual SARG Meeting Cycle

2024 SARG Meeting Schedule

#SSC24-28/2024-08/3.3

CR TOBY / CR ANIBA

The Standing Committee, in accordance with paragraph 7.1 of the Committee's Terms of Reference:

(a) **agrees that the annual Standing Committee meeting schedule be aligned to the following calender cycle:**

ANNUAL SARG MEETING CYCLE			
	Type	**Month**	**Date/Time/Reason**
1.	F2F or TEAMS	August	TBD against annual Council schedule
2.	F2F*	October	*To plan for November Council Workshop*
3.	F2F or TEAMS	December	TBD against annual Council schedule
4.	F2F or TEAMS	February	TBD against annual Council schedule
5.	F2F*	April	*To plan for May Council Workshop*
6.	F2F or TEAMS	June	TBD against annual Council schedule

*face-to-face meetings are subject to budget availability

AND

(b) **in accordance with Section 254(B) of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*, adopts the following meeting schedule for the remainder of 2024:**

- **2 October 2024 (Cairns); and**
- **4 December 2024 (Microsoft Teams).**

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

PROPOSED NEW ANNUAL SARG MEETING CYCLE

ANNUAL SARG MEETING CYCLE			
	Type	**Month**	**Timing/Focus**
1.	TEAMS	January	• Clearance of 2nd QTR Advisory Committee Reports which are due to the January Council Meeting. • Forward Planning for Apr/May/Jun Council Meetings.
2.	TEAMS	March	• Clearance of 3rd QTR Advisory Committee Reports which are due to the April Council Meeting. • Forward Planning for May Council Workshop. • Forward Planning for Jun/Jul/Aug Council Meetings.
3.	F2F	May	• *To preplan leadership sessions for May Council Workshop.* • Forward Planning for Aug/Sep/Oct Council Meetings.
4.	TEAMS	July	• Clearance of 4th QTR Advisory Committee Reports which are due to the July Council Meeting. • Forward Planning for Oct/Nov/Dec Council Meetings.
5.	TEAMS	September	• Clearance of 1st QTR Advisory Committee Reports which are due to the October Council Meeting. • Agenda Planning for the November Council Workshop. • Forward Planning for Dec/Jan/Feb Council Meetings.
6.	F2F	November	• *To preplan leadership sessions for November Council Workshop.* • Forward Planning for Feb/Mar/Apr Council Meetings.

DIRECTORATE: *Community and Building Services*
AUTHOR*: Executive Director Community Services and Executive Director Building Services*

TSIRC SOCIAL HOUSING STRATEGY 2024

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION:

The Standing Committee:

- (a) **notes the report and attachment; and**
- (b) **recommends that the TSIRC Social Housing Strategy 2024 be submitted to Council for endorsement.**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This resolution endorses the Torres Strait Island Regional Council's 10-Year Social Housing Strategy, which outlines a comprehensive roadmap to address the critical housing challenges faced by communities across the Torres Strait region. The strategy is aligned with TSIRC's long-term vision for social housing and focuses on improving outcomes in areas such as housing supply, accessibility, quality, and sustainability.

Interested Parties/Consultation:

- Councillors
- Mayor
- TSIRC Housing Team
- TSIRC Building Services
- TSIRC Community Services
- Community
- Department of Housing and Public Works

Background:

To effectively plan for future funding requirements, the Department of Housing and Public Works requested that TSIRC Housing develop a comprehensive strategy and budget to assess the social housing needs across the Torres Strait Island Regional Council communities for the next 10 years.

The development of this strategy involved a detailed analysis of key data sources, including the TSIRC Housing Needs Register and town planning data, as well as the Masterplans for each island community. These resources provided critical insights into current and future housing demands, land availability, and opportunities for development.

The draft strategy was presented to the Mayor and Councillors in November for their review, with the final plan to be submitted to the Department of Housing and Public Works following formal endorsement by the Council in December.

To ensure the strategy remains adaptive to evolving needs, it will be reviewed and updated annually. This process will account for changes in housing demand, shifting community priorities, and the availability of suitable land for development. By maintaining this proactive approach, TSIRC will continue to deliver targeted, effective housing outcomes that address the long-term needs of the Torres Strait communities.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:

The strategy focuses on key objectives, including:

Increase the Supply of Social Housing: Address overcrowding and improve living conditions for all community members.

Promote Culturally Appropriate Solutions: Support housing designs that reflect cultural values while enhancing sustainability and resilience through innovative approaches.

Standardise Housing Designs: Develop standardised designs to ensure readiness when funding opportunities arise.

Forward Planning for Funding: Provide cost estimates and strategic plans to secure funding from relevant bodies for future housing developments.

Native Title Consultation: Establish a Native Title consultation plan to address land use considerations and ensure compliance with community needs and legal requirements.

TSIRC Housing Initiatives:

TSIRC Housing has developed a 10-Year Capital Construction Plan and Social Housing Strategy to proactively respond to emerging funding opportunities. This plan includes:

- Detailed town planning, subdivisions, and infrastructure development strategies for future community needs.

- Alignment with the Department of Seniors, Disability Services, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships (DSDSATSIP), which has indicated annual funding opportunities for planning land expansions in priority communities.

By incorporating forward-looking initiatives, TSIRC will be "shovel-ready" for Development Applications that address housing needs and support future growth.

COMPLIANCE / CONSIDERATIONS:

Statutory:	• *Local Government Act 2009* • *Local Government Regulation 2012* • *National Construction Code Building Act 1975* • *Building Regulation 2006* • *Queensland Building and Construction Commission Act 1991* • *Queensland Building and Construction Commission Regulation 2018*
Budgetary:	• N/A
Policy:	N/A
Legal:	N/A
Risk:	Risk Management •
Links to Strategic Plans:	Corporate Plan 2020-2025 •
Masig Statement:	• Create partnership with Key Regional Stakeholders, the Queensland and Australian governments together with other relevant organisations to better equip us to work together to achieve our regional goals and aspirations
Standing Committee Consultation:	• Housing and Safe and Healthy Communities Committee
Timelines:	• Submit report to Funding Partners (Department of Housing and Public Works) by 25th December 2024

Other Comments:

Nil.
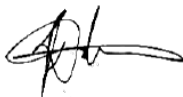
Recommended: Recommended:

Wayne Green   Dawson Sailor
Executive Director Building Services   Executive Director Community Services

Approved:

James William
Chief Executive Officer

ATTACHMENTS:
• TSIRC Social Housing Strategy 2024

Torres Strait Island Regional Council

Social Housing Strategy 2024

Torres Strait Island
REGIONAL COUNCIL

Table of contents

Introduction

TSIRC Housing are dedicated to delivering housing solutions that respect, preserve and promote the rich cultural heritage of the Torres Strait Islander communities. We understand that housing is more than just shelter, it is a vital part of community life, cultural identity and well-being. By delivering quality, culturally appropriate housing, we ensure that our homes meet the unique social, cultural and environmental needs of the Torres Strait Islander people.

Every First Nations person in Queensland has a safe and secure place to call home that meets personal, location and cultural needs. This Home provides the foundations to thrive.

(Our Place: First Nations Housing and Homelessness Action Plan 2024-2027)

Boost our Social Housing Big Build – 53,500 new social homes by 2046, providing 1200 social homes for First Nations communities.

(Homes for Queenslanders)
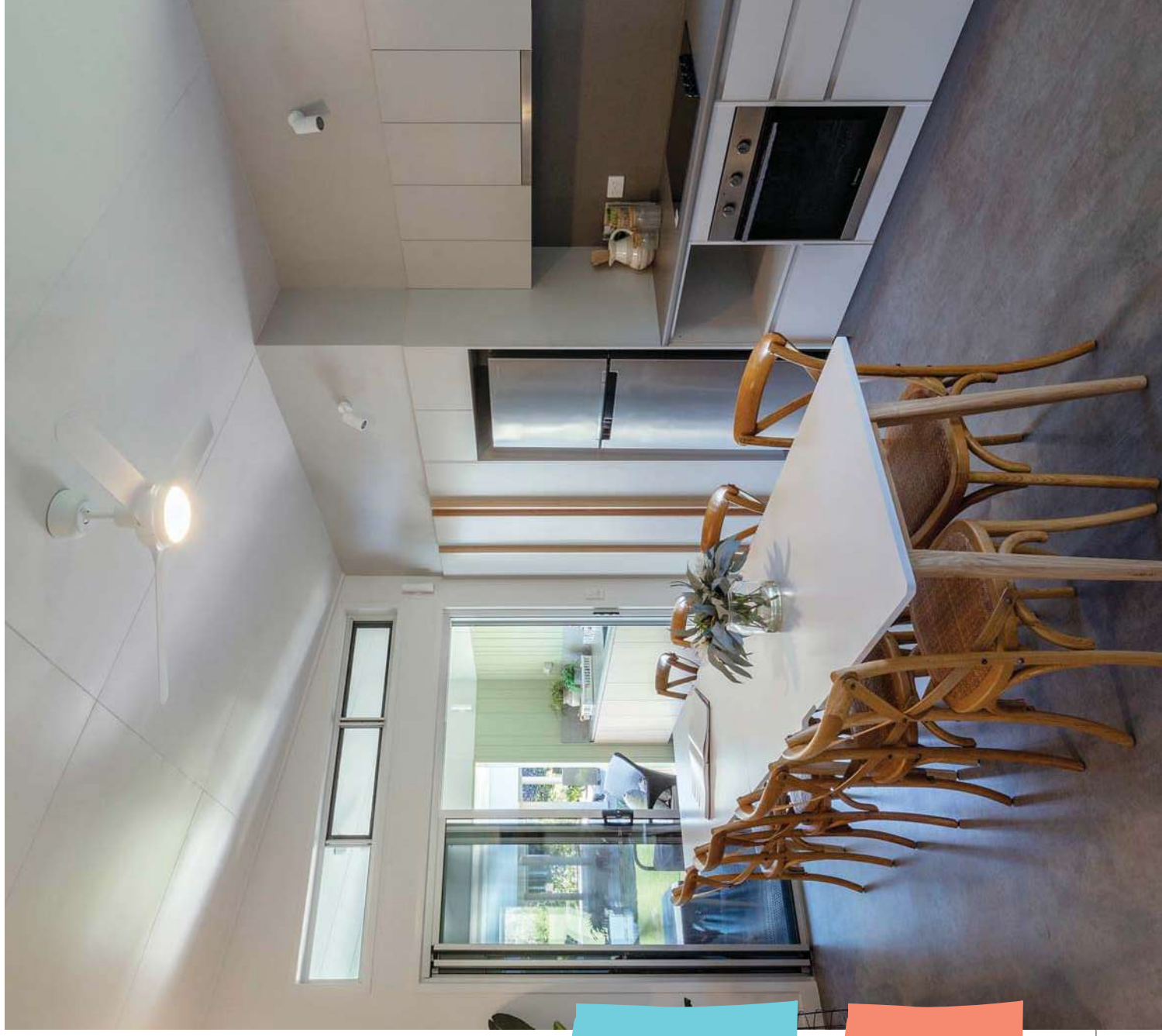
Our region

OUR REGION

The Torres Strait is a strait between Australia and Papua New Guinea. It is 151 km (94 mi) wide at its narrowest extent. To the south is Cape York Peninsula, the northernmost extremity of the Australian mainland. To the north is the Western Province of Papua New Guinea, only 4 km from Saibai.

The Strait links the Coral Sea in the east with the Arafura Sea and Gulf of Carpentaria in the west. Although it is an important international shipping channel, it is very shallow (water depth of 7-15 metres) with a maze of reefs and islands with strong tidal currents in the narrow channels.

Geographically, the islands in the Torres Strait can be divided into four main groups: an eastern group of high volcanic islands; a central group of low sandy islands; a western group of high islands composed of volcanic and granitic rocks; and a northern group of low islands composed of mangrove mud and peats.

Our region

REGIONAL DEMOGRAPHICS

Council's local government area is rich in culture with two traditional languages and six dialects, as well as Youmpla Tok (Torres Strait Creole) and English spoken across the region.

Our local government area is the most northern Council in Australia, distributed across 42,000km2 of sea. Our region consists of 15 divisions across 14 islands, extending 200 to 300km from far east to far west of our local government area.

Our local government area is an area covered by several governance frameworks with an internal border, the Torres Strait Protected Zone and the Torres Strait Treaty zone.

Council's portfolio of responsibilities extends beyond the standard remit of local government. Our operations are spread across 42,000km2 and include the provision of 75 home support services and the management of regional transport infrastructure.

Our Region

Kala Lagaw Ya
Language Group

Miriam Mir/Mer
Language

Erub/Ugar dialect

UGAR (Stephen Island)
ERUB (Darnley Island)

MER (Murray Island)
Mer dialect

MASIG (Yorke Island)

Kulkalgau Ya dialect

PORUMA (Coconut Island)

WARRABER (Sue Island)

IAMA (Yam Island)

PNG

QLD

SAIBAI

DAUAN (Mt. Cornwallis Island)
Kalaw Kawaw Ya dialect

BOIGU (Talbot Island)

MABUIAG (Jervis Island)
Mabuyag dialect

BADU (Mulgrave Island)

MUA
WUG (St. Pauls Community)
ARKAI (Kubin Community)

KIRIRRI (Hammond Island)
Waiben (Thursday Island)
Kaurareg dialect

Cape York Peninsula

A population base of 5,000+

15 Councillors (Incl. Deputy Mayor)
1 Mayor

15 Unique & Individual Island Communities, that sit within 5 nation clusters

We have 4 types of islands

- An eastern group of high volcanic islands
- A central group of low sandy islands
- A western group of high islands composed of volcanic & granite rocks
- A northern group of low islands composed of marginal muds & peats

2 Home of traditional languages and
6 dialects

Home of traditional languages:
Meriam Mir
Kala Lagaw Ya

Our Region is Home to Art Centres 3

5 TORRES STRAIT ISLAND SOCIAL HOUSING STRATEGY 2024

The Masig statement

THE MASIG STATEMENT

23 August 2022

MALUNGU YANGU WAKAY

The Voice from the Deep

PURPOSE

To establish principles and parameters on behalf of the peoples of the Torres Strait and Northern Peninsula Area to act together in unity, in order to pursue and achieve self-determination and regional autonomy and, in so doing, preserve our distinctive and diverse spiritual, material and economic relationship with the lands, territories, waters, coastal seas and other resources with which we have a connection under Ailan Kastom and Aboriginal tradition.

AIMS

1.   *In accordance with Article 3 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 13th September 2007 and supported by the Australian Government on 3rd April 2009 and the Preamble of the Human Rights Act 2019 (Qld), we seek to achieve our right to self-determination as the peoples of the Torres Strait and Northern Peninsula Area.*

2.   *By virtue of our sovereign right, we have the right to freely determine our political status and to freely pursue our economic, social and cultural development.*

3.   *In keeping with Article 4 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, in exercising our right to self-determination, we have the right to autonomy or self-government in matters relating to our internal and local affairs, as well as ways and means for financing their autonomous functions.*

4.   *Therefore, we will create partnerships with Key Regional Stakeholders, the Queensland and Australian governments together with other relevant organisations to better equip us to work together to achieve our regional goals and aspirations; and in working together as representatives of the peoples of the Torres Strait and Northern Peninsula Area obtain and safeguard our human rights enshrined in International, National and Queensland law.*

PAST   23 August 1937 was the beginning of regional autonomy √ The Torres Strait Island Councillors Conference.

PRESENT   23 August 2022 is the beginning of a new beginning, a culturally united path to regional sovereignty The MASIG Statement.

FUTURE   23 August 2037 will be the beginning of regional sovereignty.

"Access to housing is a fundamental human right that still needs to be realised for many of our 15 isolated and remote island communities, particularly those impacted by our unique location near international borders.

As the current Housing Service Provider we continue to deliver both tenancy and property management services. Ensuring safe, affordable and secure housing for our people across the region is a challenging endeavour, however it can also be a real opportunity, with the right policy setting, investment from Government and strong partnerships with our communities.

To achieve better health outcomes, creating healthier, safer and thriving communities, providing appropriate housing is essential. When families are happy and feel safe, they can flourish, prosper and thrive and most importantly feel valued, enabling them to maintain kinship and their deep affiliations to land and sea country.
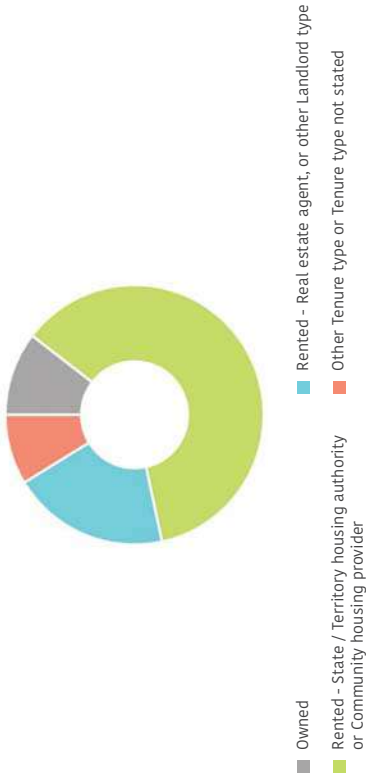
Our ten-year strategic plan for social housing offers a clear road map for Council to engage in dialogue, and advocate to all levels of Government to work in collaboration and partnership with our Council as we move toward achieving our aims outlined in The Masig Statement."
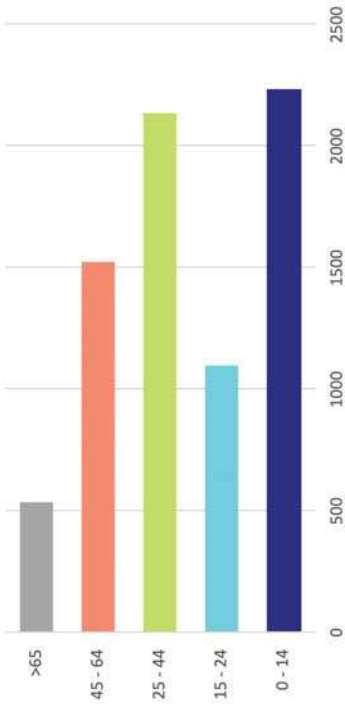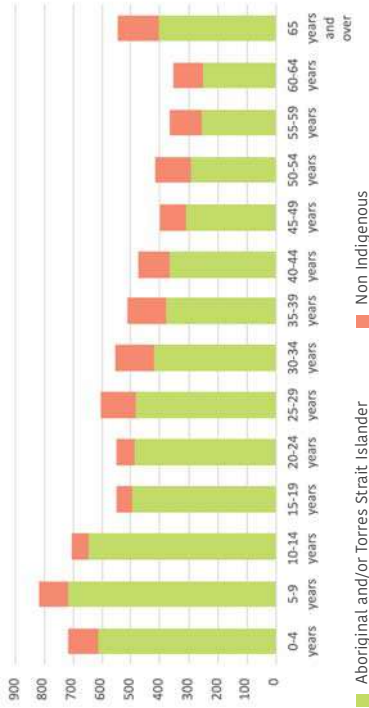
Phillemon Mosby
TSIRC Mayor

Our communities

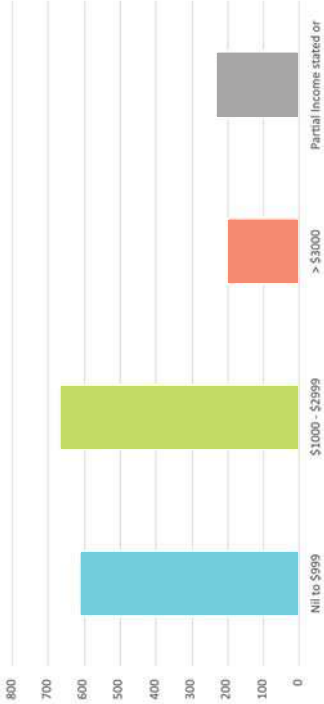## Tenure

- Owned
- Rented - State / Territory housing authority or Community housing provider
- Rented - Real estate agent, or other Landlord type
- Other Tenure type or Tenure type not stated

Age

First Nations status

- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
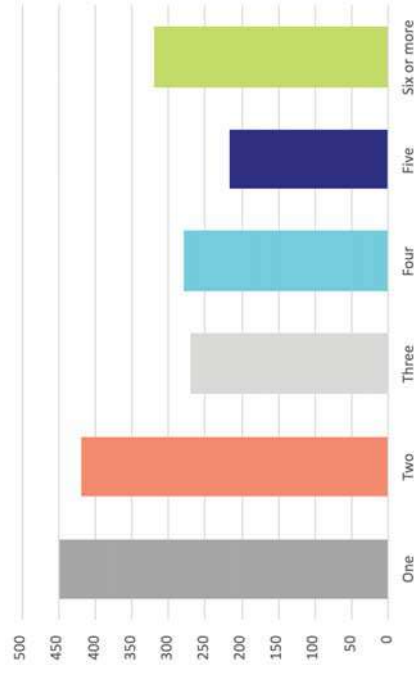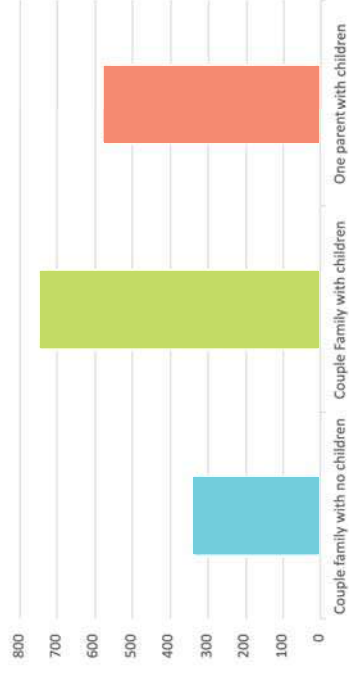- Non Indigenous

Income
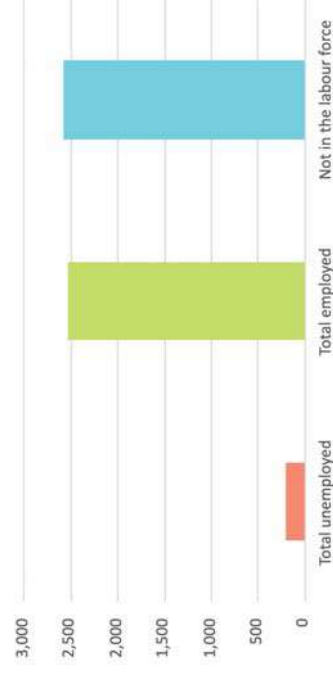
Our communities

Household composition

Family composition

Employment status

Our customs and culture

For Torres Strait Islander people, housing is more than just a place to live – it is the heart of community life, cultural continuity and social well-being. Homes are where traditions are passed down, families gather and connections to land and sea are maintained.

Housing reflects the values of kinship, respect for Elders and the collective spirit that defines the Torres Strait Islander way of life. It provides the foundation for strong, resilient communities, supporting not only physical shelter but cultural identity, social unity and a deep connection to the natural environment.

Our housing need

Housing Need Data held by Council - TSIRC Housing Department categories the Housing Need through the islands in 3 main categories:

PRIORITY ONE
VERY HIGH NEED: Homeless, Child Safety, Health, Disability and Domestic Violence

PRIORITY TWO
HIGH NEED: Overcrowding

PRIORITY THREE
MODERATE/LOWER NEED: Return to Community

The vast majority of housing in the Torres Strait Island LGA is social housing supplied and managed by the Torres Strait Island Regional Council (TSIRC) - with 2021 ABS Census data showing that 89.4% of dwellings are rented and 6.2% fully owned and 0.3% being purchased.

The rate of homelessness is 300 per 10,000 persons compared with 43.2 per 10,000 for Queensland. The capacity to move to private ownership is minimal, with 100% of the population in the most disadvantaged quintile of the Socio-Economic Index for Areas (SEIFA).
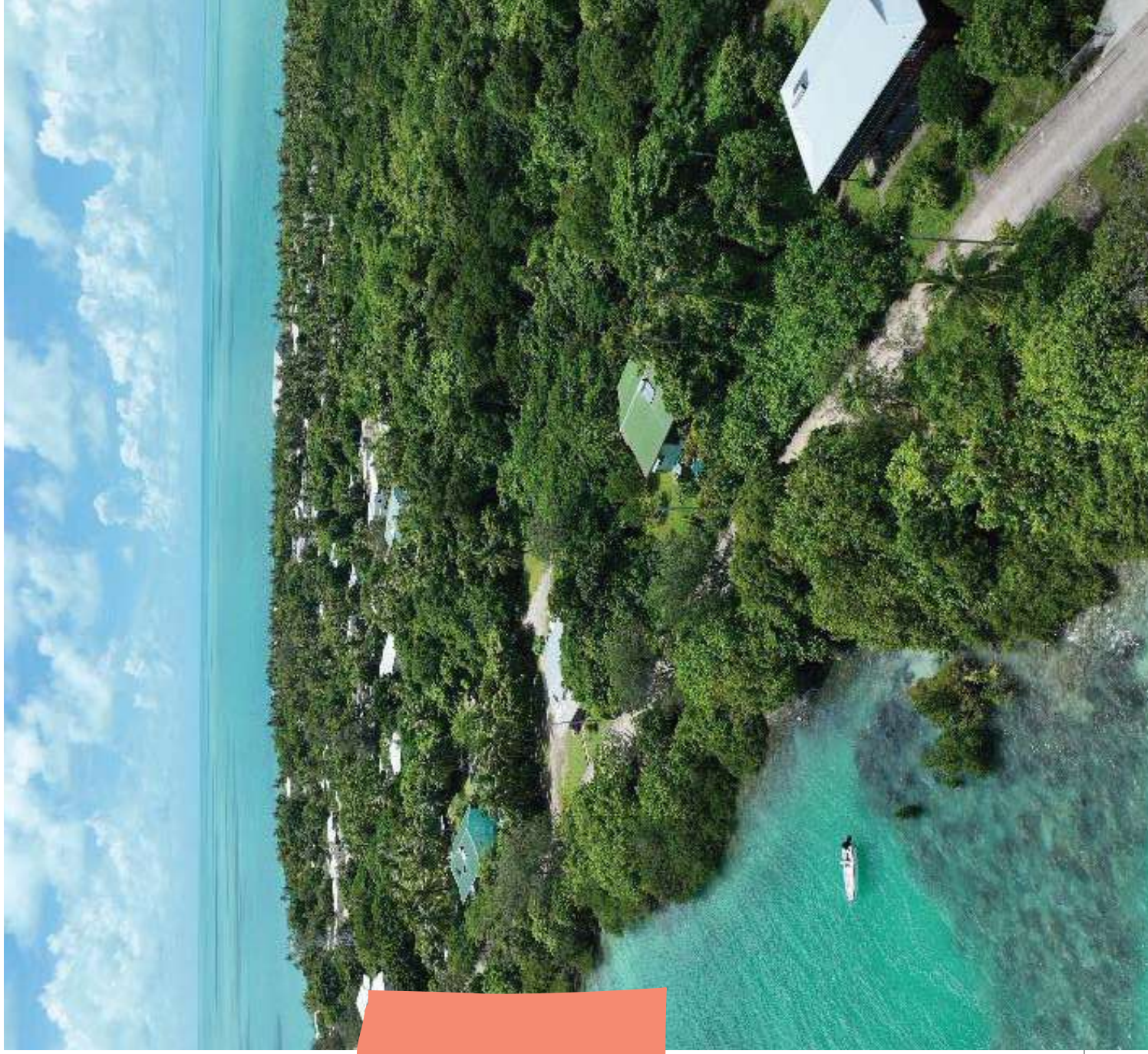
Our cohorts and their Needs

FAMILIES – LARGE FAMILIES WITH MULTI-GENERATIONAL LIVING ARRANGEMENTS

This cohort consists of families that have multiple generations living together under one roof. These households may include grandparents, parents, children and sometimes even extended relatives such as uncles, aunts and cousins. These living arrangements are common in our Communities and can arise due to several factors such as:

Cultural traditions: In our culture, it is common for several generations to live together, where the elders are cared for by the younger generations and family bonds are deeply valued.

Economic necessity: High housing costs or economic hardship can make multi-generational living a practical solution for sharing expenses, including housing, utilities and caregiving responsibilities.

Caregiving needs: In some cases, elderly family members may require care, or young parents may need help with childcare. Multi-generational homes provide a support system where caregiving is shared across generations.

The housing needs for this cohort are often different from those of nuclear families. They typically require larger living spaces with multiple bedrooms, flexible living areas and facilities that cater to both older adults and young children. Homes with accessible features for the elderly, such as ramps or single-level layouts, may also be necessary.

Our cohorts and their Needs

This cohort comprises individuals or families, often women and children, who are escaping or have experienced family and domestic violence. They face unique and urgent housing needs, as their primary concern is often immediate safety and security. Survivors of domestic violence often require:

Safe and secure accommodation: Short-term crisis accommodation such as women's shelters or refuges, where they can safely escape their abuser and receive support.

Longer – term housing solutions: Once they have moved out of immediate danger, these individuals and families need stable, long-term housing options. Affordable housing in safe neighbourhoods is essential and sometimes survivors need support transitioning into independent living.

Specialised support services: This group often benefits from integrated support services, such as counselling, legal assistance and access to employment opportunities. The impact of domestic violence on mental health, economic independence and social well-being often requires holistic support systems.

The needs of this cohort extend beyond just housing; a trauma-informed approach that ensures emotional and physical safety is essential in meeting their overall well-being. This cohort's housing needs vary from short term crisis accommodation to long term settlement in a dwelling suitable for the family size and composition.

Our cohorts and their Needs

SENIORS – INDEPENDENT LIVING

This cohort includes older adults, typically 65 and over, who are still relatively independent but may have some physical limitations or health conditions. These seniors would prefer to live autonomously rather than with family members. The main features of housing suitable for this group include:

Age-friendly designs: Homes designed to be age-friendly, with features such as no-step entries, single-level living, wide doorways, grab bars in bathrooms and good lighting.

Proximity to family: While seniors may not wish to live directly with their family members, they often prefer to reside nearby. This allows them to maintain a connection with the family unit, while still preserving their own independent and secure living space.

Community engagement: Social isolation can be a concern for seniors, so housing solutions MUST include access to community and cultural activities.

Safety and security: Homes that are safe and secure are critical for seniors who may be more vulnerable to outside intrusions.

Independent living seniors often seek to age in place, meaning they prefer homes that will accommodate their changing mobility and health needs over time without requiring them to relocate. The housing needs for this cohort are generally single level, smaller and more compact in nature.

Our cohorts and their Needs

This cohort comprises single parents, typically mothers, raising one or more children on their own. Single-parent families often face specific challenges in balancing work, childcare and household responsibilities. Their housing needs include:

Suitable family housing: Single-parent families are usually dependant on Government welfare payments, making social housing critical. They need housing that is safe and provides sufficient space for children, including multiple bedrooms.

Safety and stability: Many single-parent families have experienced instability, whether through divorce, the death of a partner, or other life changes. Therefore, stable housing is essential for providing a secure environment where the parent and children can thrive.

Community support services: Single parents will need access to social services, such as financial assistance, parenting resources and childcare. In addition, housing that offers community connections can help single parents build a support network.

Single-parent households, especially those headed by women, are a key group for housing programs aimed at creating equitable opportunities. The housing needs for this cohort vary and they require a dwelling suitable for the family size and composition.

Our cohorts and their needs

SINGLE ADULT MEN

This cohort includes single men, often of working age, who live independently and are typically without dependents. This group can encompass a wide range of individuals, from young men to middle-aged or elderly men who may be facing health issues, or homelessness. Their housing needs may include:

Single housing units: Single adult males often need access to social housing options such as single-room occupancy (SRO) units, shared accommodations, or small studio apartments.

Community proximity: Single men will require housing that allows them to maintain community connections and cultural customs and traditions.

Temporary or transitional housing: Some men may be experiencing temporary homelessness and require transitional housing that provides them with shelter while they wait for a social housing opportunity to arise.

Health and wellness support: Mental health, substance abuse, or medical challenges may affect this group disproportionately, meaning they may require housing that includes access to support services such as counselling or healthcare.

The housing needs for this cohort are generally more compact in nature with single bedroom accommodation considered a suitable option. Single adult males often fall through the cracks of social safety nets, making tailored housing solutions important for improving their stability and quality of life.

closing the gap

Providing a safe and secure home for First Nations people is a crucial foundation for enabling individuals and communities to thrive. Safe, secure and culturally appropriate housing not only meets basic needs but also serves as a platform for improving health, education, employment and social and emotional wellbeing.

Target 4: Children thrive in the early years

Culturally appropriate housing that is designed and informed by community members ensures that homes align with the cultural values, practices and child-rearing traditions of the Torres Strait Islander community. This can contribute to creating stable, supportive environments that allow children to grow and thrive. Adequate, stable housing is a key factor in early childhood development. Homes that are not overcrowded and that provide a safe space are essential for the wellbeing of children. Community-Led Place-Based Design ensures that housing design supports extended family structures, which are significant in the Torres Strait Islander culture. This allows children to be raised in environments where they can receive support from a broader kinship network, contributing to their emotional and developmental wellbeing.

Target 9: People can secure appropriate, affordable housing

Culturally appropriate housing, guided by Community-Led Place-Based Design, helps address the specific housing needs of Torres Strait Islander people. For instance, designing homes that accommodate multi-generational living or seasonal migration patterns can better align with their cultural practices and improve their overall living conditions. Community involvement ensures that housing solutions are contextually appropriate, thus reducing the likelihood of overcrowding, as homes are designed with the right size and facilities for the intended family structures and fosters local ownership and pride in the housing projects.

Target 13: Families and households are safe

A community-led approach ensures that housing design incorporates safety features and mechanisms that are in line with cultural norms while addressing concerns about family violence. Appropriately designed housing can also offer spaces that support family privacy and wellbeing, which are critical in reducing tension and conflict within households. Community-led initiatives foster collective responsibility, allowing the community to create housing solutions that support family safety, with the potential to provide culturally safe environments for women and children.

Target 14: People enjoy high levels of social and emotional wellbeing

Housing designed through a Community-Led Place-Based process is likely to incorporate cultural symbols, community gathering spaces and designs that reflect the traditional lifestyle of Torres Strait Islanders. This reinforces cultural identity and pride, directly contributing to social and emotional wellbeing. Having a secure and appropriate place to live is a fundamental determinant of health and wellbeing. Culturally appropriate housing fosters a sense of belonging, which enhances social cohesion and contributes positively to mental health outcomes. The design process itself can empower communities, giving them a voice in shaping their living environments. This empowerment and involvement promote a sense of control over their circumstances, further supporting emotional wellbeing.

Our housing design

The Torres Strait Island Regional Council (TSIRC) has partnered with QOGA to develop a housing design that considers the climatic, cultural and lifestyle needs of the Torres Strait Island people. TSIRC is working closely with QOGA to adapt and modify the design to meet various accommodation needs, including those listed below:

Housing requirement	Design and construction delivery process
Modular House – Lowset	Modern Methods of Construction QOGA open plan island design delivered in a volumetric modular capacity
Modular House – Highset	Modern Methods of Construction QOGA open plan island design delivered in a volumetric modular capacity
Traditional Build – Lowset	QOGA open plan island design delivered in a flatpack kit of parts capacity with onsite assembly
Traditional Build – Highset	QOGA open plan island design delivered in a flatpack kit of parts capacity with onsite assembly
Detached Extension – Lowset	QOGA open plan island design modified for extension arrangements. These designs will be delivered either as MMC volumetric modular units or as flatpack kits, allowing for onsite assembly
Detached Extension – Highset	QOGA open plan island design modified for extension arrangements. These designs will be delivered either as MMC volumetric modular units or as flatpack kits, allowing for onsite assembly
Underbuild/Attached extension	Bespoke designs will be developed based on existing dwellings, utilising durable materials specified for offshore marine conditions, with construction taking place onsite
Duplex/Triplex	QOGA open plan island design will be modified based on land availability and conditions, utilising durable materials specified for offshore marine conditions, with construction taking place onsite.
Low-rise Units	A range of designs will be developed based on land availability and conditions, utilising durable materials specified for offshore marine conditions, with construction taking place onsite
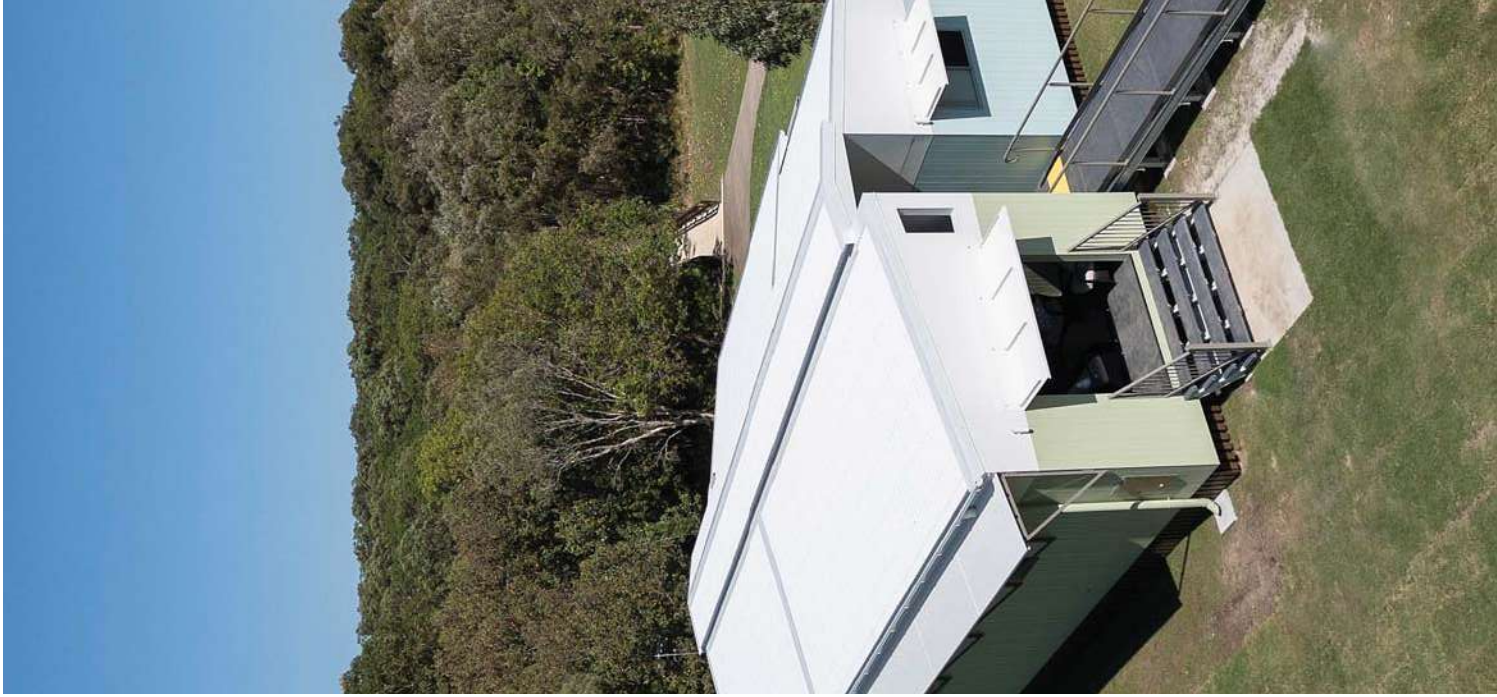
Land availability and development

Community	P1	P2	P3	Lots	Development (Subdivision Required)	Cost	Action
Badu	15	17	7	32	5-10 Years	$62,696,175	Refer Masterplan
Boigu	2	12	1	4	1-5 Years	$23,662,648	Refer Masterplan
Dauan	3	7	11	3	1-5 Years	$12,345,788	Refer Masterplan
Erub	4	3	0	5	1-5 Years	$11,068,844	Refer Masterplan
Hammond	5	9	6	1	1-5 Years	$3,845,784	Refer Masterplan
Iama	7	16	5	11	5-10 Years	$6,429,770	Refer Masterplan
Kubin	TBA	TBA	TBA	19	TBA	$2,896,532	Refer Masterplan
Mabuiag	2	1	0	8	10 Years +	$3,195,879	Refer Masterplan
Masig	2	5	1	15	10 years +	$2,316,975	Refer Masterplan
Mer	1	12	1	12	10 Years +	$9,191,972	Refer Masterplan
Poruma	0	4	3	2	1-5 Years	$1,097,857	Refer Masterplan
Saibai	4	6	6	4	1-5 Years	$64,979,679	Refer Masterplan
St Pauls	3	9	8	23	10 Years +	$32,797,631	Refer Masterplan
Ugar	0	1	1	9	10 Years +	$1,867,271	Refer Masterplan
Warraber	1	6	2	4	5-10 Years	$21,376,567	Refer Masterplan

consolidated construction plan

Community	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30	30/31	31/32	32/33	33/34	34/35	Total	Budget
Badu	2	2	2	4	4	3	5	6	6	5	39	$113,509,838
Boigu	2		2	2		2		3	2	2	15	$42,987,621
Dauan	1	1		3	2	3	2	4	2	4	22	$63,035,025
Erub		3	2		2	1	1				9	$20,710,050
Hammond	2		3		4	2	4		4	1	20	$56,750,322
Iama	2	4		4	2	4	3	4	2	3	28	$79,680,438
Mabuiag			3								3	$7,712,820
Masig		2			3		2	1			8	$22,184,061
Mer	2		3	2	3		2		2	2	16	$41,733,264
Poruma		2		2		1				2	7	$19,682,200
Saibai	2		4		2	2	2		2	2	16	$45,055,780
St Pauls		3		2	4	4	2	4	1		20	$56,466,503
Ugar	1								1		2	$5,560,342
Warraber	2		2	1		4					9	$24,204,123
Total	**16**	**17**	**21**	**20**	**26**	**26**	**23**	**22**	**22**	**21**	**214**	**$599,272,390**

construction delivery timeline – P1

Community	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30	30/31	31/32	32/33	33/34	34/35	Total	Budget
Badu	2			2	2	2	2	2	2	1	15	$42,929,854
Boigu	2										2	$4,800,000
Dauan		1		2							3	$7,805,846
Erub			2		2						4	$10,649,990
Hammond	2		1		2						5	$12,879,050
Iama		2		2		2	1				7	$18,940,953
Mabuiag			2								2	$5,141,880
Masig		2									2	$4,968,000
Mer			1								1	$2,570,940
Poruma											0	
Saibai			2			2					4	$10,842,774
St Pauls		1			2						3	$7,992,110
Ugar											0	
Warraber				1							1	$2,660,923
Total	6	6	8	7	8	6	3	2	2	1	49	$132,182,321

construction delivery timeline – p2

Community	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30	30/31	31/32	32/33	33/34	34/35	Total	Budget
Badu		2	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	17	$48,660,240
Boigu			2	2		2		2	2	2	12	$35,134,151
Dauan	1			1		2		2		2	8	$22,000,665
Erub		3				1	1				5	$10,060,060
Hammond			2		2		2		2	1	9	$26,142,053
Iama	2	2		2		2	2	2	2	2	16	$45,660,697
Mabuiag			1								1	$2,570,940
Masig					2		2	1			5	$14,462,006
Mer	2		2	2	2		2		2	2	14	$36,408,269
Poruma		2		2							4	$10,289,846
Saibai	2		2		2						6	$15,449,990
St Pauls		2		2		2		2	1		9	$25,258,022
Ugar	1										1	$2,400,000
Warraber	2		2			2					6	$15,842,306
Total	**10**	**11**	**13**	**13**	**10**	**12**	**11**	**11**	**11**	**11**	**113**	**$310,339,245**

construction delivery timeline – P3

Community	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30	30/31	31/32	32/33	33/34	34/35	Total	Budget
Badu							1	2	2	2	7	$21,919,744
Boigu								1			1	$3,053,470
Dauan					2	1	2	2	2	2	11	$33,228,514
Erub												
Hammond						2	2		2		6	$17,729,219
Iama					2			2		1	5	$15,078,788
Mabuiag												
Masig					1						1	$2,754,055
Mer					1						1	$2,754,055
Poruma						1				2	3	$9,392,354
Saibai							2		2	2	6	$18,763,016
St Pauls					2	2	2	2			8	$23,216,371
Ugar									1		1	$3,160,342
Warraber						2					2	$5,700,894
Total					**8**	**8**	**9**	**9**	**9**	**9**	**52**	**$156,750,824**

Delivery model and future housing construction programs

When the Council manage construction programs, as principal, principal contractor and program manager through funding agreements, the Council ensures that culturally appropriate practices and local knowledge are incorporated into the planning and delivery of social housing programs. The unique cultural context of the Torres Strait Islanders can be better respected and preserved when the Council controls the process.

Community Engagement is essential and the Council can ensure meaningful engagement with the community at every stage of the project, ensuring residents' voices are heard and their needs and aspirations are met. This includes ensuring traditional protocols are followed during construction, from land use agreements to engaging with elders and community leaders.

Housing can be built to accommodate extended family living and other cultural requirements with Custom Design features preferable and can be as simple as incorporating designs that reflect the local culture, climate and way of life. When community members are actively involved in the design and delivery of social housing, they take more pride in the results, which leads to greater care and long-term sustainability of the housing stock.

Given the logistical challenges of working in remote locations like the Torres Strait Islands, the Council can ensure that housing projects are specifically designed and managed to suit the unique geographical and environmental challenges of the region. The Custom Design must ensure that housing is sustainable and resilient and built to withstand local climate conditions, such as high humidity, extreme weather events and saltwater corrosion.

When the Council is directly responsible for managing housing programs, there is likely to be greater trust and confidence in the process among residents as the community feels more connected to the outcomes.

By managing construction programs internally, the Council can ensure that the social housing outcomes are aligned with broader strategic goals for the Torres Strait Island region. This includes improved Housing Standards that meet the long-term needs of residents, particularly in terms of space and accessibility. Driving community cohesion, promoting social well-being and encouraging community engagement and providing a holistic approach to community development.

Impacts and challenges

NATIVE TITLE

Challenges:

Legal complexities: Social housing projects on Indigenous lands must navigate Native Title legislation, requiring consent from Traditional Owners before development can proceed.

Time-intensive negotiations: Achieving agreements with Traditional Owners, such as Indigenous Land Use Agreements (ILUAs), can be a slow process, delaying project timelines.

Cultural sensitivity: Housing projects must respect local customs, cultural protocols and traditional land uses, which may require additional community consultation and adjustments to housing plans.

Impacts:

Delayed project start: Native Title negotiations can significantly extend the time required to secure land for social housing, delaying the commencement of construction.

Higher costs: The legal fees and time involved in navigating Native Title processes can increase the overall cost of delivering housing as well as the required payable compensation.

Community relations: Fostering strong, respectful relationships with Traditional Owners is critical but time-consuming, impacting both project timelines and outcomes.

Impacts and challenges

AVAILABILITY OF LAND

Challenges:

Limited suitable land: The Torres Strait Islands have limited land suitable for development due to natural constraints, traditional land ownership and environmental concerns.

Competing land uses: Land for social housing competes with other uses, such as community spaces, environmental conservation and private land, making it harder to allocate space for new developments.

Impacts:

Difficulty securing land: Finding available and appropriate land for social housing is a challenge, leading to delays in addressing housing needs.

Overcrowding: With limited land, social housing developments may face issues of overcrowding, leading to inadequate living conditions for families in need.

Higher land acquisition and development costs: The scarcity of land suitable for development can inflate land prices, putting pressure on government budgets for social housing.

Impacts and challenges

COST TO DEVELOP SUBDIVISIONS

Challenges:

Infrastructure Deficits: Many of the Torres Strait Islands lack the essential infrastructure needed for subdivisions (e.g. roads, water, electricity and sewage), requiring significant upfront investment.

High Transportation Costs: The remote location of the islands drives up costs for transporting materials, equipment and labour necessary to develop subdivisions.

Environmental and Topographical Challenges: The unique geography and environmental regulations of the islands require tailored planning, which increases both complexity and cost.

Impacts:

Increased Project Costs: Developing the infrastructure necessary for social housing subdivisions is expensive, significantly raising the total cost of housing programs.

Lengthy Development Process: The need to build or upgrade infrastructure often leads to longer project timelines, delaying the availability of housing.

Budget Constraints: The higher costs of subdivision development may strain government housing budgets, limiting the number of homes that can be constructed and potentially reducing the scope of housing programs.

Impacts and challenges

Challenges:

Logistics and supply chain issues: Transporting building materials and supplies from mainland Australia to the Torres Strait is a complex and complicated task, particularly for remote islands that are difficult to access.

Specialised housing needs: Social housing must be tailored to withstand harsh tropical conditions, such as strong winds, high humidity and saltwater corrosion, requiring more durable materials and construction techniques.

Inflated construction costs: The cost of labour, materials and transportation is significantly higher than on the mainland, making housing more expensive to deliver.

Impacts:

Reduced housing capacity: The high cost of delivering homes in the Torres Strait may limit the number of homes that can be built under social housing funding programs, exacerbating housing shortages.

Increased government expenditure: The higher costs of construction and logistics put additional pressure on government budgets, potentially leading to fewer resources available for other essential services.

Extended timeframes: The logistical and climatic challenges involved in building suitable homes can lead to longer construction periods, delaying the delivery of housing to vulnerable populations.
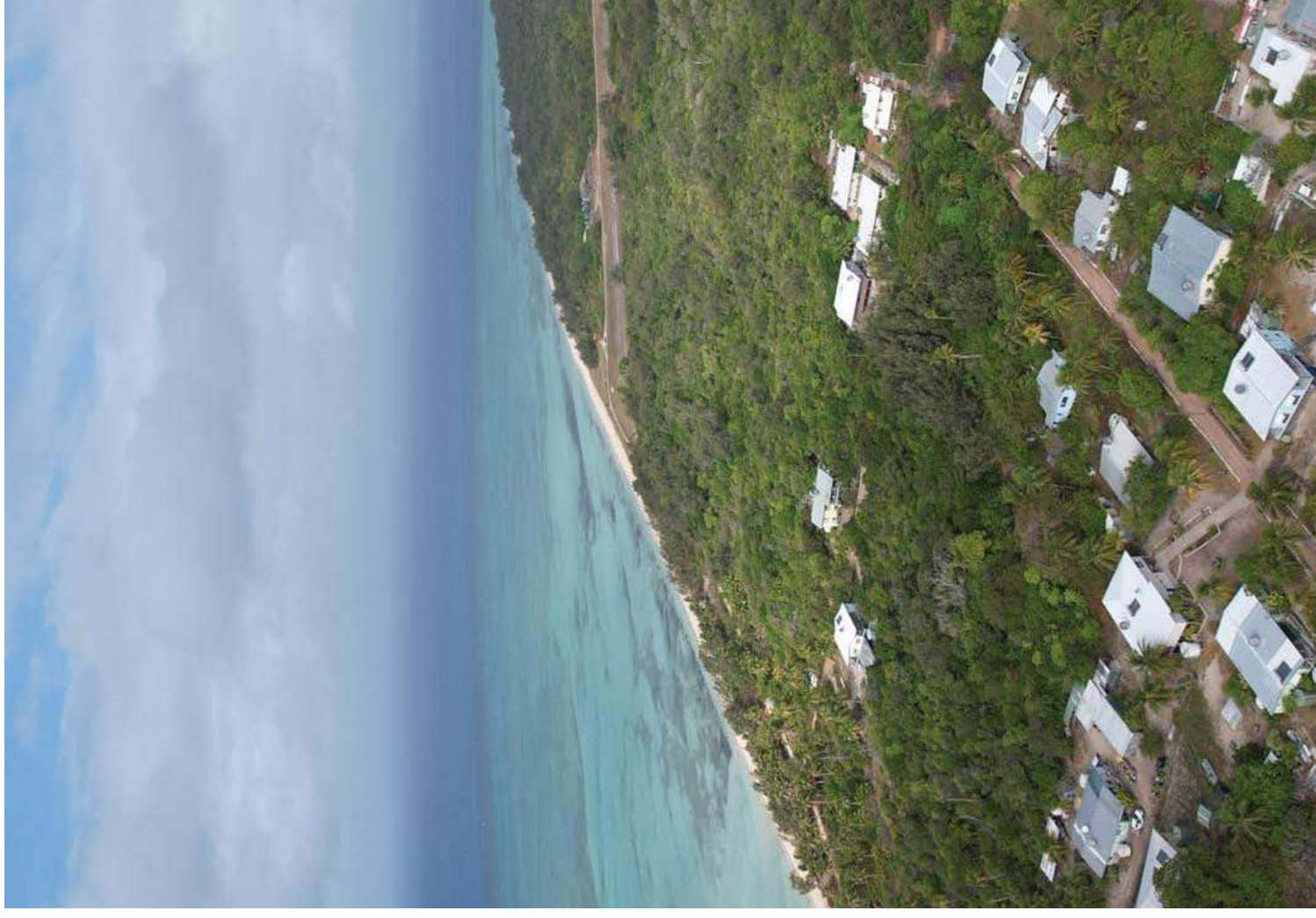
Impacts and challenges

AVAILABILITY OF CONTRACTORS TO DELIVER CONSTRUCTION PROGRAM IN THE TORRES STRAIT

Challenges:

Labor shortages: The remoteness of the Torres Strait Islands makes it difficult to attract and retain qualified contractors and skilled workers, as many prefer to work in less isolated areas.

Limited local workforce: There is a lack of locally available skilled tradespeople, which means contractors may need to be sourced from mainland Australia, further driving up costs and creating logistical challenges.

Seasonal constraints: The tropical climate, including wet seasons and cyclones, can restrict the window of opportunity for construction, limiting the availability of contractors during key periods.

Impacts:

Project delays: A limited pool of contractors and skilled workers can lead to delays in social housing construction, lengthening the time it takes to complete projects and address housing needs.

Higher labour costs: The scarcity of contractors in the region drives up labour costs, which can strain government funding for housing programs and reduce the overall number of homes delivered.

Dependency on external workers: Heavy reliance on contractors from outside the region may create logistical challenges, such as higher costs for travel and accommodation, and potential delays in project delivery due to contractor availability.

Extended timeframes: The logistical and climatic challenges involved in building suitable homes can lead to longer construction periods, delaying the delivery of housing to vulnerable populations.

Our housing future

	Action	Timeframe
1	Purchase and implementation of a Housing Management System to streamline the housing application and assessment process, ensuring the Housing Needs Register remains accurate. This system will also improve data accuracy and facilitate easy retrieval, supporting more informed decision-making.	Short - 6-12 months
2	Review developed land holdings to identify lots that would be suitable for social housing development	Short - 6-12 months
3	Commence development of ILUAs for identified social housing lots to ensure Native Title is addressed prior to being selected for development	Short - 12-18 months
4	Review current condemned social housing dwellings and seek funding for remediation and redevelopment	Short - 6-12 months
5	Undertake a review and update current Masterplans for each island in preparation for any new Council Planning Scheme	Short - 12-24 months
6	Develop a suite of housing design solutions relevant for each cohort to ensure the all members of the community are considered	Short - 6-12 months
7	Foster partnerships with not-for-profit social housing providers to deliver short term outcomes for specific cohorts while longer term solutions are being developed	Med - 24-36 months
8	Commence planning for expansion zones on three islands with identified land shortages and highest social housing need, including seeking funding to develop subdivisions where further lots are required	Med - 24-36 months
9	Undertake Native Title process for expansion zones to ensure timely delivery of funding expectations for subdivision projects	Med - 24-36 months
10	Council, State and Federal Government adopt an integrated planning approach and co-ordinate funding opportunities in the areas of housing, economic development, infrastructure and environmental management	Med - 24-36 months
11	Deliver subdivision developments and social housing outcomes for three identified islands of greatest need	Long - 36 months +
12	Commence planning for expansion zones on further islands with identified land shortages and social housing need, including seeking funding to develop subdivisions where further lots are required	Long - 36 months +

DIRECTORATE: *Corporate Services*
AUTHOR: *Corporate Performance and Planning Lead*

DRAFT ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) USE POLICY

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION:

The Strategic Action Reference Group (SARG) Standing Committee:

  (a) **notes the Draft Artificial Intelligence Use Policy; and**
  (b) **recommends the draft policy be adopted by Council.**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The new Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy establishes guidelines for the use of AI tools within the Torres Strait Island Regional Council (Council).

It aims to ensure that AI tools and systems are used to enhance productivity, decision-making, and service delivery without compromising ethical standards, legal compliance, or public trust.

Following a review by SARG, the policy will be presented to Council for consideration at the December 2024 Council meeting.

BACKGROUND:

Artificial Intelligence is transforming the way organisations including local governments operate, offering opportunities to enhance workplace efficiencies and service delivery. AI is a branch of computer science focused on creating systems capable of performing tasks that typically require human intelligence.

Council does not have an Artificial Intelligence Policy; therefore this is a new policy for consideration and adoption.

The policy applies to all of Council's operations and workers, including Councillors, employees, contractors, labour hire employees and volunteers, who propose, use, manage, or interact with AI tools and systems.

A procedure has been developed to assist with the safe, transparent and correct use of AI technology across the organisation.

COMPLIANCE / CONSIDERATIONS:

Statutory:	N/A
Budgetary:	N/A
Policy:	Investigations
Legal:	Considerations • Information Privacy Act 2009 (QLD) • Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (QLD)
Risk:	This policy must be updated every three years to ensure legislative and commercial aspects relating to the policy are given due consideration
Links to Strategic Plans:	Corporate Plan 2020-2025 (Bisnis Plan) People - Outcome 4: We are a transparent, open, and engaging Council. Sustainability - Outcome 8: We manage Council affairs responsibly to the benefit of our communities.
Masig Statement:	N/A
Standing Committee Consultation:	SARG
Timelines:	Adoption December 2024 and review December 2027

OTHER COMMENTS:

N/A

Robert Blake

Prepared/Recommended:
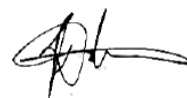Robert Blake
Corporate Planning and Performance Lead

S. Andres

Endorsed:
Susanne Andres
Executive Director Corporate Services

Endorsed:
Warren Jenkins
Manager Technology Services

Approved:
James William
Chief Executive Officer

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1: DRAFT TSIRC Artificial Intelligence Use Policy

Attachment 2: DRAFT TSIRC Artificial Intelligence Use Procedure

Artificial Intelligence Use Policy (DRAFT)

1. PURPOSE

This policy establishes guidelines for the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) within Torres Strait Island Regional Council (Council). It aims to ensure that AI tools and systems are used to enhance productivity, decision-making, and service delivery without compromising ethical standards, legal compliance, or public trust.

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all of Council's operations and workers, including Councillors, employees, contractors, labour hire employees and volunteers, who propose, use, manage, or interact with AI tools and systems.

3. LINK TO CORPORATE PLAN

- People *Bisnis – Pipol*
  - o **Outcome 4**: We are a transparent, open and engaging council.

- Sustainability *Bisnis - Mekem las long*
  - o **Outcome 5**: We plan effectively for the future of our individual communities and region.
  - o **Outcome 8**: We manage council affairs responsibly to the benefit of our communities.

- Prosperity *Bisnis – Pruitpul*
  - o **Outcome 11**: We invest in the retention of key skills within our region.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

Council commits to using AI technologies in a manner that is ethical, transparent, and promotes the welfare of staff and the community while adhering to all applicable laws and regulations.

AI will be engaged in line with the following principles:

- **Transparency**: AI applications must be understandable by and explainable to a wide range of stakeholders.

- **Accountability**: Decisions made with the assistance of AI must include an identifiable chain of accountability.

- **Equity**: AI tools will be used in a way that promotes fairness and avoids bias, ensuring equal and just treatment of all individuals.

- **Privacy and Security**: AI systems will be designed and used in compliance with privacy laws and standards, ensuring that personal and sensitive information is protected.

5. REPORTING

An AI tool is to be referenced when used to create graphics or visual aids, or as a decision-making tool.

6. DEFINITIONS

"Artificial Intelligence" means technology with the capability to do things that appear to be like humans, improving performance through learning from data and experience.

7. RELATED DOCUMENTS AND REFERENCES

- Information Privacy Act 2009 (QLD)
- Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (QLD)
- Information Technology Policy
- Information Technology Change Management Policy
- Privacy Policy
- ICT Acceptable Use Procedure
- ICT Standard Operating Environment Procedure
- Information Privacy Procedure
- Artificial Intelligence Engagement and Use Procedure

8. REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed when depending on its risk rating and/or related legislation/documents are amended or replaced, other circumstances as determined from time to time by Council or at intervals of no more than three (3) years.

Policy type:	☐ Council ☒ Administrative
Directorate:	Corporate Services
Responsible Officer	Manager, Information Technology
Authorised on:	[DD] [M] [YYYY]
Effective date:	[DD] [M] [YYYY]
Next review date:	August 2027
Review history:	New

Procedure Title: Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use Procedure

1. Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to provide a clear and structured approach for the usage of approved AI tools within the operations of the Torres Strait Island Regional Council (Council), ensuring that all uses align with the Council's AI policy, other relevant policies, procedures, guidelines, and regulatory requirements.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to all of Council's operations and workers, including employees, contractors, labour hire employees and volunteers who utilise AI tools in their official duties, including those in administrative, operational, and decision-making roles. This also extends to employees that commission third parties that may use AI tools to complete activities on Council's behalf.

3. Definitions

- **AI Tools**: Software or systems that utilise machine learning, data analytics, or automated decision-making algorithms to perform tasks that typically require human intelligence.

- **Generative AI**: AI that creates new content including, but not limited to, text, speech, images, code and music through the use of algorithms and machine learning.

4. Responsibilities

- **IT Department**: Oversees the procurement, implementation, and maintenance of AI tools.

- **Records Department:** Ensure that confidential records are not compromised by the use of AI.

- **Department Heads**: Ensure their teams are trained and comply with the AI usage procedure.

- **Employees**: Follow the outlined procedure when using AI tools.

5. Procedure Steps

Step 1: Tool Verification

- **1.1 Verify Approval**: Confirm that the AI tool is on the Council's approved list of AI technologies.

- **1.2 Contact IT**: If the tool is not approved, submit a request to the IT Department for evaluation and potential approval.

Step 2: Training and Onboarding

- **2.1 Mandatory Training**: Complete the required training provided by Learning and Development, which covers operational usage and ethical considerations specific to the AI tool.

Step 3: Data Handling

- **3.1 Data Security**: Ensure all data used with the AI tool complies with the Information Privacy Act 2009 (QLD). Official Council information and personal information related to employees or others should not be shared with or uploaded to generative AI products and services not approved for use by Council.

- **3.2 Data Accuracy**: Verify the accuracy and relevance of data before inputting it into the AI system to ensure reliable outputs.

Step 4: Usage

- **4.1 Operate According to Training**: Use the AI tool only as trained, adhering to operational guidelines to ensure ethical and effective usage.

- **4.2 Referencing:** Reports that utilise AI generated graphics or visual aids, or where AI has been relied upon to make decisions, the AI tool is to be referenced.

Step 5: Monitoring and Reporting

- **5.1 Regular Monitoring**: Regularly monitor the outputs and decisions made by the AI tool to ensure accuracy and fairness.

- **5.2 Report Issues**: Immediately report any malfunctions, biases, or discrepancies noted during operation to your manager and the IT Department.

Step 6: Feedback and Improvement

- **6.1 Provide Feedback**: Submit feedback on the AI tool's performance and usability to the IT Department as requested.

- **6.2 Participate in Reviews**: Engage in periodic review sessions to discuss challenges, successes, and potential improvements in AI tool usage

6. Documentation and Record-Keeping

Maintain records of AI tools used, training records, performance reviews, and compliance checks. These documents must be stored securely and be readily accessible for auditing purposes.

7. Compliance

Ensure all steps and activities comply with the council's AI policy, local regulations, and ethical standards. Non-compliance must be reported and will be subject to review and disciplinary action.

8. Review and Updates

This procedure should be reviewed annually or more frequently if significant changes in technology or legislation occur.

Directorate:	Corporate Services
Responsible officer:	Manager Technology Services
Authorised on:	[DD] [M] [YYYY]
Effective date:	[DD] [M] [YYYY]
Next review date:	[Month] [YYYY}
Review history:	New

Appendix 1: Possible uses of AI

AI may be used for a number of purposes to enhance the performance and efficiency of Council. Below are some examples.

Generating documents

AI might assist in the drafting of reports and correspondence, summarising research or texts, or creating other documents. It is important that this is within the employee's area of expertise as the output requires checking for accuracy. Think of the output as a first draft for you to review and correct.

Data Analysis

AI might assist in reviewing data and providing analysis and suggestions. Due to its speed, AI can review a significant amount of data much more quickly than a person could. Be sure to review to the output, run checks for accuracy, false assumptions and inconsistencies. Be mindful that the data output will be affected by the quality of data going in.

Learning and Development

AI might assist with gathering information for learning and development processes. AI may bring together a significant amount of information and provide it in a format that is easy to digest. Ensure you are aware of AI "hallucinations" and fact check the information provided noting that AI has been observed to create false information to fill gaps in knowledge.

Appendix 2: Considerations for use of an AI tool

Before using AI please ensure you have gone through the following considerations:

Have you identified an opportunity where AI might enhance performance and/or efficiency of Council operations?

Is there an AI tool currently listed as authorised for use by Council?

Will the AI require confidential, sensitive or personal information, including draft documents, to be accessed by the AI tool?

Have staff completed the generic AI training and trained in the use of the specific AI tool?

What steps have been taken to ensure the accuracy of the data being provided to the AI tool?

What steps have been taken to ensure the completeness, relevance and accuracy of the output?

What ethical implications are there for using AI in the proposed manner? What actions are proposed to remove or mitigate any ethical concerns?

What considerations of copyright and the use of culturally sensitive materials relate to the proposed use of AI?

Are staff aware that they are responsible for any use, including misuse, of AI and its output, as part of their performance?

DIRECTORATE: *Corporate Services*
AUTHOR: *Executive Director Corporate Services*

RESOLUTION TO CLOSE THE MEETING TO THE PUBLIC

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION:

The Standing 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 for closed discussion and for the reasons outlined under those items.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

A local government meeting is open to the public unless the local government or committee has resolved that the meeting is to be closed.

Section 254J of the *Local Government Regulation 2012* allows the Council or its Standing Committee to close its meeting to the public to discuss one or more of the following matters:

(a)   the appointment, discipline or dismissal of the chief executive officer;

(b)   industrial matters affecting employees;

(c)   the local government's budget;

(d)   rating concessions;

(e)   legal advice obtained by the local government or legal proceedings involving the local government including, for example, legal proceedings that may be taken by or against the local government;

(f)   matters that may directly affect the health and safety of an individual or a group of individuals;

(g)   negotiations relating to a commercial matter involving the local government for which a public discussion would be likely to prejudice the interests of the local government;

(h)   negotiations relating to the taking of land by the local government under the *Acquisition of Land Act 1967*;

(i)   a matter the local government is required to keep confidential under a law of, or formal arrangement with, the Commonwealth or a State;

(j)   an investigation report given to the local government under chapter 5A, part 3, division 5 of the Act.

Section 254J(6) of the *Local Government Regulation 2012* stipulates that a local government or a committee of a local government must not make a resolution (other than a procedural resolution) in a local government meeting, or a part of a local government meeting, that is closed.

Interested Parties/Consultation:

N/A

Background / Previous Council or Committee Consideration:
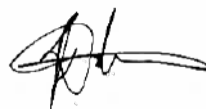
N/A

COMPLIANCE / CONSIDERATIONS:

Statutory:	Section 254J of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*
Budgetary:	N/A
Policy:	Council meetings	State Development and Infrastructure
Legal:	N/A
Risk:	Council breach of its Statutory requirements above.
Links to Strategic Plans:	TSIRC Corporate Plan 2020–2025 *(Bisnis Plan)* Delivery Pillar One – People *(Bisnis – Pipol)* Outcome 4: We are a transparent, open and engaging council. ➢ 4.2 Evolve Council's communication channels and community's access to information.
Masig Statement:	N/A
Standing Committee Consultation:	N/A
Timelines:	Standard Procedure at all Council and Standing Committee Meetings

Other Comments:

Nil.

Recommended:

Susanne Andres
Executive Director Corporate Services

Approved:

James William
Chief Executive Officer

ATTACHMENTS:

Nil.

DIRECTORATE: *Corporate Services*
AUTHOR: *Executive Director Corporate Services*

CLOSED BUSINESS

RESOLUTION TO RETURN THE MEETING TO OPEN DISCUSSION

<u>**OFFICER RECOMMENDATION:**</u>

The Standing Committee resolves to move out of closed discussions pursuant to Section 254I of the
Local Government Regulation 2012.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Section 254I of the *Local Government Regulation 2012* stipulates that a local government meeting is open to the public unless the local government or standing committee has resolved that the meeting is to be closed.

Interested Parties/Consultation:

N/A

Background / Previous Council or Committee Consideration:

N/A

COMPLIANCE / CONSIDERATIONS:

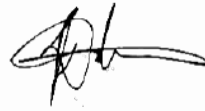|	
Statutory:	Section 254I of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*
Budgetary:	N/A
Policy:	<u>Council meetings	State Development and Infrastructure</u>
Legal:	N/A
Risk:	Council breach of its Statutory requirements above.
Links to Strategic Plans:	TSIRC Corporate Plan 2020–2025 *(Bisnis Plan)* Delivery Pillar One – People *(Bisnis – Pipol)* Outcome 4: We are a transparent, open and engaging council. ➢ 4.2 Evolve Council's communication channels and community's access to information.
Masig Statement:	N/A
Standing Committee Consultation:	N/A
Timelines:	Required procedure for all Council and Standing Committee meetings.

Other Comments:

Nil.

Recommended:

Susanne Andres
Executive Director Corporate Services

Approved:

James William
Chief Executive Officer

ATTACHMENTS:

Nil.

DIRECTORATE: *Corporate Services*
AUTHOR: *Executive Director Corporate Services*

CONSIDERATION OF MATTERS DISCUSSED IN CLOSED SESSION

<u>**OFFICER RECOMMENDATION:**</u>

For the Committee to formally resolve on the matters discussed in its Closed Session.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Section 254J(6) of the *Local Government Regulation 2012* stipulates that a local government or a committee of local government must not make a resolution (other than a procedural resolution) in a local government meeting, or a part of a local government meeting, that is closed.

The open meeting must resume to pass a resolution if any decisions are necessary following the closed-meeting discussion.

Interested Parties/Consultation:

N/A

Background / Previous Committee Consideration:

N/A

COMPLIANCE / CONSIDERATIONS:

Statutory:	Section 254J(6) of the *Local Government Regulation 2012*
Budgetary:	N/A
Policy:	[Council meetings	State Development and Infrastructure](#)
Legal:	N/A
Risk:	Council breach of its Statutory requirements above.
Links to Strategic Plans:	TSIRC Corporate Plan 2020–2025 *(Bisnis Plan)* Delivery Pillar One – People *(Bisnis – Pipol)* Outcome 4: We are a transparent, open and engaging council. 4.2 Evolve Council's communication channels and community's access to information.
Masig Statement:	N/A
Standing Committee Consultation:	N/A
Timelines:	Standard Procedure at each Committee Meeting

Other Comments:

Nil.

Recommended:

Susanne Andres
Executive Director Corporate Services

Approved:

James William
Chief Executive Officer

ATTACHMENTS:

Nil.