



**STRATEGIC ACTION
REFERENCE GROUP (SARG)
MEETING**
14 AUGUST 2024

MINUTES

Time: 1.00pm (*meeting commenced at 1.05pm*)
Venue: Committee Meeting Room, Level 3, 111 Grafton Street, Cairns
Microsoft TEAMS Meeting ID: 492 328 719 745
Passcode: XYbzfi

PRESENT:

Mayor/Chair

Deputy Mayor

Chair - Culture, Arts, Land & Heritage Advisory Committee

Chair - Economic Growth Advisory Committee

Chair - Environment & Climate Adaptation Advisory Committee

Chair - Governance & Leadership Advisory Committee

Chair - Housing, Families and Safe & Healthy Communities Advisory Committee

Cr Phillemon Mosby

Cr Ranetta Wosomo

Cr Chelsea Aniba

Cr Rocky Stephen

Cr Kabay Tamu

Cr Dimas Toby

Cr Keith Fell

APOLOGIES:

Nil

OFFICERS:

Chief Executive Officer

Executive Director Building Services

Executive Director Community Services

Executive Director Corporate Services

Executive Director Engineering Services

Executive Director Financial Services

TSIRC Secretariat

Mr James William

Mr Wayne Green

Mr Dawson Sailor

Ms Susanne Andres

Mr David Baldwin –
via TEAMS

Ms Hollie Faithfull

Mr Darryl Brooks

GUESTS:

Ms Sandy Killick (Democracy Matters) - Masig Statement (*refer AI 2.3*)

Mr Angus Sutherland, | Lead Intergovernmental Relations, LGAQ (*refer AI 2.6*)

Ms Jessica Buxton, Consultant

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

At 1.05pm, the Mayor welcomed Committee Members and staff to the inaugural meeting of the Strategic Action Advisory Group (SARG) Standing Committee, noting that a quorum of members was present.

The Mayor especially welcomed the newly-elected Advisory Committee Chairs (Crs Aniba, Tamu and Toby) and 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.

Cr Rocky Stephen delivered the opening prayer.

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

B. NOTING OF APOLOGIES

Nil apologies.

C. CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS

No COI declarations were made. The Mayor requested that Committee Members advise of any COI declarations should they arise throughout discussions.

1. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES (N/A)

1.1. ACTION ITEMS UPDATE

The status of Action Items from the former Strategic Advisory Reference Group (SARG) were raised by the Mayor. The Chief Executive Officer (Mr James William) spoke to this item and advised that the Action Items from the former Strategic Advisory Reference Group will need to be revised into a more current and strategic listing.

Action:

1. Chief Executive Officer to review/update the Action Items from the former Strategic Advisory Reference Group (SARG).
2. Draft Minutes and Action Items from each SARG to be provided to the Mayor when the Draft Minutes are uploaded onto the TSIRC website.

2. MAYORAL ITEMS

2.1. Strategic Action Reference Group (SARG) & Advisory Committees – Governance Framework

The Mayor referred to the former Strategic Advisory Reference Group (SARG) Performance Review (2024) – see AI 2.2 below – where a key priority was to develop an effective framework where Advisory Committees, SARG and the Council could work strategically to advance the regional focus and establish engaging partnerships with other sister Councils, TSRA, etc. on common critical issues.

The Chief Executive Officer stressed that structural and cultural mindset changes take time. There are process improvements still required for SARG and the Advisory Committees, especially in relation to selecting what will be the key priorities of key deliverables for this term of Council with limited resources without overwhelming the organisation.

The Chief Executive Officer stressed that financial sustainability has to be one of the highest priorities and a prime strategic issue for Council as costs continue to rise and revenue flow is not guaranteed. Council will need to focus on strategic sourcing of revenue, including the building of strong and solid data as to why such revenue is required.

2.2. Former Strategic Advisory Reference Group (SARG) Performance Review 2024

The Mayor highlighted a number of issues discussed at an informal meeting on 3-5 May 2024 of the current SARG members, including:

- 6-monthly planning sessions and review for SARG strategies, to be assisted by an external expert to mentor/coach SARG members; and
- SARG members to be engaged in State/Federal/Regional advocacy.

The Chief Executive Officer recommended that Advisory Committee Chairs work with their respective Lead Executive Directors to strategise the priorities that should be the main purview of their Committee. As an example, there may be 30 'big needs' across the portfolio but the limited resources available to Council realistically mean that only 5 of those 'big needs' can be strategically prioritised.

The Mayor requested that Item 2 of the former SARG Team Assessment Questionnaire be noted and that three items in particular be noted in relation to improvements required for the current SARG Standing Committee:

- be adequately funded and resourced to function effectively;
- be proactively involved in lobbying and advocacy;
- develop a strategic governance framework (that is not only compatible with our internal challenges), that focuses on reframing our relationships with our partners in the region and our place in the region as a service provider and a local government body in the region particularly in the space of driving and influencing the region.

The Mayor requested that the Chief Executive Officer and Executive Directors look at how the matters raised in the for SARG Performance Review 2024 can be implemented for internal governance and best practice.

2.3. Masig Statement Action Plan – Update

Ms Sandy Killick (Democracy Matters) joined the meeting by TEAMS dial-in at 2.10pm to speak to this agenda item. Ms Killick addressed a paper circulated separately titled '*Advancing the Masig Statement TSIRC Action Plan (2024-2028) (Version 2.0)*'.

The Committee confirmed with Ms Killick that the Governance and Leadership Advisory Committee would be the main point of contact for Council in relation to the Masig Statement. The Committee reviewed the strategic actions contained in the Action Plan paper presented by Ms Killick, including confirmation of the responsibility for each strategic action listed, as well as confirmation that the Mayor would have responsibility for Strategic Action 4.

The Mayor advised that he will do a handover with the Chair of the Governance and Leadership Advisory Committee (Cr Toby) on the Masig Statement.

The Mayor requested clarity to be established on how external parties can take ownership and drive the Masig Statement externally as a whole-of-Torres Strait priority, with a focus for what it means for the entire community.

Ms Killick will update the action plan based on the matters discussed and will send back to Councillors.

The Chief Executive Officer advised that in a recent meeting that he and the Mayor had with the Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA) it was made clear that the TSRA would like to drive the Masig Statement at the regional level in the context of regional governance, so it was obvious that for continuity and complementarity purposes that the TSRA needs to give consideration to the adoption of the Masig Statement and the progress to date.

➤ *Ms Killick left the meeting at 2.40pm.*

2.4. Torres Strait & Northern Peninsula Area Regional Organisation of Councils (TS&NPA ROC)

The Mayor advised the Standing Committee that the TS&NPA ROC Mayors met on 9 August 2024 in Cairns and agreed to revisit the terms of reference with a view to formal agreement to secure State Government funding of approximately \$600,000 (notwithstanding the current situation with the Northern Peninsular Area Regional Council with the appointment of a Governance Advisor and Financial Controller to NPARC for the next 6 months in relation to resolving financial challenges, high staff turnover and governance issues).

The Mayor advised that the \$10,000 contribution originally committed by the three TS&NPA ROC member organisations has been utilised to produce a Strategic Plan for the implementation of the TS&NPA ROC. The Mayor advised that he has received confirmation from the report's author that the Strategic Plan has been submitted to the Torres Shire Council. TSIRC was not aware of this development and the Mayor emphasised that it was important for the three Councils to agree and cooperate on agreed priorities for the region.

2.5. Torres and Cape Indigenous Council Alliance (TCICA)

The Mayor currently represents TSIRC on TCICA. TCICA is currently reviewing its Strategic Plan. The Mayor will email SARG Members to seek input on what TSIRC should be advocating for as a member of TCICA.

➤ *Mr Angus Sutherland (Lead of Intergovernmental Relations, LGAQ) joined the meeting at 2.10pm*

2.6. Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ) Indigenous Leaders' Forum (ILF) Accord

Mr Angus Sutherland (Lead of Intergovernmental Relations, LGAQ) spoke to this item advising that the ILF Accord arose out of concerns from Mayors and elected members of the ILF that the engagement by State Government was not adequate nor did it reflect the Government's advocacy framework on Closing the Gap issues. The ILF Accord will be a means to hold the State Government accountable with its programs, decision-making around programs aimed at Closing the Gap as well as directing the Government on how it will engage with regions.

The ILF Accord is still in the consultation phase and the LGAQ is hopeful that the ILF Accord will be finalised prior to the upcoming 2024 State Government elections.

The Mayor sought clarification on the roles of TCICA and the LGAQ. Mr Sutherland advised that the two bodies should complement each other.

Mr Sutherland concluded that a meeting will be held next week (w/b 19/8/24) to finalise the ILF Accord.

➤ *Mr Sutherland left the meeting at 3.35pm.*

2.7. Regional Governance – Regional Leaders’ Forum

The Mayor advised that the Regional Leaders’ Forum will be held in September 2024. The TSIRC priority at this meeting will be to ascertain the current appetite of leaders at that forum to progressing the Regional Assembly.

3. CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORTS

3.1. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) – TSIRC and Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA)

The Chief Executive Officer (Mr James William) spoke to this item and requested that SARG members review the MOU and provide comments back to him as soon as possible to set the narrative.

3.2. Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) – TSIRC and Regional Infrastructure Advisory Committee (RIAC)

The Chief Executive Officer (Mr James William) spoke to this item advising that he is currently in discussions with the RIAC Chief Executive Officer with a view to reactivating the forum.

The TSRA Chair has indicated that it would be aiming to review arrangements so that the TSRA becomes the primary advocacy voice to the Australian Government for funding to the region.

3.3. 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 calendar cycle:

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

Action:

Chief Executive Officer to provide details on the budget and costings for each SARG meeting.

4. BUILDING SERVICES DIRECTORATE

Nil.

5. COMMUNITY SERVICES DIRECTORATE

Nil

➤ *Committee discussions were suspended from 4.00pm to 4.20pm for afternoon tea.*

6. CORPORATE SERVICES DIRECTORATE**6.1 Policy Framework**

The Executive Director Corporate Services (Ms Susanne Andres) spoke to this item. The Committee noted the report and agreed to provide feedback and guidance on the policy, including whether the framework requires further shaping.

6.2 Advocacy Framework

The Executive Director Corporate Services (Ms Susanne Andres) spoke to this item. Ms Andres advised that this framework is very much an early draft and should preferably have been canvassed initially through the Governance and Leadership Advisory Committee prior to consideration by SARG.

The Committee noted the report and agreed to provide feedback and guidance on the framework, including whether the framework requires further refining.

➤ *The Chief Executive Officer (Mr James William) left the meeting at 4.30pm.*

6.3 2025-2023 TSIRC Corporate Plan – Community Consultation

The Executive Director Corporate Services (Ms Susanne Andres) spoke to this item. The Committee noted the report and agreed to provide feedback and guidance on the plan, particularly the 'Youmpla Voice Survey' questions.

6.4 Acceptable Request Guidelines Policy *(former acceptable request and communication protocol policy)*

The Executive Director Corporate Services (Ms Susanne Andres) spoke to this item. The Committee noted that policy was adopted at the July 2024 Ordinary Council meeting and that the Mayor had requested that the policy be brought to the SARG.

6.5 Strategic External Grant Funding Policy

The Executive Director Corporate Services (Ms Susanne Andres) spoke to this item and advised that the policy will need to be improved. Ms Andres further advised that the policy expired in 2023 and needs to be reviewed. The Committee noted that policy and agreed to provide feedback.

6.6 Community Grants Policy

The Executive Director Corporate Services (Ms Susanne Andres) spoke to this item and recommended that the policy be improved further at the November 2024 Council Workshop. The Committee noted the recommendation.

7. ENGINEERING SERVICES DIRECTORATE

Nil.

8. FINANCIAL SERVICES DIRECTORATE

Nil.

9. RESOLUTION TO CLOSE THE MEETING TO THE PUBLIC

#SSC24-28/2024-08/9

CR STEPHEN / CR FELL

The Standing Committee resolves to close the meeting to the public pursuant to section 254J of the *Local Government Regulation 2012* to allow the Council to discuss items listed on the agenda for closed discussion and for the reasons outlined under those items.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

10. CORPORATE SERVICES DIRECTORATE: Native Title Consent Process for New Housing

[Reason for Closed Discussion: these matters involve discussions relating to 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.]

Discussed by the Standing Committee and noted for submission to the Trustee Council.

11. RESOLUTION TO RETURN THE MEETING TO OPEN DISCUSSION

#SSC24-28/2024-08/11

CR ANIBA / CR STEPHEN

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

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

12. CONSIDERATION OF MATTERS DISCUSSED IN CLOSED SESSION

The Standing Committee formally resolved as indicated in Agenda Item 10.

13. MATTERS ARISING

Nil.

14. NEXT MEETING – 2 OCTOBER 2024 (Cairns)

Noted by the Standing Committee.

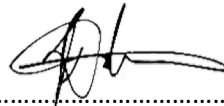
15. CLOSE OF MEETING & PRAYER

The Mayor formally closed the meeting at 5.20pm and delivered the closing prayer.

MINUTES CONFIRMED – 25 October 2024



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Cr Phillemon Mosby
Mayor
Torres Strait Island Regional Council
Date: 25 October 2024



.....
James William
Chief Executive Officer
Torres Strait Island Regional Council
Date: 25 October 2024

CONFIRMED