# TRUSTEE MEETING
22 SEPTEMBER 2026

# MINUTES

Time: 9:00am to 10:30am
Venue: *Microsoft (TEAMS) Meeting ID: 445 642 995 169 46 | Passcode: i2qk2Lp3*

PRESENT:

| | |
|---|---|
| Chair | Mayor Phillemon Mosby |
| Division 3 – Saibai | Cr Chelsea Aniba – via TEAMS |
| Division 4 – Mabuiag | Cr Keith Fell – via TEAMS – left at 1015am |
| Division 5 – Badu / Deputy Mayor | Cr Ranetta Wosomo – via TEAMS – joined meeting at 10.23am |
| Division 6 – Arkai (Kubin), Mua Island | Cr Iona Manas – via TEAMS |
| Division 7 – Wug (St. Pauls), Mua Island | Cr John Levi – via TEAMS |
| Division 8 – Kirirri (Hammond Island) | Cr Seriako Dorante – via TEAMS |
| Division 9 – Iama | Cr Aggie Hankin – |
| Division 10 – Warraber | Cr Kayby Tamu – via TEAMS – left at 10:07am |
| Division 11 – Poruma | Cr Francis Pearson – via TEAMS |
| Division 12 – Masig | Cr Ted Mosby – via TEAMS |
| Division 13 – Ugar | Cr Rocky Stephen – |
| Division 14 – Erub | Cr Nixon Mye – via TEAMS |
| Division 15 – Mer | Cr Bob Kaigey – via TEAMS |

LEAVE OF ABSENCE:

| | |
|---|---|
| Division 1 – Boigu | Cr. Dimas Toby – Personal Commitments (family or personal matters) |
| Division 2 – Dauan | Cr Torenzo Elisala – Personal Commitments (family or personal matters) |

OFFICERS:

| | |
|---|---|
| Chief Executive Officer | Mr James William |
| Executive Director Building Services | Mr Wayne Green |
| Acting Executive Director Community Services | Mr David Abednego |
| Executive Director Corporate Services | Ms Michelle Webster |
| Acting Executive Director Engineering Services | Mr Adeah Kabai |
| Executive Director Financial Services | Ms Hollie Faithfull |
| Acting DOGIT Transfer, Land Tenure and Native Title Advisor | Mr John Coyle |
| Executive Assistant to the CEO | Ms Amy Orr |
| TSIRC Secretariat | Ms Tia Hart |

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

At 9.10am the Mayor (Mr Phillemon Mosby) formally opened the Trustee Council meeting for the month of September 2026, noting that a quorum of members was present.

The Mayor welcomed Councillors and attendees and made the following opening remarks to Council:

Deputy Mayor Cr Ranetta Wosomo, Councillors, CEO Mr James William, members of the Executive Leadership Team, Council officers, and members of our communities — **Koeyma Eso nithamunka Mura.**

Firstly, I wish to acknowledge our Heavenly Father for His provision, favour and blessings throughout my healing journey.

I also sincerely thank everyone who has kept me in their thoughts, offered words of encouragement, and prayed for me and my family during this period. Your kindness, support and prayers have meant more to me than I can adequately express.

Since my temporary absence from Council in May, I have been very conscious of the impact this has had on our elected leadership team, our organisation and our region.

While I would much rather have been alongside you throughout this period, I believe there has also been something very positive revealed through this experience — the depth of leadership, capability, resilience and potential within our elected leadership team.

For that reason, I want to place on record my sincere appreciation and recognition of our Deputy Mayor, **Cr Ranetta Wosomo**, for her dedication, persistence and steady leadership during my absence.

Deputy Mayor, you have demonstrated that leadership at this level is not determined by gender. You have shown that women and girls in the Torres Strait have a rightful place at every level of leadership, decision-making and governance.

You have not simply maintained business as usual. You have made your own mark and demonstrated that women can lead with strength, courage, compassion and determination.

This is consistent with the sentiments I shared with you during our **Strategic Action Reference Group workshop in Cairns from 31 August to 4 September 2026**.

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I also acknowledge our Councillors, our CEO Mr James William, our Executive Leadership Team, Council officers and all those who have continued to carry the responsibilities of Council and support our communities during this period.

**Temporary Mayoral Delegation Arrangements**

As I continue my recovery and undertake a period of light duties, I have asked our CEO, **Mr James William**, to prepare and put in place appropriate **Temporary Mayoral Delegation Arrangements**.

I want to provide some clarity to Council regarding the purpose and nature of these arrangements.

The intention is to provide **clarity, continuity, accountability and good governance** while I progressively return to my full Mayoral responsibilities.

The proposed arrangement provides for an **instrument of delegation and authorisation from the Mayor to the Deputy Mayor, Cr Ranetta Wosomo**, enabling the temporary allocation of specified Mayoral duties and functions, as agreed between the Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

I want to be very clear about what this arrangement does — and what it does not do.

**It does not constitute an appointment of the Deputy Mayor as Acting Mayor.**

I remain the elected Mayor of the Torres Strait Island Regional Council and remain responsible for my Mayoral office while undertaking light duties.

The purpose of this delegation is to provide a practical governance mechanism through which particular functions can appropriately be undertaken by the Deputy Mayor during this period.

It is also important that this arrangement remains clearly distinguished from the separate statutory operation of **section 165 of the Local Government Act 2009**, which provides for the Deputy Mayor to act for the Mayor in circumstances of absence or temporary incapacity.

Accordingly, this delegation arrangement is intended to operate while I remain in office and continue undertaking my Mayoral responsibilities on light duties.

It does not replace, limit or displace the statutory provisions that apply should circumstances arise where section 165 is engaged.

Importantly, this practical arrangement is based on the mutual understanding and agreement between the Mayor and Deputy Mayor, and is conditional upon the Deputy Mayor's approval and continuing willingness to undertake the delegated functions.

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I believe this provides Council with an appropriate balance between continuity of leadership and clarity of responsibility.

It also respects the distinct but complementary roles of the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, elected Council and administration.

The legislative framework also provides for a Mayor to delegate certain Mayoral powers to another councillor, subject to the applicable statutory limitations. It is therefore important that any delegation is properly documented, clearly defined and appropriately recorded.

For that reason, I have asked the CEO to ensure that the arrangements are properly documented and maintained within Council's governance framework, including the appropriate recording of the delegation in accordance with Council's statutory obligations.

This is not about transferring the office of Mayor.

It is about ensuring that, during my gradual return, Council has a clear and practical mechanism for maintaining continuity of leadership, while preserving accountability and the integrity of our governance arrangements.

**Our Collective Leadership**

My absence has reminded me of something fundamental:

**Leadership is not about one individual.**

**Leadership is collective.**

Every person around this table brings different knowledge, experience, relationships and perspectives.

That diversity is not our weakness — **it is our strength.**

We may not always agree, and robust discussion is an important part of good governance.

We should be able to challenge ideas, ask difficult questions, scrutinise proposals and have respectful debate.

But once decisions are properly made, we must remain united in our commitment to the people we have been elected to serve.

Where we are today is our starting point.

We cannot change every circumstance that has brought us to this point, but we can determine what we do from here.

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The decisions we make today will help shape the opportunities available to the next generation of Torres Strait Islanders.

Our responsibility is therefore to remain focused on our people, our communities and our future.

We must continue working towards **greater opportunity, greater autonomy, stronger partnerships and greater capacity for our people to shape and own their future.**

**Strengthening Our Regional and Pacific Voice**

This responsibility also extends beyond the individual communities represented around this Council table.

As Torres Strait leaders, we have a responsibility to ensure that the voice of our people is heard not only within Queensland and Australia, but also within the broader regional environment in which our people, our culture, our waters and our traditional relationships exist.

I recently responded to a regional discussion initiated by Mayor Seriat concerning the importance of strengthening **Torres Strait representation and engagement within the broader Pacific regional architecture**, including the **Pacific Islands Forum and the Melanesian Spearhead Group**.

TSIRC supports the principle of a **coordinated and genuinely regional approach** to this important work.

However, I believe it is equally important that any new regional engagement is firmly grounded in the existing frameworks and relationships that have served the Torres Strait for generations.

In particular, we must recognise the significance of the **Torres Strait Treaty**, which has now been in force for more than four decades.

The Treaty provides a unique and enduring framework governing the relationship between Australia and Papua New Guinea, including matters concerning the traditional way of life, movement, environment and interests of traditional inhabitants.

The **Joint Advisory Council**, or JAC, is an important part of that architecture, providing a formal mechanism through which Australian, Papua New Guinean and traditional inhabitant representatives can consider matters arising under the Treaty.

It was within this context that TSIRC raised a number of important international and strategic matters at the recent **Joint Advisory Council meeting in Port Moresby from 10 to 14 August 2026**.

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The opportunities now emerging across the wider Pacific should therefore be considered carefully and collectively.

Where appropriate, they should be connected to the existing Treaty framework rather than pursued as separate or competing regional initiatives.

There is considerable merit in building consensus across our **Mayors, GBK and TSRA Chairs, NPARC and other relevant regional leadership and statutory bodies**, while recognising the distinct legislative mandates, responsibilities and obligations of each organisation.

I believe the time is right for us to consider the development of a **clear regional implementation and advocacy plan**.

Such a plan could:

- identify the respective statutory and cultural responsibilities of our regional leadership bodies;
- establish an agreed mechanism for determining and carrying the collective Torres Strait position;
- align regional priorities with the Torres Strait Treaty, Pacific regional architecture and the broader Melanesian context;
- identify opportunities for direct engagement with the Pacific Islands Forum and the Melanesian Spearhead Group;
- establish agreed advocacy priorities and messages for engagement with the Commonwealth and relevant Pacific institutions; and
- take account of the respective terms of office, current advocacy programs and existing commitments of our regional leadership.

Most importantly, any future representation must be **culturally legitimate, collectively endorsed and capable of being sustained beyond individual terms of office.**

Our objective should not be to establish another arrangement that depends upon one organisation or one current office holder.

Our objective should be to build a **durable regional mechanism** that can continue to represent the interests and aspirations of Torres Strait people across generations.

Accordingly, TSIRC supports the proposal for regional leaders to come together and develop an agreed position before any formal approach is made to the Australian Government, the Pacific Islands Forum or the Melanesian Spearhead Group.

This provides us with an opportunity to build upon the work already being undertaken through the **Torres Strait Treaty and JAC processes**, while

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strengthening the Torres Strait's connections with our Pacific and Melanesian counterparts.

These connections are important across a range of shared strategic priorities, including:

**climate change, oceans and marine management, maritime and border issues, culture, connectivity, economic development, and the movement of traditional inhabitants.**

I look forward to TSIRC continuing to work constructively with **Torres Shire Council, GBK, TSRA, NPARC, Traditional Owner leadership and other regional entities** to develop a coordinated pathway forward.

The proposed **Zenadth Kes Pacific and Melanesian Engagement Regional Implementation and Advocacy Plan** provides a useful starting framework for regional leadership consideration.

This is the kind of regional leadership that I believe we must continue to build — leadership that is coordinated but not controlling; collective but respectful of each organisation's mandate; culturally grounded but outward looking; and focused on creating lasting opportunities for our people.

Our people deserve to see their leaders working together where there are matters of shared strategic importance.

**Courageous and Culturally Grounded Leadership**

As elected leaders, we must continue to lead lawfully, ethically and in the public interest.

But accountability and compliance must never prevent us from being courageous.

Where we encounter systemic barriers, culturally unsafe approaches, uninformed methodologies, or practices that do not respect the cultural authority and lived realities of our people, we must have the courage to respectfully challenge them and advocate for better ways forward.

Because sometimes leadership is not about following the path that already exists.

**Sometimes leadership is about having the courage to create a better path.**

And sometimes creating that better path requires us to come together across organisational boundaries and find a common regional voice.

That is the responsibility before us.

**Moving Forward Together**

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As we come together for these September meetings, I ask each of us to remember three things:

**Stay united. Stay focused. Stay determined.**

Let us continue to support Deputy Mayor Wosomo in her leadership, work collaboratively with our CEO and administration, and maintain a clear understanding of the different but complementary responsibilities of elected Council and administration.

Let us also continue to strengthen our relationships with our regional partners and ensure that TSIRC remains an active and constructive participant in discussions that affect the future of our people and our region.

I have full confidence in this leadership team and in our collective ability to continue serving our communities through what has been a challenging period.

My return is gradual, but I return with **renewed gratitude, renewed confidence and an even stronger belief in the potential of this leadership team.**

And finally, I leave you with this thought:

**Leadership is not only about what we achieve while we hold office. Leadership is about what we leave behind.**

One day, another generation will look back at this period and ask:

**“What did they leave for us?”**

My hope is that they will say:

**They stood together. They stood with courage. They stood for their people. And they helped create a better future.**

Let us continue to lead with vision, stand with courage, engage with enthusiasm, listen with humility, and never forget who we are here to serve.

**We are one team. We achieve together. And we lead together.**

**Koeyma Eso nithamunka Mura.**

**Cr Phillemon Mosby**

**Mayor**

Cr John Levi delivered the opening prayer, and the Trustee Council observed a minute of silence to honour the memory of the deceased and those in sorry business at this time.

## B. LEAVES OF ABSENCE

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#T24-28/2026-9/B

CR FELL / CR PEARSON

Council (as Trustee):

grants leave of absence for each of the following Councillors for the Trustee Council Meeting dated as listed:

| Division | Councillor | Date of Absence | Reason |
|---|---|---|---|
| Division 1 – Boigu | Cr. Dimas Toby | 22 September 2026 | Personal Commitments (family or personal matters) |
| Division 2 – Dauan | Cr Torenzo Elisala | 22 September 2026 | Personal Commitments (family or personal matters |

***CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY***

## C. CONFLICT OF INTEREST (COI) DECLARATIONS

The Mayor advised that no written COI notifications were provided by Councillors in relation to the Trustee Meeting for September 2026.

The Mayor added that if throughout the course of the discussion that any Councillors become aware of a potential conflict of interest immediately advise the meeting.

D. LIVE STREAM

The Mayor advised that this meeting is being LIVE STREAMED on Council's YouTube Channel.

## 1. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES (19 August 2026)

#T24-28/2026-9/1

CR FELL / CR PEARSON

Council (as Trustee) confirms the Minutes of the Trustee Meeting held on 19 August 2026.

***CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY***

## 1.1. UPDATE ON ACTION ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

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The Chief Executive Officer (Mr James William) spoke to this item and the update was noted by the Trustee Council.

Items noted as 'completed' during this update will be removed from future reports.

## 2. RESOLUTION TO CLOSE THE MEETING TO THE PUBLIC

#T24-28/2026-9/2

CR STEPHEN / CR HANKIN

Council (as Trustee) resolves to close the meeting to the public pursuant to section 84 of the *Local Government Act 2009* to allow the Trustee to discuss the following items:

Under section s84.2.a MABUIAG – COMMERCIAL LEASE APPLICATIONS This report seeks a Trustee decision about six Expressions of Interest (EOIs) for commercial leases on Mabuiag

***CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY***

## 3. RESOLUTION TO RETURN THE MEETING TO OPEN DISCUSSION

#T24-28/2026-9/3

CR ANIBA / CR STEPHEN

Council (as Trustee) resolves to move out of closed discussions pursuant to Section 84 of the Local Government Act 2009.

***CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY***

## 4. CONSIDERATION OF MATTERS DISCUSSED IN CLOSED SESSION

#T24-28/2026-9/4

CR ANIBA / CR STEPHEN

Council (as Trustee) resolved as follows:

4.1. [Standing Agenda Item] Culture, Arts, Land & Heritage (CALH) Advisory Committee - *Update on Land and Native Title Strategic Matters – verbal update by Cr Chelsea Aniba (CALH Advisory Committee Chair)*

| Executive Summary |
| --- |
| Discussions involve sensitive matters in relation to land or native title. |

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Discussion only. Council (as Trustee) noted the verbal updates provided by Cr Aniba.

### 4.2. Mabuiag – Commercial Lease Applications

#T24-28/2026-9/4.2

CR HANKIN / CR ANIBA

Council (as Trustee):

note that six Expressions of Interest (EOI) for commercial leases at Mabuiag were submitted by Mabuygiw Garkaziw Kupay TSI Corporation;

a. note that the consultation process under the Trustee Policy was undertaken resulting in objections to the EOIs, as the sites are culturally significant;
b. note that the Divisional Councillor for Mabuiag does not support the EOIs, as the sites are culturally significant;
c. refuse the EOIs, based on part (b) and (c) of this resolution; and delegate to the Chief Executive Officer the power to formalise the Trustee's decision in relation to this resolution, including advising the applicant of the Trustee's decision.

***CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY***

## 5. ITEMS ARISING

Council (as Trustee) noted there were no items arising.

6. **NEXT MEETING** – 28 October 2026 (VC)

## 7. CLOSE OF MEETING

The Mayor formally closed the Trustee Council meeting at 10:25am.

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MINUTES CONFIRMED – 28 OCTOBER 2026

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|---|---|
| ..... | ..... |
| Cr Phillemon Mosby | James William |
| Mayor | Chief Executive Officer |
| Torres Strait Island Regional Council | Torres Strait Island Regional Council |

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