TRUSTEE MEETING
28 OCTOBER 2026

MINUTES

Time: 9:00am to 10:30am
Venue: *Microsoft (TEAMS) ID:* 447 846 433 701 72 | Q9A9xA7B

PRESENT:

Chair	Mayor Phillemon Mosby
Division 3 – Saibai	Cr Chelsea Aniba *– joined meeting at 10:30am*
Division 4 – Mabuiag	Cr Keith Fell
Division 7 – Wug (St Pauls) Mua Island	Cr John Levi
Division 8 – Kirirri	Cr Seriako Dorante
Division 10 – Warraber	Cr Kabay Tamu
Division 11 – Poruma	Cr Francis Pearson
Division 12 – Masig	Cr Ted Mosby
Division 13 – Ugar	Cr Rocky Stephen

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Division 1 – Boigu	Cr Dimas Toby *– Personal Commitments*
Division 2 – Dauan	Cr Torenzo Elisala *– Absent*
Division 5 – Badu	Cr Ranetta Wosomo *– Personal Commitments*
Division 6 – Arkai (Kubin) Mua Island	Cr Iona Manas *- Absent*
Division 9 – Iama	Cr Aggie Hankin *– Personal Commitments*
Division 14 – Erub	Cr Nixon Mye *– Personal Commitments*
Division 15 – Mer	Cr Bob Kaigey *– Absent*

OFFICERS:

Chief Executive Officer	Mr James William
Acting Head of Building Services	Mr Evaness Hollingsworth
Executive Director Community Services	Mr Dawson Sailor
Executive Director Corporate Services	Ms Joanne Bryant
Executive Director Engineering Services	Mr David Baldwin
Acting Head of Financial Services	Mr Frank Barbieri
Executive Assistant to the Mayor	Ms Trudy Lui
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 9:15am the Chair (**Mayor Phillemon Mosby**) formally opened the Trustee Council meeting for the month of October 2026, noting that a quorum of members was present.

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

Koeyma Eso, Councillors, Deputy Mayor Cr Ranetta Wosomo, Chief Executive Officer Mr James William, members of the Executive Leadership Team, our Council officers, Traditional Owners, Trustees and community representatives.
I acknowledge our Elders, past and present, who continue to guide us through their knowledge, wisdom and enduring connection to our lands, seas and culture. I also acknowledge the Traditional Owners and custodians of the islands across Zenadth Kes, whose aspirations and voices must remain at the heart of our decisions as elected leaders.
I welcome everyone to our October Ordinary Council and Trustee Meeting.
As we come together today, I am reminded that our responsibility as elected leaders extends beyond managing the day-to-day operations of Council. We have a collective responsibility to protect the interests of our communities, strengthen our governance, safeguard our financial sustainability and create the conditions for future generations to live with dignity, opportunity and confidence in their future.
Over recent weeks, our engagement with government representatives, regional partners, industry stakeholders and national policy leaders has reinforced both the challenges facing our region and the opportunities available to us when we work together with a clear and united purpose.
Our task is to ensure that these engagements translate into tangible commitments, better policy decisions, fairer investment and meaningful improvements in the lives of our people.

1. Malungu Yangu Wakay — Voice from the Deep

I want to begin by reaffirming the importance of *Malungu Yangu Wakay — Voice from the Deep* as a guiding principle for our leadership and decision-making.
Malungu Yangu Wakay is our commitment to listen deeply to the voices of our communities, respect the knowledge and aspirations of our people, and ensure that what we hear informs the priorities we establish, the decisions we make and the actions we take.
It is about moving beyond consultation alone. It is about demonstrating that community voices matter and that there is a clear connection between what our people tell us, what Council decides, who is responsible for acting and how we measure progress.
As Mayor, I remain committed to championing this approach across our Council, our Trustee responsibilities and our engagement with government and regional partners.
Our commitment must be reflected in how we develop policy, allocate resources, negotiate land tenure arrangements, plan infrastructure, strengthen local economic participation and advocate for services that meet the realities of island life.
I encourage each of us to continually ask:

- What are our communities telling us?
- What does this mean for our Council and our region?
- What decisions and commitments are required?
- Who is responsible, and by when?
- How will we demonstrate that progress has been achieved?

This is how we turn the voices of our people into collective action, measurable outcomes and lasting change.
Malungu Yangu Wakay is more than a statement of intent. It is a commitment to listen, to act and to be accountable to our people.

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2. Government engagement and national Closing the Gap review

During our recent engagement at the Indigenous Leaders Forum, we had an important opportunity to engage with Selwyn Button, Indigenous Policy and Evaluation Commissioner at the Australian Productivity Commission, regarding the Commission's work on the National Agreement on Closing the Gap.

The discussion reinforced the importance of evaluating whether government policies, funding arrangements and programs are delivering meaningful improvements on the ground, particularly for First Nations communities.

While substantial reporting and national commitments have been established since 2020, our communities continue to experience significant gaps in essential infrastructure, housing, transport, employment and service delivery.

For the Torres Strait, these challenges are compounded by our geographical isolation, dispersed island communities, high freight and construction costs, and the additional responsibilities placed on local government in remote and border communities.

Our engagement highlighted the importance of ensuring that Indigenous local government is properly represented in national economic and employment data. The contribution of our councils to local employment, service delivery, community resilience and economic participation must be visible in the evidence used to inform government policy.

I also acknowledge the contribution of Councillor Keith Fell in presenting the operational realities of our 15 island communities, including the logistical challenges associated with equipment repairs, marine transport, aging infrastructure, seawalls, jetties and housing upgrades.

These are not simply operational difficulties. They are structural issues that require a different approach to policy development, funding allocation and public-sector accountability.

Our engagement with the Productivity Commission provides an important opportunity to ensure that the experience of Torres Strait communities informs the national review of Closing the Gap. We must continue to advocate for practical recommendations that recognise the role of local government and support successful community-led approaches.

I encourage Council to maintain a coordinated approach to our submissions and follow-up engagement so that our evidence, experiences and proposed solutions are clearly represented in the national review.

3. Financial sustainability, freight, fuel and essential services

One of the most pressing issues confronting our Council remains our long-term financial sustainability.

As a non-rateable First Nations local government operating across 15 island communities, TSIRC faces a unique combination of grant dependency, high freight and fuel costs, aging infrastructure, limited revenue opportunities and increasing service-delivery obligations.

These circumstances must be understood when governments assess our financial position and determine the level and structure of investment required.

Our recent discussions have highlighted the growing pressure on Council's unrestricted cash reserves, operating position, departmental expenditure and ability to meet capital project commitments while waiting for grant reimbursements.

We must remain disciplined in our financial management, strengthen internal accountability and ensure that expenditure decisions are supported by sound forecasts, effective procurement and clear evidence of value for money.

However, we must also be honest that internal efficiencies alone cannot resolve a structural funding model that does not adequately recognise the real cost of delivering essential services across remote island communities.

The subsidised supply of retail fuel is a clear example. Council has reported an operating loss of approximately $800,000 associated with fuel supply operations, with the cost of delivery and logistics exceeding the price that can reasonably be charged to residents.

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Our communities depend on fuel for marine transport, fishing, subsistence activities, access to essential supplies and everyday livelihoods. Removing these arrangements without a viable alternative would place further pressure on households and undermine community wellbeing.

We are also facing an urgent fuel security concern at Badu, following advice that CSWIFT does not intend to extend its lease or continue retailing fuel in the community. This requires timely engagement with the relevant parties and governments to establish a sustainable pathway for continued supply.

I acknowledge the collaborative advocacy being pursued by TSIRC and the Torres Strait Regional Authority (TSRA) leadership to seek a formal fuel and freight subsidy scheme, alongside broader air and sea travel subsidy arrangements.

Our position must be clear: the cost of remoteness and essential regional connectivity cannot continue to be absorbed disproportionately by our Council and our people.

We must continue to press both the Commonwealth and Queensland Governments for a coordinated, long-term funding response that recognises the realities of our region and protects the continuity of essential services.

4. Infrastructure investment and the emerging asset replacement challenge

Our discussions with government and political representatives have also highlighted the scale of the infrastructure challenge facing the Torres Strait.

The cost of constructing, maintaining and replacing essential community assets continues to rise. Delayed investment reduces purchasing power, increases future liabilities and places our communities at greater risk of infrastructure failure.

Recent regional analysis presented in our discussions has highlighted the possibility of infrastructure replacement requirements reaching between $1.6 billion and more than $2 billion over a ten-year horizon. These projections demonstrate the scale of the challenge, although the underlying assumptions and asset assessments must continue to be verified through appropriate planning and financial analysis.

We cannot afford to treat infrastructure investment as a series of isolated projects. We need a long-term regional investment framework that connects asset condition, community priorities, service needs, construction costs, maintenance obligations and future replacement requirements.

Our advocacy must address the adequacy of existing infrastructure funding programs, the effect of escalating construction costs, the availability of modern construction methods and the need for funding arrangements that reflect the true cost of delivering projects in remote island locations.

We must also ensure that capital funding decisions take account of the whole life of an asset, including maintenance, operational costs and eventual replacement.

Our communities deserve infrastructure that is fit for purpose, resilient to climate and environmental pressures, and capable of supporting future generations.

5. Land tenure, Whole Transfer requests and Trustee responsibilities

Land tenure and the aspirations of our communities remain central to our work as both a local government and a Trustee body.

Our recent engagement with Queensland Opposition Leader Steven Miles, Shannon Fentiman MP and Leanne Linard MP raised important issues concerning land tenure arrangements, Whole Transfer requests and the future relationship between Council, Traditional Owners, Prescribed Bodies Corporate and government.

The discussions included community aspirations on Mer, Masig/Badu and Yam Island, including the strong desire expressed at Yama for a comprehensive land transfer approach rather than selective retention of public infrastructure land by Council.

These matters require careful, respectful and transparent engagement. We must recognise the aspirations of Traditional Owners and PBCs to exercise greater control over their lands and pursue economic development opportunities, while ensuring that essential services and public infrastructure can continue to operate reliably.

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Our responsibility is to work through these arrangements in a way that respects community decisions, clarifies ownership and operational responsibilities, and avoids imposing unreasonable financial or administrative burdens on any party.
Where Council retains essential infrastructure or service obligations, the associated tenure and lease arrangements must be practical, sustainable and clearly understood.
I encourage us to maintain constructive engagement with Traditional Owners, PBCs, GBK, relevant government agencies and other stakeholders so that these transitions are guided by community aspirations, sound governance and fair, workable agreements.
Our Trustee responsibilities require us to look beyond immediate transactions and consider the long-term interests of our communities, the protection of our lands and the opportunities that future generations should inherit.

6. Regional partnerships and collaborative advocacy

Our recent engagements have reinforced the importance of working collectively with regional partners and all levels of government.
The challenges facing TSIRC cannot be resolved by Council acting alone. We need partnerships that are practical, accountable and capable of mobilising investment, policy reform and coordinated action.
Our work with TSRA on fuel and freight subsidies is an important example of the regional advocacy required. We must continue building a shared position that articulates the costs of remoteness, the importance of regional connectivity and the consequences of failing to provide sustainable support for essential services.
We must also continue working with regional local government organisations, including the Torres Cape Indigenous Council Alliance (TCICA), to strengthen our financial sustainability, improve funding arrangements and develop the evidence needed to support our strategic investment priorities.
Our discussions with government and regional partners must focus on four connected priorities:

1. **Financial sustainability:** securing funding arrangements that reflect the true cost of remote service delivery and protect Council's long-term financial position.
2. **Infrastructure and funding reform:** improving capital investment, project delivery, grant reimbursement processes and whole-of-life asset planning.
3. **Strategic investment and economic development:** creating opportunities for local employment, business development, land-based enterprise and stronger regional economic participation.
4. **Regional advocacy and partnership accountability:** ensuring commitments are documented, responsibilities are clear and agreed actions are followed through.

Partnerships must be measured by the outcomes they deliver, not simply the meetings we attend or the statements we make.

7. Procurement reform, local participation and cultural responsibility

I also want to acknowledge the work undertaken on the draft TSIRC Procurement Strategy, which is intended to strengthen Council's procurement capability, governance, contract management and value realisation through to 2030.
This strategy is an important opportunity to improve the way we plan and manage expenditure, support local businesses and ensure that Council's purchasing power contributes to community development.
During the discussions, Councillors raised the need to reduce unnecessary barriers for local suppliers, provide clearer guidance on how community members can become approved vendors, and create meaningful opportunities for local people who are unemployed to participate in Council-funded economic activity.
We must ensure that local procurement is not simply about awarding contracts within the region. It should also be about building local capability, developing skills, creating employment pathways and strengthening the long-term capacity of our island communities.

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I particularly welcome the proposed addition of a cultural awareness and respect action to the strategy. Contractors and service providers working in Zenadth Kes must understand that they are working in living communities with distinct cultural protocols, Traditional Owners and local expectations.
Cultural respect must be embedded in the way we procure, deliver and manage services.
I encourage Councillors to review the draft strategy and provide practical feedback before it is brought forward for consideration and adoption. We must ensure that the final strategy is achievable, appropriately resourced and responsive to our communities' economic and cultural priorities.

8. Our collective responsibility and the way forward

Councillors, our discussions and engagements over recent weeks have made one thing clear: the challenges before us are significant, but so too is our collective responsibility and opportunity to lead.
We must continue to strengthen Council's governance, maintain financial discipline and ensure that our decisions are informed by evidence, community priorities and a clear understanding of the consequences for our people.
We must also be united in our advocacy. Our communities should not have to navigate fragmented government systems, repeated submissions and disconnected funding programs to secure the essential services and infrastructure they need.
As Mayor, I will continue to work with the Deputy Mayor, Councillors, our CEO and Executive Leadership Team to strengthen our partnerships, advance our strategic priorities and pursue practical solutions to the challenges facing our region.
I acknowledge the work of the Deputy Mayor, Councillors, our CEO, the Executive Leadership Team and Council officers in maintaining our services, progressing our priorities and representing our communities through these important engagements.
Our task is to build on this work by ensuring that every commitment has a clear purpose, every priority has an identified pathway, and every decision contributes to a stronger and more sustainable future for TSIRC.
Let us continue to lead with unity, respect, courage and accountability. Let us ensure that our differences do not distract us from the shared responsibility we carry for our people and our region.
Above all, let us keep the voices, knowledge and aspirations of our communities at the centre of everything we do.

Malungu Yangu Wakay — Voice from the Deep. We listen to our people, we act together, and we remain accountable for the future we build.
Koeyma Eso.

Cr Keith Fell 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.

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B. LEAVES OF ABSENCE

#T24-28/2026-10/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	28 October 2026	Personal Commitments (family or personal matters)
Division 9 – Iama	Cr Aggie Hankin	28 October 2026	Personal Commitments (family or personal matters
Division 14 – Erub	Cr Nixon Mye	28 October 2026	Personal Commitments (family or personal matters

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Council (as Trustee) noted that Deputy Mayor Wosomo was granted a leave of absence in the August Trustee meeting.

C. CONFLICT OF INTEREST (COI) DECLARATIONS

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

D. LIVE STREAM

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

1. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

#T24-28/2026-10/1

CR DORANTE / CR MOSBY

Council (as Trustee) confirms the Minutes of the Trustee Meeting held online on 22 September 2026.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

1.1. UPDATE ON ACTION ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

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

Executive Director Community Services (**Mr Dawson Sailor**) advised that updates provided were not reflected on the register. Mr Dawson Sailor provided a verbal update.

Council (as Trustee) noted the update.

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

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2. KIRIRRI (HAMMOND ISLAND) – QUEENSLAND AMBULANCE SERVICE LEASE APPLICATION

#T24-28/2026-10/2

CR DORANTE / CR FELL

Council (as Trustee):

1. Approves, in accordance with the *Torres Strait Islander Land Act 1991*, a 40-year lease to Queensland Ambulance Service over Lot 81 on SP248418, Hammond Island; and

2. Delegates to the Chief Executive Officer the power to formalise the Trustee's approval in relation to all matters set out in this resolution, including by signing necessary instruments.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

3. TRUSTEE CONSENT, TRANSFER OF AN ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER LAND HOLDING ACT (KATTER) LEASE- St Pauls Community

#T24-28/2026-10/3

CR LEVI / CR STEPHEN

Council (as Trustee):

1. Consent to the transfer of Land Holding Act lease (Lease No. 719480495) over Lot 15 on SP256048, St Pauls, from Zawai Malaki Mahat Kris to John Tosh Kris; and
2. Delegate to the Chief Executive Officer the power to execute the General Consent form.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

4. UNDOCUMENTED COMMERCIAL LAND OCCUPATION PROJECT (LEASE AND LICENCE REVENUE)

Council (as Trustee) noted the report.

5. DOGIT TRUSTEE FUND BALANCES – QUARTERLY UPDATE

Council (as Trustee) noted the DOGIT Trustee Fund balances as at 30 September 2026.

Action Item:
The Chief Executive Officer action item is to meet with Cr Rocky Stephen to discuss the utilisation of Trustee Funds for potential projects.

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6. RESOLUTION TO CLOSE THE MEETING TO THE PUBLIC

#T24-28/2026-10/6

CR STEPHEN / CR PEARSON

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.

1. Under section 84(2)(a) - Culture, Arts, Land & Heritage (CALH) Advisory Committee update on Land and Native Title Strategic Matters - Discussions involve sensitive matters in relation to land or native title.
2. Under section 84(a) - Transfer of Dwelling-Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Land Holding Act (Katter) Lease – 28 William Street, Poruma - This report seeks Trustee approval for the transfer of a social housing dwelling on a Katter lease to the leaseholders of 28 William Street, Poruma.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

7. RESOLUTION TO RETURN THE MEETING TO OPEN DISCUSSION

#T24-28/2026-10/7

CR FELL / CR STEPHEN

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

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

8. CONSIDERATIONS OF MATTERS DISCUSSED IN CLOSED SESSION

8.1. *[Standing Agenda Item]* CULTURE, ARTS, LAND & HERITAGE (CALH) ADVISORY COMMITTEE *– verbal update only by Ms Joanne Bryant (Acting Executive Director Corporate Services) in the absence of Cr Chelsea Aniba (CALH Advisory Committee Chair)*

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

Discussion only.

Council (as Trustee) noted the verbal updates provided by The Acting Executive Director Corporate Services (**Ms Joanne Bryant**).

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8.2. TRANSFER OF DWELLING-ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER LAND HOLDING ACT (KATTER) LEASE – 28 William St, Poruma

#T24-28/2026-10/8.2

CR PEARSON / CR FELL

Council (as Trustee):

1. Approves the transfer of the social housing dwelling located at 28 William Street, Poruma (described as Lot 28 on SP270862) to the registered leaseholders; and
2. Delegates to the Chief Executive Officer the power to take all necessary steps in relation to this resolution, including finalising and executing an Agreement to Transfer Dwelling.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

9. ITEMS ARISING

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

10. NEXT MEETING – 17/18 November (KIRIRRI)

11. CLOSE OF MEETING & PRAYER

The Chair formally closed the Trustee Council meeting at 10:48am.

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