



## **Kowanyama Aboriginal Council Meeting Minutes**

17 May 2017, 10.12 am – 2.09pm

Kowanyama Aboriginal Shire Council Chambers - Kowanyama

### **Present**

Mayor Michael Yam (Chair)

Cr Colin Lawrence

Cr John Fry

Chief Executive Officer, Fabian Williams

Corporate Governance, Katherine Wiggins

Manager Finance, Helen Taylor

Chris Delaney, Human Resources Manager (12.38pm – 2.09pm)

### **Apologies**

Deputy Mayor Territa Dick

Cr Wendy Wust

Deputy Chief Executive Officer & Director Community Services, Cameron Unwin

Executive Assistant, Deborah Robinson

### **1) Welcome and Apologies**

The Mayor welcomed Councillors and staff to the meeting.

### **RESOLUTION - Apologies**

Deputy Mayor Territa Dick be granted approved leave for this meeting.

**Moved Cr Fry**

**Seconded Cr Lawrence**

**MOTION CARRIED**

## RESOLUTION - Apologies

Cr Wust be granted approved leave for this meeting.

**Moved Cr Lawrence**

**Seconded Cr Fry**

**MOTION CARRIED**

### 2) Updates to Councilor Register of Interest or Related Parties

No updates were provided

### 3) Minutes from Previous Council Meeting

The CEO talked through the minutes of the previous meeting and provided an update on the Action Items.

#### Action Item Updates:

Ref No.	Date	Month	Year	Topic	Full Item Details	Council Officer	Progress comments	Status
1	23	March	2017	Katter Leases	CEO to work with Tracy Board to schedule a community information session on Katter Leases.	CEO	Community Meeting scheduled for Tuesday 30 May. Add RISE, School, PBC and Police to the meeting.	Complete
2	23	March	2017	Katter Leases	CEO to work with management to progress a procedure for Katter Lease holders to purchase housing repair and maintenance services from council.	CEO	Building Services Manager to progress procedure.	In progress
3	23	March	2017	Katter Leases	CEO to progress 2017/2018 Rates and Levies discussions with management so Katter lease holders are aware of future housing costs	CEO	Added to Community Meeting agenda	In progress
4	23	March	2017	Katter Leases	CEO to progress a celebration for new house owners resulting from the Katter Lease project.	CEO	CEO working with Tracy Board to arrange celebrations	In progress
5	23	March	2017	Staff Leave	CEO to review the current procedure for staff leave during extended periods of illness or rehabilitation	CEO	Being incorporated in the HR policies and procedures development. To be presented at the June Council meeting.	In progress
1	18	April	2017	Media Policy	CEO to progress a media policy	CEO	Included in Code of Conduct (to be presented at May Council meeting)	Complete
2	18	April	2017	Debt collection policy	CEO to progress a debt collection policy	CEO	Finance team progressing.	In progress
3	18	April	2017	Health Services	CEO to present report on health services leases to June 2017 council meeting	CEO	To be discussed at June Council meeting.	In progress
4	18	April	2017	Local economy	CEO to work with local stakeholders to encourage purchasing products/services within the community	CEO	Noted. Also to be included in 2017/2018 Operational Plan.	Complete
5	18	April	2017	Local economy	CEO to investigate the production of Kowanyama souvenirs to	CEO	To be added to 2017/2018 Operational Plan	Complete

					increase Council revenue and support local artists.			
6	18	April	2017	In kind services	CEO to work with staff to plan ceasing the provision of in-kind accounting services for third parties from the 2017/2018 financial year.	CEO	Meeting to be scheduled. To be incorporated in budget.	In progress
7	18	April	2017	Logo	Director Community Services & Deputy CEO to schedule a meeting between the logo designers, Deputy Mayor and Cr Wust to further discuss the new logo.	Director Com. Services & Deputy CEO	CEO to follow-up with Director Community Services & Deputy CEO on progress.	In progress
8	18	April	2017	Projects	CEO to provide plan showing timelines and progress of current projects.	CEO	To be presented at June Council meeting	In progress

Council discussed the request from Apunipima to commence a lease in order to provide health services in the community.

### **RESOLUTION – APUNIPIMA HEALTH SERVICES**

That Council resolve to request a formal written proposal from Apunipima on the provision of health services in Kowanyama.

**Moved Mayor Yam**

**Seconded Cr Lawrence**

**MOTION CARRIED**

#### **4) Departmental Updates**

##### **a) Office of the CEO**

The CEO presented his Information Report, with the following summaries:

##### **Queensland Audit Office Management Report**

In April the Queensland Audit Office (QAO) provided a Management Report for the 15/16 Financial Year. This Management Report highlights the deficiencies in Council operations between 1 July 2015 and 30 June 2016 and states what Council needs to do to resolve these issues and consequently improve the future QAO assessment of Council. The Management Report highlighted a total of 38 deficiencies across risk management, human resources, financial policies and asset management. The full Management Report is being presented later today as a Closed Business report.

Staff are working hard to resolve the issues identified in the report to improve the future assessment of Council. Already staff have fixed 15 of the 38 deficiencies identified.

##### **Queensland Audit Office External Review**

The QAO visited the Kowanyama Office and facilities on the 26th, 27th and 28th April and the Cairns Office on the 2nd, 3rd and 4th May in order to progress our 2016-2017 External Audit. The visit was a success and we are now on track to meet our external audit obligations. The QAO will be visiting Council offices again in September.

### Internal Audit

In addition to the External Audit Council needs to undertake internal audit activities in order to further improve operations and be complaint with Local Government regulation.

Our internal auditors, Pacifica, will be in Kowanyama today (Wednesday 17) and Thursday to review our cash management procedures at the Bakery, Airport, Training Centre and Post Office. This review will ensure appropriate controls are in place to avoid theft of cash. Once Pacifica have finished their observations they will provide a written report for Council and then commence a review into fraud management practices.

### Audit Committee

The next Audit Committee is taking place on Monday May 29 in Cairns. The Mayor and Deputy Mayor will be attending along with senior staff. At the meeting the Queensland Audit Office will provide a preliminary report into the 2016/2017 Audit and Council will present additional items such as the internal audit progress and the issues raised in the Queensland Audit Office Management Letter.

### Community Meeting

A community meeting has been scheduled for Tuesday 30 May 2017, 5.00pm – 7.00pm at the Multi-Purpose Centre. A BBQ will also be provided. Agenda items include:

- Council's next 5 year Corporate Plan (to gain ideas for community members)
- Rates and levies
- Update on Katter Leases
- Update on the Cattle Company
- Strong, Proud, Healthy and Safe health information session
- Ergon electricity rebate

The council requested that RISE, the School, PBC and the police also be invited to present at the community meeting.

### Capital Works

The following capital works projects are underway and progressing well:

- Football Ground
- Rodeo Ground
- Playground
- Airport Grounds and Carpark
- Farm Road
- Community Pool – Fencing
- Skate Park
- Laundry Mat

### Work Place Health and Safety

It has been identified that Council's Work Health and Safety Processes are in need of improvement. To resolve this staff are in the process of developing a suite of WHS procedures.

### Child Care

In 2016 Council received a grant to purchase Childcare infrastructure (three dongas) in order to provide additional childcare services in community. However at the time of the grant application there wasn't a review of the additional licenses that Council would need to obtain in order to provide childcare. Unfortunately the outcome was that Council was not able to obtain the licenses so the childcare infrastructure was not installed and sat vacant for several months.

Following a further review of what Council would need to do in order to provide these childcare services it has been identified that Council is not in a position to provide childcare – as it would involve significant staff training and compliancy checks across council.

Due to this Council staff have approached the Department of Education and Training (DET) to amend the funding agreement so that the dongas can be used for playgroups rather than childcare. The DET has agreed to this amendment as so the dongas can now be installed.

In order to avoid future risks in receiving assets or funding for projects that Council is not in a position to proceed with, staff have developed a project assessment process to identify the full costs and risks of projects before funding applications are submitted. This process is being presented at the Council meeting today.

### Centrelink

Due to issues with confidentiality and inadequate space, staff are currently considering whether the Centrelink office should be relocated to the Ideas Box area. If Council is agreeable to this idea in principle, costs for relation will be obtained to enable further assessment and ensure the benefits outweigh the financial risk. This could be provided at the June 2017 Council meeting. The Council agreed that the idea seemed reasonable in principle and requested that further details including costs be provided to Council for further consideration.

### Action Item

**Admin Manager to progress a plan for moving Centrelink operations, including costs, and provide to the June Council meeting.**

The Council thanked the CEO for the updates.

## b) Finance Manager

The Finance Manager Helen Taylor presented her Information Report providing the following key updates:

- Our year to date budgeted (expected) income was \$24,952,856
- Our year to date actual income is \$19,127,954
- Our year to date budgeted (expected) expenditure was \$22,683,762
- Our year to date actual expenditure is \$15,807,442

The net result variance to budget is only \$329k over spent, and Council continues to be in a good position to hit or exceed the budgeted \$100k surplus by the end of June. In May Council will have \$800k of recurrent funding to boost our result.

Council is tracking reasonable well considering the NDRRA, Stage 2 Topsy Creek and Stage 2 NPARI Houses are not as advanced as expected.

## 5) Agenda Reports

### a) Code of Conduct

Fabian Williams, CEO presented the Code of Conduct. Mr Williams stated that under the Public Sector Ethics Act 1994, Local Governments, as public sector entities, are required to develop a Code of Conduct based on the principles and values contained in the Public Sector Ethics Act 1994.

Mr Williams further stated that Council does not currently have an up to date Code of Conduct. This has been identified by the Queensland Audit Office as a deficiency and noted within their management report:

To remedy this the Manager Human Resources has developed a Code of Conduct which is in line with best practice. The Code of Conduct covers the following subjects: Integrity and Impartiality, Promoting the Public Good, Accountability & Transparency

The objective of Kowanyama Aboriginal Shire Council's Code of Conduct is to provide a set of values, ethics, standards and behaviours related to the way employees and Councillors do their job. The Code does not cover every situation. However, the values, ethics, standards and behaviours it outlines are a reference point to help make decisions in situations it does not cover.

In particular the Code of Conduct aims to promote positive cooperative working relationships and as well as confidentiality of council business.

It is proposed that once the Code of Conduct is approved it will be presented to all staff. Furthermore it will become a requirement for all staff to sign the Code of Conduct to demonstrate that they agree to abide by the content.

### Action Item

**Human Resource Manager to add a section about whistleblowing protections to the Code of Conduct and plan roll out to all staff to ensure they fully understand - Including team workshops/training, with recognition that there will be varying literacy levels**

## **RESOLUTION – Code of Conduct**

That Council endorse the Code of Conduct, with the addition of Whistle-Blowers reference.

**Moved Cr Fry**

**Seconded Cr Lawrence**

**MOTION CARRIED**

### **b) Projects Assessment Tool**

Mr Fabian Williams CEO presented the new Projects Assessment tool and process. Mr Williams stated that Council does not currently have a formalised process to assess projects that Council would like to pursue. This is putting Council at financial and operational risk – financially they may be unidentified project costs (including staffing costs and ongoing repair & maintenance) and operationally projects may not be in line with the goals as set out in Council's plans (Corporate Plan, Operational Plan, Asset Management Plan and Risk Management Plans (currently in development)).

To remedy this, staff have identified that it would be beneficial for an assessment process to be created so projects can be prioritised to ensure they are in line with Council's plans and budget limitations (both short-term and long-term) before they commence – this would include both Operational and Capital projects, and projects that Council funds with its own revenue or applies for through grant funding

To meet these needs a "Project Assessment Tool" and "New Project flowchart" has been drafted.

The intention is that when there is an idea for a new project, and estimated costs are over \$10,000, the 1) full costs, and 2) the project's relationship to Council's plans would be identified and weighted. This information would then create a score. The score would then be provided to Council to assist in their decision making for approving projects.

Mr Williams further added that the "Project Assessment Tool" is a spreadsheet that captures information such as:

- The strength of the project to Council's Corporate, Operational, Asset Management Plans
- The risk to Council if the project doesn't go ahead
- Whole of life costs (such as ongoing repair and maintenance and administration costs)

The tool scores the project based on these strengths, from 0-2. A score of zero (0) would mean a weak relationship, a score of two (2) would mean a strong relationship.

These project scores would be presented to Council at each budget, budget review or (if needed) special meeting for endorsement. Staff would then only progress projects that are scored as a priority and approved by Council.

The "New Project flowchart" detailed the process to capture the information for the tool.

Ms Wiggins further added that the tool will enable the assessment of projects to give a clear way forward for budget planning and grant funding applications but that Council will still have final decision on the projects to pursue.

Council thanked staff and agreed that the tool will be very useful and would enable better decision making.

### **RESOLUTION – Project Assessment Tool**

That Council endorse the Project Assessment Tool and process.

**Moved Mayor Yam**

**Seconded Cr Lawrence**

**MOTION CARRIED**

### **c) QAO Final Management Report**

Helen Taylor presented the QAO Final Management Report. Ms Taylor stated that as noted in the April 2017 Council meeting “CEOs Information Report” Council’s Audited Financial Statements were signed off in March 2017. Council has now received the QAO “Management Report” (also known as the auditor-general’s observation report) that goes into detail into the governance and financial deficiencies as observed during the audit process.

Under the Section 213 of the Local Government Regulation this report must be presented to the next ordinary meeting of Council.

Since receipt of the report staff have already worked through and resolved 15 issues.

### **RESOLUTION – QAO Final Management Report**

That Council notes the Queensland Audit Office Final Management Report (Observation Report) for the 2015/16 financial year.

**Moved Cr Fry**

**Seconded Cr Lawrence**

**MOTION CARRIED**

### **6) Closed Business – 12.38pm – 1.45pm**

#### **RESOLUTION – Closed Business**

Pursuant to Local Government Regulations section 275 council resolved to move into closed business to discuss:

- Council’s budget

**Moved Cr Lawrence**

**Seconded Cr Fry**

**MOTION CARRIED**



**RESOLUTION - End of Closed Business**

Council resolved to move out of Closed Business

**Moved Cr Fry**

**Seconded Cr Lawrence**

**MOTION CARRIED**

### **RESOLUTION – Community Benefit Fund and Funeral Fund**

That Council remove the Community Benefit Fund and Funeral Fund from the fees and charges

**Moved Mayor Yam**

**Seconded Cr Fry**

**MOTION CARRIED**

### **RESOLUTION – Revenue Policy and Statement**

That Council endorse the revised Revenue Policy and Revenue Statement

**Moved Cr Lawrence**

**Seconded Mayor Yam**

**MOTION CARRIED**

### **RESOLUTION – Bad Debt Write-Offs**

That Council resolve to write off the bad debts as tabled.

**Moved Cr Fry**

**Seconded Mayor Yam**

**MOTION CARRIED**

#### **Action Item**

**Meeting to be arranged to Queensland Fire and Rescue to clarify emergency rescue procedures.**

### **7) General Business**

Cr Fry requested an update of the progress of the new housing projects. The CEO advised that there had been delays due to the closed roads.

#### **Action Item**

**CEO to draft letter to Transport and Main Road and the Cape York Mayors Alliance to notify them of delays with Topsy Creek Road project.**

The Mayor enquired as to what Council could do to improve access through the Mitchell Creek.

**Action Item**

**CEO to review possibilities to improve access through the Mitchell Creek, in line with the new projects assessment process.**

**Council Meeting Closed at 2.09pm**