

5.7. FNQROC STRATEGIC REGIONAL WMMR ADVISORY GROUP - APPOINTMENT OF ELECTED MEMBER REPRESENTATIVE

REPORT AUTHOR Paul Hoye, Manager Environment and Planning

DEPARTMENT Environment and Planning

RECOMMENDATION

That Council

- 1. Appoint the Deputy Mayor, Councillor Lisa Scomazzon, as Council's elected member representative on the FNQROC Regional Waste Management Group; and**
- 2. Note the information in the attachments relating to the first meeting of the FNQROC Regional Waste Management Group.**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Waste Resource Management in the Far North has long been a costly exercise for member Councils given historic restrictions on landfills within the Wet Tropics, the distance to disposal and recovery centres and the recent waste levy imposed by State Legislation.

To mitigate costs, manage risks and drive resilience planning and investment attraction, the FNQROC Regional Waste Management Group proposed to develop a Regional Strategic Waste and Materials Recovery Framework and would like it identified as a strategic Board project to highlight its importance for the region. The framework will be developed with the support of Queensland Treasury Corporation (QTC) and the Department of Environment and Science (DES).

At the FNQROC meeting on the 14 June 2021, FNQROC resolved to:

- a) Support the progression to develop a Regional Strategic Waste and Materials Recovery Framework in partnership with QTC and DES.
- b) Support the progression being driven by an Advisory Group consisting of one elected member and a senior manager from each participating Council, and representatives from both QTC and DES; and
- c) Adopt the Terms of Reference for the Regional Strategic Waste and Materials Recovery Framework Advisory Group and formally invites QTC and DES to participate as members.

The purpose of this report is to formally appoint Douglas Shire Council's elected member to the Advisory Group and to provide Councillors with information relating to the first meeting of the Group.

BACKGROUND

Far North Queensland faces a set of unique challenges in delivering cost effective and sustainable waste services. All Councils in the region struggle with issues such as access to secondary markets, transport costs, and increasing expenses and difficulties in developing new waste infrastructure. This impacts on the ability of Councils to achieve strategic ambitions, and to deliver and operate viable networks of resource recovery facilities.

National and State Government strategies, legislation and policies introduced in recent years have provided a roadmap for the future actions required by FNQROC Councils in managing the waste streams generated in the region. Waste (resource) management in the region has been a costly exercise for member Councils given historic restrictions on landfills within the Wet Tropics, the distance to disposal and recovery centres and the recent waste levy imposed by State Legislation.

- With future increased costs and Federal and State legislative requirements, the cost and risk will escalate into the future:
 - The State government has set waste reduction and materials recovery targets for 2025 and beyond which won't be met by a number of FNQROC Councils.
 - Waste levy rebate payments are currently due to expire in June 2022 which, combined with an expected increase in the waste levy itself, will directly impact on waste management costs and therefore increase the cost of service provision to ratepayers.
 - Member Councils remain vulnerable to and reliant on external markets for reprocessing of materials and face increasing year on year costs associated with transport.
- With regional collaboration, benefits could be obtained through:
 - Utilising current infrastructure to minimise lost income through contaminated waste streams.
 - Minimising the cost of managing our waste streams.
 - Maximising our opportunities to protect our environment.
 - Investment attraction to the region

To mitigate costs, manage risks and drive resilience planning and investment attraction, the FNQROC Regional Waste Management Group proposed to develop a Regional Strategic Waste and Materials Recovery Framework and would like it identified as a strategic Board project to highlight its importance for the region. The framework will be developed with the support of QTC and the Department of Environment and Science.

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COMMENT

The development of a Regional Strategic Waste and Materials Recovery Framework provides the opportunity to move the region from its current 'risk management and mitigation' approach to resilience planning and investment attraction around waste management.

Factors that underpin the need for the framework include:

- The Cairns Bedminster facility is due to be decommissioned in 2026 – this directly impacts on Douglas Shire Council, Cairns Regional Council, and Mareeba Shire Council in the short-term, and has long-term implications for contributing to the State’s waste diversion from landfill targets (65% by 2025 and 80% by 2030). A regional approach to feedstock supply will aid in securing the right solution for an organics processing replacement.
- The region is faced with significant decisions around the management of residual waste as for a number of FNQROC Councils, only one putrescible landfill will remain operational by the end of 2021. This facility is privately owned and operated. Douglas Shire Council’s only landfill will close in December 2021.

To improve waste management efficiencies, there is a need to collectively consider emerging technologies, emerging trends in packaging, and legislation around single use plastics and contaminants.

- To minimise impacts on soil organics, waterways and the Great Barrier Reef, there is a need to collectively consider how best to engage with the agriculture and civil construction sectors to achieve the best outcomes for materials recovery.
- National and State procurement policies are moving towards a mandate to source and use recycled materials in the delivery of funded projects.
- State and federal policies will continue to accelerate toward a transition to circular economy principles.

A first meeting of the FNQROC Regional Waste Management Group occurred on 23 July 2021 and Douglas Shire Council was represented by the Deputy Mayor, (as the elected representative), and the Manager Environment and Planning as the senior manager. The next meeting is to be held on Thursday 30 September 2021.

PROPOSAL

That Council notes the Terms of Reference – Regional Strategic Waste and Materials Recovery Framework Advisory Group and a Briefing Note relating to the first meeting of the Group and that Council endorses the Deputy Mayor of the Douglas Shire Council the Douglas elected representative for the FNQROC Regional Waste Management Group.

FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Staff and Councilor time is obviously required; however, this is a very important Group that Council needs to be involved in.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Participation in the regional Group forms a part of Council’s measures to mitigate issues surrounding current and future waste management needs.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Economic: The Group will investigate opportunities to utilise current infrastructure to minimise lost income through contaminated waste streams, ways to minimise the cost of managing our waste streams and future requirements of technology and infrastructure to solve transport, recycling and disposal needs in the most efficient manner having regard to cost, environment and social outcomes.

Environmental: Investigating opportunities and requirements to minimise impacts to the environment is a key aspect of the Group. Attaining a circular economy for materials generated in the Region is key driver for the Regional Strategic Waste and Materials Recovery Framework.

Social: The current and future needs and desires of our communities is a key component to be considered in the development of the Regional Strategic Waste and Materials Recovery Framework.

CORPORATE/OPERATIONAL PLAN, POLICY REFERENCE

This report has been prepared in accordance with the following:

Corporate Plan 2019-2024 Initiatives:

Theme 1 - Celebrating Our Communities

Douglas Shire Council embraces the diversity of our communities and values the contribution that all people make to the Shire. We recognise that it is a core strength of the region. We acknowledge our past so that it may guide us in the future. We recognise the wrongs done to our Indigenous community and we actively seek to reconcile so that we may all benefit from and enjoy our Shire. We acknowledge early European settlers who forged an agricultural base for our economy and we welcome all new arrivals as part of our broader community.

Goal 2 - We will deliver programs and services that protect and enhance the liveability of our beautiful Shire.

Theme 4 - Inclusive Engagement, Planning and Partnerships

In delivering for our communities, economy and environment, Douglas Shire will ensure open and transparent engagement and communication. We will develop robust strategic plans and we will partner with our community and key stakeholders.

Goal 3 - We will recognise the critical role that our partners play in planning and delivering vital programs and services.

COUNCIL'S ROLE

Council can play a number of different roles in certain circumstances and it is important to be clear about which role is appropriate for a specific purpose or circumstance. The implementation of actions will be a collective effort and Council's involvement will vary from information only through to full responsibility for delivery.

The following areas outline where Council has a clear responsibility to act:

Builder/Owner Council makes a significant investment every year in the infrastructure that underpins the Shire through its capital works program. Council will manage its assets with appropriate frameworks and deliver its projects through robust project management.

Service Provider Council provides many services to the community from roads and waste services to libraries and recreational facilities. Services evolve over time and it is the Council's mission to ensure that these services are appropriate, delivered efficiently, and designed with the customer at the centre.

CONSULTATION

Internal: Nil

External: FNQROC

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Nil

ATTACHMENTS

1. FNQ Regional Strategic Waste [5.7.1 - 7 pages]
2. Councillor Briefing Note 23 July 2021 [5.7.2 - 1 page]

REGIONAL STRATEGIC WASTE FRAMEWORK ADVISORY GROUP

Terms of Reference – Regional Strategic Waste and Materials Recovery Framework Advisory Group

Current as at Thursday 26 August 2021

Purpose

To guide the development of a strategic waste management and materials recovery framework for Far North Queensland that is appropriate for servicing the needs of the regional, rural and remote communities governed by FNQROC member Councils.

Role

The Regional Strategic Waste and Materials Recovery Framework Advisory Group (Advisory Group) will guide the development of a long term (20+ years) strategic waste framework to ensure the FNQROC region has the infrastructure and services required to contribute to achieving state and national obligations around resource recovery targets.

The role of the Advisory Group is therefore to:

1. Identify emerging issues of strategic importance that will impact member Councils;
2. Provide advice to the FNQROC Executive regarding the development (and subsequent implementation) of the regional framework; and
3. Make recommendations on strategic framework priorities to the FNQROC Board.

Deliverables

The Advisory Group will:

1. Provide recommendations to the FNQROC Board on the preferred approach for developing the strategic waste management and materials recovery framework;
2. Guide the development of a report detailing recommendations for the waste management and materials recovery framework;
3. Provide recommendations in relation to the implementation of the waste management and materials recovery framework;
4. Provide recommendations in relation to the formation of Advisory Group technical sub-committees if and when deemed necessary to further inform the process (for example regional procurement, organics);
5. Contribute to compiling documentation regarding options considered for the waste management and materials recovery framework;
6. Contribute to compiling documentation of consumer research and community consultation activities; and
7. Participate in communication activities associated with the awareness, education, engagement and communication phases of the project.

This Advisory Group will form in July 2021 and will deliver the final report to the FNQROC Board by December 2022. To achieve its objectives, the Advisory Group will meet at approximately six-week intervals throughout this period.

The first Advisory Group meeting is scheduled for 23 July 2021 in accordance with the attached Preliminary Program of Meetings.

It should be noted that the Preliminary Program of Meetings is subject to change. The Program may alter based on unforeseen constraints and/or changes to the scope of the project that may occur throughout the process.

The Chair shall determine meeting agendas in conjunction with FNQROC staff. FNQROC officers will compile and circulate the agenda to Advisory Group members prior to each meeting and attend to all meeting arrangements.

The location and duration of the meetings will be dependent on the agenda.

Minutes will be recorded by FNQROC and, with the exception of confidential information, be posted to the FNQROC website.

Membership

The Advisory Group will comprise:

1. one elected member and one technical lead from each participating Council;
2. FNQROC representative;
3. QTC representatives; and
4. Department of Environment and Science representatives

Council officer members should hold a key position within their Council and have technical expertise in the areas of waste management and resource recovery.

State Agency members will participate as advisors to the working group and should be at a Principal, Director or Executive Director level.

Chair

The Chair of the Advisory Group will be drawn from the Board of FNQROC with the position to be held for the duration of the project. This representative may also be the council elected representative.

Reporting Structure

The Advisory Group Chair will report to the FNQROC Board and is responsible for the effective facilitation of the Group's discussions. The Chair will be supported in this role by the FNQROC Executive Officer and Regional Strategic Infrastructure Coordinator.

The Advisory Group will provide advice and recommendations to the FNQROC Board through the Chair. As such, the Advisory Group has no decision-making authority and must respect and abide by any subsequent decisions made by the Board.

The FNQROC Executive Officer, in consultation with the Advisory Group Chair, will make the final decision on the membership of the Advisory Group, including appointments to vacancies that may emerge during the term of the project.

Where a position becomes vacant, FNQROC will work with the relevant Council to fill that position for the remainder of the term.

If a member leaves their current position during their term, that member is automatically considered to have resigned their membership from the Advisory Group. However, this member may submit an Expression of Interest in continuing to be a member of the Advisory Group if they take up a new position with another member council.

Role of Advisory Group members

To ensure the benefits can be realised and information is shared, the role of members is to:

1. Act impartially and represent the interest of the broader FNQ community. While members have a role in providing specific sector or interest group opinions, members must on balance strive to meet the needs and aspirations of the whole community.
2. All parties shall ensure they act in Good Faith and apply principles of Reasonableness and Fairness with regard to the presentation of issues and/or concerns, solutions, and suggestions within the Advisory Group forum.
3. Complete tasks and actions identified.
4. Be the point of contact for their councils/department
5. Disseminate information within their individual councils/departments to appropriate officers and elected members.

Quorum and voting

A quorum is defined as 50% +1 of Advisory Group members who may be present in person, online, or via a combination of the two. State Agency members are not included when determining if a quorum is achieved.

The Advisory Group will work towards a consensus decision-making style. When decisions are required, the motion shall be decided by a majority of votes of the members represented at that meeting. In the event of an equality of votes the Chair shall have a second or casting vote. State Agency members are not eligible to participate in voting.

Conflicts of Interest

All members of the Advisory Group are required to always declare any conflicts of interest that arise during their term. All conflicts of interest must be declared to the Chair prior to any discussion and/or involvement in the issue for which the conflict arises.

Where a conflict of interest exists, the member will withdraw from the discussion as required or act as directed by the Chair.

Proxies

Where required, proxies must come from within the same organisation and must be of an equivalent standing (e.g. an elected member must be replaced with an elected member).

Observers

In some instances, the work of an Advisory Group may be enhanced by the contribution of observers from organisations that are not Advisory Group members. For example, additional State government agencies, sister organisations (such as TCICA or RDA) professional service providers or industry knowledge experts.

Such organisations may be invited to attend specific meetings to participate as an observer.

The FNQROC Executive Officer, in consultation with the Advisory Group Chair, will make the final decision on participation of observers in an Advisory Group.

Probity

The Advisory Group will endeavour to adhere generally to the principles of probity and will develop, and from time-to-time update, a probity framework covering proposed activities.

If considered beneficial to do so, from time-to-time the Advisory Group may engage the services of a probity advisor to assist the Group in adhering to the principles of probity.

Confidentiality

During Advisory Group membership, the member will not reveal any confidential or proprietary information entrusted in the course of their duties and may not use or attempt to use any such information, documents or data, other than for the fulfilment of their duties with the Group.

Upon cessation of Advisory Group membership, and thereafter, the member shall not reveal any confidential or proprietary information, which they obtained while a member of the Group, and may not use or retain, or attempt to use or retain, any such information, documents or data.

Expenses

Members of the Advisory Group will be required to cover their own expenses, including travel expenses to and from meetings. To accommodate working lunch meeting, meals will be provided at the discretion of FNQROC.

Dispute resolution

Where a dispute cannot be resolved at the committee, it is to be escalated to the FNQROC Executive Officer. If it cannot be resolved by the FNQROC Executive Officer, it will be escalated to the FNQROC Board.

Date	Workshop Theme
Friday 23 July 2021	Scoping the project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and finalise Advisory Group terms of reference • Establish baseline knowledge • Align on problem definition • Identify existing data sources
Thursday 30 September 2021	Defining success and decision-making foundations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Align on project scope for RFQ documents • Establish process for consultant selection • Establish common understanding of foundational facts
Thursday 4 November 2021	Understanding current state and levers to improve <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of existing data to identify key themes • Revisit key themes from initial planning work
Wednesday 8 December 2021	Understanding current state and levers to improve <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check in on process to date • Feedback from initial stakeholder consultations • Implications of data across waste streams (sources and pressure points)
Thursday 3 February 2022	Defining a path forward <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check in on process to date • Early view on findings / recommendations
Thursday 31 March 2022	Aligning the Plan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check in on progress to date • Review / discuss recommendations tabled to date • Discuss support required from the State to deliver recommendations

Attachment 5.7.1
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We the undersigned agree to be bound by the Terms of Reference for the FNQROC Regional Strategic Waste Management and Materials Recovery Advisory Group.

Signed for and on behalf of member Councils at the meeting on Thursday 30 September 2021.

Advisory Group Chair
Cr Angela Toppin
Mayor
Mareeba Shire Council

Cr Brett Moller
Cairns Regional Council

Mr Steve Cosatto
Cairns Regional Council

Cr Teresa Millwood
Cassowary Coast Regional Council

Mr Gavin Hammond
Cassowary Coast Regional Council

Cr Peter Burns
Cook Shire Council

Mr Sheils Barra
Cook Shire Council

Mr Garry Pickering
Croydon Shire Council

Cr Lisa Scomazzon
Deputy Mayor
Douglas Shire Council

Mr Paul Hoye
Douglas Shire Council

Cr Barry Hughes
Mayor
Etheridge Shire Council

Cr Barry Woibo
Deputy Mayor
Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council

Cr Lenore Wyatt
Mareeba Shire Council

Mr Morris Hamill
Mareeba Shire Council

Cr David Clifton
Tablelands Regional Council

Mr Jon Turner
Tablelands Regional Council

Mr Victor Mills
Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council

Cr Andrew Ross
Mayor
Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council

Mr Sam Bann
Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council

Our Ref: DM3715743

Briefing Note for Councillors

WMMR Meeting Outcomes Friday 23 July 2021

Summary of Discussions

- First meeting of the Regional Strategic Waste Management and Materials Recovery Advisory Group was held Friday 23 July in Cairns. Chaired by Cr Angela Toppin, Mayor of Mareeba Shire Council.
- The Advisory Group consists of elected members, technical leads from within Council operations teams, and senior representatives from QTC, DES and LGAQ.
- 11 elected members have been nominated to join the Advisory Group:
 1. Cr Angela Toppin, Mayor, Mareeba Shire Council (Chair)
 2. Cr Ross Andrews, Mayor, Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council (Deputy Chair)
 3. Cr Brett Moller, Cairns Regional Council
 4. Cr Teresa Millwood, Cassowary Coast Regional Council
 5. Cr Peter Burns, Cook Shire Council
 6. Cr Lisa Scomazzon, Deputy Mayor, Douglas Shire Council
 7. Cr Barry Hughes, Mayor, Etheridge Shire Council
 8. Cr Andrew Lancini, Hinchinbrook Shire Council
 9. Cr Bruce Woibo, Deputy Mayor, Hope Vale Aboriginal Shire Council
 10. Cr Lenore Wyatt, Mareeba Shire Council
 11. Cr David Clifton, Tablelands Regional Shire Council
- The Advisory Group was formed to help move the region towards a circular economy and is tasked with developing a strategic framework for waste management and resource recovery.
- Regional alignment of Councils aims to improve the economics of waste.
- The framework will:
 - be informed by and consider state and federal policies such as the Queensland waste levy
 - consider waste streams and sectors, end markets, emerging technologies and waste collection systems
 - aim to identify genuine opportunities for regional alignment, acknowledging that all Councils have different capabilities, resources and priorities
 - acknowledge that new infrastructure (such as putrescible landfill) is constrained by our natural assets and requires social license
- The first meeting focussed on defining the Advisory Group Terms of Reference and defining the Problem Statement.
- The **Problem Statement** will guide delivery of the project and defines at a high level what we want the project to achieve. It was defined by the group as:
 - What **sequence of levers** will allow **12 FNQ regional Councils** to improve the **economics of waste management operations**, encourage **economic development** and **meet or move towards State targets** relating to household waste generation, recycling and landfill by 2050, to improve environmental and social outcomes?
- The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday 30 September in Cairns. At this meeting the Advisory Group will define the scope of the project in more detail, discuss options for securing an external partner to assist with writing the plan, and start interrogating waste collection data.