

5.9. DAINTREE FORUM #2

REPORT AUTHOR(S): Nevinia Davenport, Executive Assistant
Linda Cardew, Chief Executive Officer

DEPARTMENT: Office of the Chief Executive Officer

RECOMMENDATION

That Council receive and note the report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report details the issues raised by the local community at the second Daintree Forum held at Diwan on 23 July 2015, and Council's actions to date in response.

BACKGROUND

On 3 June 2014 the following Notice of Motion was carried unanimously:

1. *That the Council undertake no less than three (3) community Forums engaging with the communities north of the Daintree River within the term of the current Council;*
2. *The first Forum to be conducted early in the 2014/15 financial year and the second and third Forums to be conducted during the 2015 calendar year; and*
3. *That the Forums either be general or specific in terms of the issues the Council may seek to canvass.*

Councillors were in agreement that there are many unique issues affecting the communities living north of the Daintree River, and that there is an opportunity for the new Council to demonstrate that it has a serious intention to respond to and rectify any perception that the community has been somewhat ignored and underserved by the former Douglas Shire and Cairns Regional Councils, and other service providers.

While not all issues are the responsibility of Council to resolve, Council considered that providing a Forum as an opportunity for the communities north of the River to have direct contact with Council would be beneficial, particularly if the new Douglas is to stay true to its objective of providing open, transparent and inclusive government.

The second forum attended by approximately 35 local residents and business operators was convened in Diwan on 23 July 2015 from 10.00am to 2.00pm with discussion generally under the following five sessions:

1. Capital Works and Operational Initiatives completed in 2014-2015 and planned for 2015-2016;
2. Mayoral advocacy;
3. NDDRA update;
4. Coconut Management Plan; and
5. Waste collection

COMMENT

The following summarises the issues and comments raised by the community and discussed at the Forum, the action taken by Council to date and the schedule for future work. A detailed issues register is provided below.

	Issue/Comments/Needs	Action to Date	Scheduled	Roles Continuum
1.	Establishment of the Daintree Joint Management Group (DJMG).	DJMG formed comprising Douglas Shire Council, Jabalbina Yalanji Aboriginal Corporation, Daintree Coast Community Council, Tourism Port Douglas Daintree, Daintree Marketing Cooperative, Terrain Natural Resource Management, Wet Tropics Management Authority and QLD Parks & Wildlife Service. First DJMG meeting held 20 August 2015.	20 August 2015 Completed and ongoing with two meetings per financial year.	Information Provider Advocate Facilitator
2.	Assessment of repairs required to Cape Tribulation Road as a result of deterioration caused by NDRRA works contractor trucks.	Assessment will be completed at the end of the NDRRA works as part of the regular Council road maintenance program. Council has also used the opportunity of NDRRA works to complete some similar maintenance activities at substantial cost savings to rate payers.	Ongoing	Asset Owner Fully Responsible Regulator
3.	NDRRA works contractor truck movements north of the Daintree River impacting on peak season (school holiday) periods. Avoid or reduce number of trucks during peak seasons.	Increased truck movements were deferred to after the September school holidays.	Completed	Agent
4.	NDRRA works contractor truck speed levels and distance from other vehicles.	Contractor instructed to comply with regulated speed limits and ensure suitable distance from advance warning vehicle. Continually monitored by Council and Superintendent representatives.	Completed	Agent
5.	Replacement of toilets at Cow Bay Beach removed by QLD Parks and Wildlife Service. Suggestion from community member to relocate the portaloos from the northern side of the ferry to Cow Bay Beach.	A Mayoral Minute was carried unanimously at the 18 August 2015 Ordinary Council Meeting as follows: <i>“That Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service (QPWS) is advised that Council:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>will accept the QPWS offer of up to \$80,000 to meet part or the whole of the capital costs (whichever is the greater) for suitable toilet</i> 	Ongoing	Fully Responsible

	Issue/Comments/Needs	Action to Date	Scheduled	Roles Continuum
		<p><i>facilities at Cow Bay Beach, such costs to include the cost of construction; and</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>will own the asset and meet the maintenance costs into the future. The toilet facility is to be located on Council-controlled land and Council will be responsible for the delivery of the project.”</i> <p>A draft Funding Deed is being reviewed.</p> <p>The project is currently being designed but construction cannot commence as the reserve is subject to a yet to be determined Land Claim.</p> <p>The Portaloo from the northern bank of the ferry cannot be moved at this time.</p>		
6.	Management of illegal camping	Additional Local Laws Officer employed for camping including work north of the Daintree River. New signage has been placed at a number of “hot spots” and temporary signage is also erected where areas become routinely used. Arrangement developed with police for assistance (hiring) in dealing with major issues.	Ongoing	Fully Responsible
7.	Investigate electronic ticketing system for Daintree Ferry	Investigations into options have commenced.	Ongoing	Fully Responsible
8.	Why gas and dangerous goods be transported on the ferry with all vehicles.	<p>These restrictions were taken under advice of the Department of Transport Marine Services with reference to the International Maritime Dangerous Goods Code.</p> <p>More specific details of the advice was provided directly to the resident that raised the query via email correspondence.</p>	Completed	Information Provider

	Issue/Comments/Needs	Action to Date	Scheduled	Roles Continuum
9.	Signage at turnoff to ferry is illegible and should specifically mention "Daintree"	Signage was powder coated which has significantly increased its legibility and an additional section of the sign was added "Welcome to the Daintree".	Completed	Fully Responsible
10.	Roadside waste collection community consultation	Community consultation has been completed. The survey will be the subject of a report being submitted to Council for consideration at the 24 November Ordinary Meeting.	24 November 2015	Fully Responsible
11.	Transfer station at Cape Tribulation	Some potential land had been identified and discussions with the land owners is to form part of ongoing working group tasks.	Ongoing	Fully Responsible
12.	Advocate state government for possible boat ramp at Coopers Creek	To be progressed.	2016	Advocate
13.	Reduction of roadside spraying and chemicals within the herbicides	Within the Douglas Shire Council Operational Plan 2015-2016 under Infrastructure Services, is an operational initiative:- <i>IS7 – Investigate and implement, where practical, procedures and techniques to reduce herbicide spraying, including the use of glyphosate, on roadsides, public areas and in routine garden maintenance.</i> Investigations have commenced.	October 2015 – March 2016	Fully Responsible
14.	Cars driving on wrong side of the road at the culvert located on the southern side of the Palm Café to avoid a dip in the culvert on one side of the road.	Officers have inspected the concrete 'dip' and while the vertical alignment is not ideal (and may cause discomfort if driven over at the posted speed) it is not sufficient to warrant immediate action as a safety issue. Given the speed limit and speed environment of the roadway we believe drivers should have no difficulty in negotiating this dip safely if they obey the advanced 'Dip' warning signs and advisory speed plate. The section of roadway is trafficable and requires only that a driver reduce speed as is prudent when approaching or negotiating crossings like this.	Completed	Fully Responsible

FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Daintree Forum No. 2 was conducted with minimal cost, in a Council owned facility. The actions taken to date have either been funded through Council's approved budget, or funded with the assistance of a State Government grant. Suggestions, programs and initiatives that have not yet been investigated or implemented may need to be funded (if approved) in future budgets. To date, staff and existing resources have been used to respond to proposals.

A sausage sizzle was provided with attendees donating a gold coin. A total of \$81.80 was raised of which 100% was donated to the Ravenshoe Appeal on 29 July 2015 via the Bendigo Bank Mossman.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

While all actions carry some degree of risk, there are no substantial risks in any of the actions taken to date. Future projects and actions will be assessed from a risk perspective on a case by case basis.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

Economic: The suggestions and comments made at the Forum by residents and business operators highlighted the importance of economic sustainability in this remote area of the Shire, and the value of Council support.

Environmental: A passion for the rainforest environment was the most common reason cited by residents for living north of the River. Some of the many physical and logistical challenges were acknowledged and discussed. This Forum provided a valuable opportunity for Councillors and officers to hear more of the priority environmental issues.

Social: The Forum provides support for social cohesion, bringing community members together to share ideas and solve problems.

CORPORATE/OPERATIONAL PLAN, POLICY REFERENCE

This report has been prepared in accordance with the following:

Corporate Plan 2014-2019 Initiatives:

Theme 1 - Celebrating Our Communities

1.2.3 - Develop and support opportunities to build resilience and sustainability of community groups and agencies.

1.2.4 - Network, advocate and partner with stakeholders to achieve positive outcomes.

Theme 2 - Building a Sustainable Economic Base

2.2.1 - Develop business initiatives to support commercial development and investment within the Shire.

2.2.5 - Expand tourism and agricultural business opportunities and benefits through collaborative planning and promotion.

2.3.4 - Develop positive partnerships with economic development organisations and work proactively towards achieving mutually agreed goals and objectives.

Theme 3 - Improve Environmental Performance

3.1.2 - Identify and implement opportunities to create vibrancy in high profile areas, such as Daintree Gateway and Mossman town centre.

Theme 4 - Engage, Plan, Partner

4.1.2 - Undertake community engagement activities that are clearly identified and are appropriate in relation to the project.

4.2.2 - Provide leadership to secure beneficial social, environmental and economic outcomes for the Shire.

Theme 5 - Governance

5.2.1 - Provide Councillors and community with accurate, unbiased and factual reporting to enable accountable and transparent decision-making.

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:

Advocate	Supporting communities and groups by advocating for certain actions from other organisations (usually other levels of government)
Agent	Delivering a program or activity for another organisation (usually another level of government)
Asset-Owner	Meeting the responsibilities associated with owning or being the custodian of assets such as infrastructure.
Facilitator	Bringing people together to develop solutions to problems
Fully-Responsible	Delivering a program or activity for another organisation (usually another level of government).
Information Provider	Bringing people together to develop solutions to problems.
Part-Funder	Sharing the cost of a program or activity with other organisations.

Regulator Meeting the responsibilities associated with regulating activities through legislation or local law.

CONSULTATION

Internal: Various Council departments and officers were involved and consulted in the delivery of the second Daintree Forum, including:

- NDRRA Project Engineer and Traffic Management Officer
- Open Spaces Coordinator and Nursery Technician Open and Public Spaces
- Technical Officer – Waste
- General Manager Operations
- General Manager Corporate Services
- Manager Governance
- Executive Officer

External: Nil

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Forum provided the opportunity for the Daintree community north of the River to be consulted on a wide range of issues.