



TORRES SHIRE COUNCIL

*To lead, provide & facilitate a sustainable,
safe & culturally vibrant community*

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31 October 2022

MEDIA RELEASE - TORRES SHIRE COMMUNITY CONSULTATIONS

From Saturday 22nd October 2022, Torres Shire Council held a series of community consultations, commencing at Rosehill followed by Horn Island on Monday 24th October 2022, TRAWQ Wednesday 26th October 2022 and Port Kennedy Thursday 27th October 2022. The final in this series of community consultations will soon be held on Muralag (PoW). These community consultations attracted almost 100 community members. Council's compliance team prepared and hosted the sausage sizzle and were on hand to answer any questions regarding the proposed amendment to the animal management subordinate local law regarding particularly high-density units and permissible animal limits.

"Council was delighted to receive direct feedback from the community and the community was very engaged at these Community Consultations", Mayor Yen Loban said today. "As the community's elected representatives, we wanted to understand what is concerning our communities and what improvements or changes Council may make to meet community needs."

Many topics were discussed including noise and interruption from helicopters flying close to homes, boat trailers left on Council controlled areas and roads obstructing access and egress in various nominated streets in the Shire. At Horn Island there was concern raised about the keeping of animals and about the disposal of animal carcasses near the ocean.

The community was concerned that there are too many cars in the Shire and Council outlined its proposed importation of motor vehicles scheme modelled on the one in force on Lord Howe Island that is currently before the Queensland Attorney-General. Community members also discussed the number of containers being used on council reserves, the number of dogs on the streets and cars blocking safe access and egress both to the beach and also suburban roads. The lag time between Council requesting street light repairs in the Shire and Ergon's response time to carry out the repairs was discussed by participants and Council advised that it had instituted a solar response. Community members nominated sites where there was no illumination.

The upcoming Summit announced by the Premier was one of the hot topics of discussion and participants were advised that it was Torres Shire Council that called for this Summit. When asked by community members about data to support the community's concerns, Council outlined its detailed analysis of cost of living pressures from buying basic necessities in life including food to telecommunications, transport and freight, energy all of which are impacted by monopolisation. Council outlined detailed socio-economic data it presented to the Queensland Government that it will discuss at the Summit. Whilst currently announced as a one day Summit, Council is lobbying to have it as a two day Summit with all those who should be involved attending. If needs be, Council will host the second day.

The biggest topic discussed at all community consultations was housing, whether that be supporting the aspiration of home ownership, providing rental accommodation and the long waiting lists, the fact that neither the Commonwealth nor Queensland Governments pay headworks associated with development or property and land rates.

The participants expressed grave concern that government accommodation is squeezing community accommodation. Council endorsed community concern and advised that it had raised with the Premier and the relevant Ministers at the recent Community Cabinet on 5th and 6th September 2022 on Thursday Island that over the past 8 years, the Queensland Government has built forty-six government employee housing and only two community houses.

The community asked Council to consider lobbying for a cap on rents in the Shire. The Horn Island Affordable Housing subdivision was discussed as was land tenure arrangements across the Shire. The community raised the need to have homes currently untenanted occupied. At the Port Kennedy community consultation, it was suggested that all Government offices be relocated to Horn Island and government employee accommodation also located there. This will alleviate the community housing shortage on Thursday Island. Council advised of the various initiatives it is undertaking in the housing portfolio and that the Horn Island sub-division will be open in 2023 for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander residents to build their own homes.

The community also recommended that public transport needed urgent attention, including marine transport. Specific concerns affecting individuals were also raised and documented. These concerns too will be followed up.

Mayor Loban advised participants that “the Japanese Ambassador to Australia had recently visited the Shire as have the Prime Minister of Australia, the Hon Anthony Albanese MP and the Minister for Indigenous Australians, the Hon. Linda Burney and Senator for Queensland Nita Green. Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk MP and her Cabinet attended the Shire for Community Cabinet on the 5th and 6th September 2022 along with the Member for Cook, Cynthia Lui MP. The Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby and his wife visited the Shire. He had only recently presided over Queen Elizabeth II funeral. Council appreciates so many dignitaries going out of their way to visit our Shire”.

Other items discussed were the loud noise complaints and speeding vehicles posing a safety concern, community members called on Council to install speed bumps.

“At Community Cabinet, Torres Shire Council presented 18 detailed briefs and 23 recommendations. We called for the reintroduction of the Kuki patrol and discussed in detail the benefits of bringing some of the events of the 2032 Olympics to the Thursday Island Sports precinct. We expressed our appreciation to the Deputy Premier for the funding provided to Council to develop the Master Plan for the precinct.”

“All the concerns and suggestions from Council’s community consultations will be comprehensively recorded and reported to Council’s November Ordinary Council Meeting and the elected members will consider and act on the report. A big Esso to the community for your engagement, time and contributions.” Mayor Loban concluded.

End Release

TSC Media Centre

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