Question	Responses

What specific social, cultural or community issues should our local government prioritize in the upcoming strategic community planning process?	**Illicit drug use, alcohol and vape/smoking numbers**
	
	- Attendees noted that illicit drug use was an underlying problem and not limited to young persons. It has come and gone in waves across the decade. Attendees noted some periods presented greater instances of use than others.
	
	- Meeting noted that cannabis use is different than historical use in the 60s-90s. Strains are bred with greater efficacy and not 'natural' in their potency. Negative side effects such as psychosis, memory loss are more severe.
	
	- Attendee with medical background put forward that the availability of cheap alcohol and cigarettes almost encouraged people to take up an increase in use, even if they didn't partake before moving to Island.
	
	  Seemingly persons that did not necessarily partake on the mainland seemed to adopt heavier use after arriving. Likely related to stress, and lack of other alternative stress relievers?
	
	- Facilitator noted that for some agencies who deploy large numbers of staff on the Island over the last decade, a 'school trip' mentality was prevalent in the staff. Staff were dominantly the same age and without friends or family networks in proximity. This behaviour had an influence on local residents of the same age group in social arenas.
	
	- Attendee asked about price control to help dissuade take up? Meeting confirmed that price controls are not practiced by Government in Australia, except for extraordinary times by State Governments (famine,war,depression,etc)
	
	- Attendees discussed programs other mainland local governments they have lived in have committed to in this space. State's 'Drug Aware' program for schools / Visiting Athletes / Speakers to schools speaking about lifestyle choices. Vaping recognised as a growing pattern of usage amongst younger persons.
	
	- Meeting discussed the take up of drinking and smoking as 'escapes' from the stress of remote living. Noted that many persons had larger salaries and access to cheap liquor. The interaction between highly paid mainland 'tradies' and local residents saw some influence between the two that the attendees thought not positive in terms of drug use.
	
	- Facilitator put that the challenge of drug use was serious enough a subject to warrant a stand-alone project with Council involving specific engagement with the community, IOTHS, AFP, School and other relevant stakeholders.
	
	  Attendees agreed that a separate initiative by Council would be welcome.
	
	Themes: Healthcare, Mental Health, Drug Use, Alcohol/Smoking/Vaping Addiction

Question:	Responses:
What specific social, cultural or community issues should our local government prioritize in the upcoming strategic community planning process? (cont)	**Aged Care** - Long term Island resident raised the lack of aged care provision. No facility exists for aged persons who need care. - Meeting noted the provision of Health and Community Care (HACC) services by IOTHS, and the current use of the hospital facility to house two seniors unable to live independently - Facilitator noted that the Department of Infrastructure delivers services for Norfolk Island, CKI and CI. Norfolk Island has 25 residential aged care beds as an attached facility to their hospital. Attendee noted that this was a legacy of the previous NI Government; noted that the Commonwealth has expanded the number of aged care beds since taking over the facility in 2016. - Unequivocally the Commonwealth provides Residential Aged Care on Norfolk Island and not CKI and CI. - Attendee noted the importance of care at end of life when independent living was no longer possible. Noted that a senior whose partner had recently passed away was now moving to the mainland as living alone was not possible. - Meeting recalled the April 2021 visit from APP Architects and the Department's Special Projects Team that consulted widely on the establishment of a Residential Aged Care facility on Christmas Island; positive reviews of the engagement. Shire had completed the planning and other zoning related aspects to prepare for such a construction adjacent to IOTHS which was the site the APP Architects had finalised on. Facilitator informed the meeting that APP Architects and the Department's Special Project Team had presented their '*Detailed Business Case*' to the decision makers in Canberra for funding 1 July 2023. This submission was made at end 2021/beginning of 2022. The Department declined the funding opportunity; this was conveyed to the Shire in March 2022. Shire has since then unsuccessfully been able to obtain a copy of the '*Detailed Business Case*' despite several written requests for it.

	- Attendee asked if Aged Care was raised during the Minister's visit in March 2023? Council representative confirmed that it was not; Council had one 30min session with the Minister.
	- Council representative thought that the refusal of the '*Detailed Business Case'* was because it would have been a capital expenditure program that would attract significant ongoing annual expenditure to operate it. Advised the meeting that the Territories Budget had been reduced over time.
	- Meeting recalled the multiple Aged Care consultations over the last decade.
	An FOI was made to the Department for the Commonwealth commissioned *2014 AHA Aged Care Report* in 2016. The Council specified it wished to receive the original submitted version from the AHA consultants as well as the final version cleared for release.
	Council noted that when the FOI request was completed, it received the original version which had 20+ recommendations, whilst the final public version had significantly fewer and worded substantially differently.
	The final version was reportedly the 15th version of the original report.
	- Meeting discussed the ability for Department to 'send-back' consultants' reports for a 're-draft' before accepting a final copy. Attendees did not think this was completely transparent.
	- Attendee asked if residents could change this practice? Advised that these were the operational practices of Government and residents did not have input into their methodology .
	- Attendee asked how Christmas Island can be better informed and involved with federal administrative processes?
	- Facilitator advised that an FOI request follows statutory timelines if a member of the public wanted to know about a document or decision making process.
	- Meeting suggested that the Council raise to the Minister the request for the 'Detailed Business Case' before pursuing the FOI option.
	- In terms of the local government's participation in the aged care space, the meeting put that the council should

	continue to advocate and lobby for the interests of residents. It was not a local government responsibility to fund from ratepayer monies, rather to advocate. **Themes:** Governance transparency, Local Government Advocacy on Social Issues, Aged Care
Question:	**Responses:**
What specific social, cultural or community issues should our local government prioritize in the upcoming strategic community planning process? (cont)	**Capacity Building for CI Incorporated Associations / Community Groups** - Attendee put forward the high number of Associations on the island and the island's reliance on them for a range of social, cultural and volunteer service delivery was important to raise. - Capacity Building was discussed as a community issue in this context. Volunteer burnout, turnover and lack of resources led to a decline in capabilities - Attendee described a previous job role in a QLD local government where they were a 'club development officer.' NFPs and community groups in the municipality would have them as a contact where they could get assistance in grant writing and governance advice. Noted that compliance with rules applicable in the NFP space was not a focus of NFPs as much as the actual volunteering and community development activities. **Capacity Building for Business** - Attendee put forward on the same theme that small businesses could use some mentoring / advice in this area. - Meeting noted the 2014 loss of the *Small Business Development Corporation* , the WA body that supported SBs in terms of advice on licensing, registrations, insurance compliances, marketing and other related SB space matters. A local SBDC representative Joanne used to live in IOTs and facilitated business subject matter experts to the Islands with the service delivery agreement funding. Facilitator recalled that his own business professor Matthew Winters from Curtin University was the last subject matter expert to be brought up for a marketing workshop. - Meeting had positive recollection of SBDC service delivery. Attendee put forward that a previous Commonwealth Economic Development Officer, now gone, had ended the SBDC service. The rationale was that the then newly incorporated Indian Ocean Territories Regional Development Organisation (IOTRDO) would hub marketing of the island, provide business mentoring and perform functions supporting landing investment on CI and CKI.

- Meeting recalled the original IOTRDO grants program that had CKI and CI organisations able to submit their proposals to the IOTRDO for funding. The funding was provided by the Commonwealth (*facilitator note – the Commonwealth and IOTRDO are separate entities*).

- These IOTRDO open grant rounds were open twice.

Grants for Social and Business development

- Meeting discussed the current lack of availability of grants for both social, cultural and community development and business developments.

- Facilitator confirmed that WA state grants do not apply in the IOTs.

- Attendee provided a historical overview of how a grants regime once happened on Christmas Island:

  1. A local community group would submit an application for a WA type grant to the relevant WA funding body.

  2. That WA funding body would assess the application and inform the Perth Territories Office whether or not they would have recommended it for funding if that application '*had come from a WA community group.*'

  3. The Perth Territories Office would then fund that grant application accordingly from a budget allocation *specifically* saved for this purpose in the IOT Budget.

  4. Normal acquittal processes would follow with that WA funding body to ensure the grant was used according to the terms of the grant milestone deliverables.

- Attendees recounted that this budget allocation to 'mirror' state-type programs was cancelled by the Department in the 2000s.

- Attendees restated that one of the responsibilities of the IOTRDO upon its founding was to be responsible for disbursement of a grant program for CKI and CI. Facilitator confirms, noting that he was a member of the IOTRDO in this period.

  The facilitator noted that the last grant program the IOTRDO released only gave community groups the ability to apply for grant money if it actioned one of the IOTRDO's own goals in its own strategic plan.

  It did not avail the possibility of community groups applying for funds to action their own organisation's plans.

- Attendee noted that this loss of access to a community grant funding stream prevented the return of community art projects that had been had previously including street parades and circus training.

- Attendees did not think this model of grant provision where community groups can only apply to complete a project on the IOTRDO's strategic plan was satisfactory.

  The IOTRDO grant round was only provided once in this manner in 2019. There have been no open grant programs since in the IOTs from the Commonwealth.

- Attendees considered the Commonwealth's 'mirror' practice to be more suitable than a grant program tied to the IOTRDO's strategic plan.

- Council attendee put to the meeting that the Commonwealth Grants Commission, an independent body that looks to assess (amongst other things) if Commonwealth programs and initiatives are funded properly and achieve value for money, had advised the Department after one of their reports that the Department needed to make a grants program allocation available to IOT residents to ensure they receive similar opportunities to WA residents.

- The Department had committed to this for a short time with the 'mirror' system, and then with the initial two rounds with the IOTRDO as it was established.

- The meeting noted that the final IOTRDO round, which only let community groups apply for IOTRDO projects in its own strategic plan, was an exertion of control from the community to the Commonwealth.

  Meeting noted the IOTRDO is chaired by the Office of the Administrator.

- Council attendee put that the rationale for the reduction of the grants budget line in the Department's IOT budget was because their own budget had been trending lower over successive periods.

- Attendees wanted the creation of a 'one-stop-shop' for grant availability. Facilitator informed the meeting that the IOTRDO's website has a specific 'grants available' page, but that it was not updated frequently.

  Another attendee provided that manual registration on www.grantsconnect.gov.au , www.business.gov.au and www.tenders.gov.au would provide email alerts to you on new grants that match your 'alert me' words.

- Facilitator confirmed that manual subscription to these portals would assist. Put to the meeting that the Federal Grant Programs on offer were usually to solve 'federal scale problems' and did not always lend themselves to grassroots activities that local NFPs wanted to do.

  Facilitator confirmed that he had explored corporate grants with ANZ, Domino's and Kleen Heat Gas to no avail.

	- Attendee suggested Council create a flow-chart to explain how grant funding worked on Christmas Island.
	- Attendees summarised that the governance arrangements that community groups and business entities found themselves in on CI did not provide them with the full suite of support services and grant access that they would have access to as mainland residents.
	Input for the Strategic Community Plan was for Council to lobby for the return of a grants allocation in the IOT Budget to be administered in the same 'mirrored' way as previously.
	Themes: Governance Arrangements, Grant Funding, Community/Cultural/Social Development, Business grants development, Transparency of Decision Making
Question: What specific social, cultural or community issues should our local government prioritize in the upcoming strategic community planning process? (cont)	**Responses:** **Street Beautification / Health** - Attendee suggested Council could consider planting fruiting trees in the township to provide readily available fruit. This would have some benefits for health. - Meeting observed that mango trees especially were very popular during the wet season **Mental Health** - Attendee thought that boredom was an issue, and led to less optimal outcomes for behaviour. A link to substance abuse was suggested. - Meeting noted the establishment of the Men's Shed. Unknown how active they were at present- meeting noted overall drops in community groups' energies from time to time. **Themes:** Health, Streetscaping, Mental Health, Drug Use, Alcohol/Smoking/Vaping Addiction

Rec Centre Session
19.4.2023   Community Feedback Notes from Strategic Community Plan 2023-2033 Workshops

Question:	Reponses:
How can the local government ensure equitable access to community facilities, services, and programs for all residents, regardless of their socio-economic status or cultural background?	**Language Challenges** - Attendee summarised that language provides access to services. Observed that many elder Asian residents needed assistance in communication at IOTHS and other agencies on Island. - Meeting discussed historical language programs at CIDHS on Saturdays in the 90s and 2000s, and an adult language learning initiative in the 2000s. Volunteers ran these programs. An attendee provided that the Chinese Government had sent a language and culture teacher for a period to Christmas Island. - Meeting identified the need for interpreters on Island. Meeting agreed that poor communication risked poorer health outcomes, and poorer results overall with other agencies. - Attendee noted that bilingual nurses were historically hired on CI. They were nearing retirement age now. **Themes:** Accessibility, Seniors Issues, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities issues

Notes:

Facilitators: Herve Calmy   Calmy Planning, Town Planning Consultant
                         Chris Su   SOCI Director of Planning, Governance and Policy   chris@shire.gov.cx

Attendees: 13

Location: 6.30pm – 8.50pm Recreation Centre, 19.4.23