



Norfolk Island Governance Committee

Communique

Meeting – 20 March 2024

The Norfolk Island Governance Committee (NIGC) met on-island on Wednesday, 20 March 2024, at the Office of the Administrator in New Military Barracks.

Attendees at the meeting included the three democratically elected community representatives Chris Magri, Alma Davidson and Chelsea Evans, the Administrator of Norfolk Island George Plant, Australian Government representative Sarah Vandenbroek and Queensland Government proxy representative David Thannhauser.

The NIGC focused discussion on the long-term workplan and timeframe for establishing a new bespoke local governing body on Norfolk Island. The Committee agreed to a five-step process to develop the new bespoke local governance model and accompanying revenue model.

Stage one has now been completed. This stage included a four-month period of direct community consultations. The NIGC thanks everyone who took the opportunity to meet directly with the committee members and to those who made written submissions providing input into the new governance model for Norfolk Island. Submissions can be found at

<https://app.box.com/folder/248013395493?s=2p5u9x465ioilokcld6u81wgyzaaiqvs>.

In addition to community consultations, we have focused our efforts on developing a methodology and timeline to modernise Norfolk Island's governance, along with the development of a set of foundational elements for its development.

Stages two and three will see the formulation of a draft governance model and a plan for a structured transition to the new governance arrangements. Community consultations will continue throughout these stages, underscoring the NIGC's emphasis on the significance of the broader community's ongoing participation. It's crucial that the new governance model is collectively developed and embraced by all Norfolk Islanders.

Stage four involves publishing the proposed governance model. There will be a period for final community consultation on the proposed model prior to its consideration by the Australian Parliament. **Stage five** deals with the elections for the new governing body and the implementation and transition to the new governance model.

The NIGC agreed that while we expect to have work finished on designing the new governance model by December 2024 (including seeking and reflecting community feedback on the proposed model), that timeframe for completing all steps and holding elections is unlikely to be feasible. On this basis, the NIGC have developed a new timeframe to deliver the five-step workplan. This timeframe is set out below.

The NIGC discussed the need for interim arrangements for the Norfolk Island Regional Council from December 2024 until the new governing body is established. The Community Representatives invite the Norfolk Island community to attend the public meetings at the Rawson Hall Supper Room on Wednesday, 27 March 2024 and 3 April 2024 to discuss the options available. Alternatively, please get in touch with Chris, Alma or Chelsea to share your thoughts and suggestions if you are unable to come to one of these sessions.

Options under consideration include:

- Extending the term of the current administrator; or
- Appointing one or more alternate administrators; or
- Electing a Regional Council for an interim period.

The future joint management of KAVHA was a key theme explored by the NIGC during the discussion regarding the development of the new local governance model. The NIGC and the Australian Government share the same aspiration for the KAVHA Advisory Committee to transition to a body with decision-making powers as an interim measure before the new governance body is established.

The NIGC also progressed plans to source expert advice to support their work to develop a new bespoke model of local governance and undertake financial modelling to develop the revenue model.

Following the NIGC meeting on Wednesday, all NIGC members accepted the invitation from the Norfolk Island Knowledge and Learning Centre and attended a presentation by Professor John Quiggin on social democracy as a model of governance on the morning of Thursday, 21 March 2024.

Communiques and other public information about the NIGC will be distributed through Norfolk Island media and online at <https://www.norfolkislandgovernance.com/> or on DITRDCA's website at <https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/territories-regions-cities/territories/norfolk-island/norfolk-island-governance-administration/norfolk-island-governance-committee>.

Contact NorfolkIslandGovernance@infrastructure.gov.au or the community representatives directly on NIGCcommunityreps@gmail.com

