



Norfolk Island Governance Committee

Communique

31 May, 12 and 13 June 2024

The Norfolk Island Governance Committee (NIGC) has undertaken meetings in the past fortnight to continue developing the new governance model. This model will form the basis of the NIGC proposal to the Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories, the Hon Kristy McBain MP.

On 31 May 2024, the NIGC met virtually to discuss the proposed law-making powers of the new governance body. The NIGC proposed the new governance body be established through a new Norfolk Island Act, and that the governing body have the power to make laws for the peace, order, and good government of Norfolk Island.

The NIGC then met in person in Brisbane on 12 and 13 June 2024 to progress the overarching structure of the new governance body.

It will be proposed the new body be called the Norfolk Island Assembly and that, when exercising its powers, the Assembly will have regard to Norfolk Island traditions and customs.

Members agreed on the structure of the proposed Assembly including the number of members and their responsibilities, along with broadly agreeing its functions and powers. It was agreed there would be governance principles and a robust integrity framework to support the proposed model to function successfully and sustainably.

No changes to the existing judiciary framework and its functions are proposed.

It was agreed the revenue model to support the Norfolk Island Assembly would need to be adaptive to economic circumstances, capacity, and community needs and aspirations. Contributions from the residents of Norfolk Island towards governance, services, and infrastructure will be assessed to ensure affordability, fairness, and equity. Members agreed to propose the replacement of the land rates model with an equitable model based on a household and business premises levy. The committee discussed other sources for supplementary fees and levies which will be further explored.

Members reached broad agreement on the content of the Preamble to be re-established in the Norfolk Island Act, with final elements to be further considered as part of the formal legislative process, which includes community consultation.

Community representative Alma Davidson tabled a statement of reservation (attached to this communique) on elements of the proposed Preamble relating to Norfolk Island's status as a Non-Self Governing Territory within the meaning of the definition under Chapter XI of the UN Charter. This statement included letters from the Norfolk Island People for Democracy and the Norfolk Island United Nations Petitions Group.

The NIGC also identified the matters that will be further considered in preparation for, and transitioning to, the proposed Norfolk Island Assembly.

Attendees at these workshops 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 Vandebroek and Queensland Government representative Rachel Welch.

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.