



Kowanyama News

October 2025

New Accord signed at Councils' conference



Queensland's First Nations council leaders have signed a Queensland Indigenous Council Leaders' Accord with the State Government to guarantee local leaders a seat at the policy-making table to secure real outcomes for their communities.

The formal partnership between the State and Queensland's 17 First Nations council was signed at the conclusion of the Indigenous Leaders Forum, a precursor to the Local Government Association of Queensland's annual conference held on the Gold Coast last month.

"Since 2011, the ILF has been a valuable way for the First Nations councils to come together to share our success, discuss specific challenges and put forward issues to discuss and unpack collectively," Mayor Territa Dick said.

"Kowanyama presented to our other First Nations councils the partnership with the Arthur Beetson Foundation and the success of the future immortals tour program."

She said meeting with all of the 77 local governments in Queensland was also a valuable experience.

"This conference is an amazing forum for networking, advocating and learning from peers," she said. "This year Kowanyama presented the success of our establishment of Queensland's first fully digital Indigenous Knowledge Centre (The Kowanyama Studio).

"Being asked to present a council showcase is a big deal, and we are proud to have shown off the amazing progress we are making locally in closing the digital gap.

"Our showcase was a highlight of the conference, having received so much positive feedback from our peers and stakeholders."

A Message from Mayor Territa Dick

What an incredible few months it's been for our community, full of exciting milestones, important community discussions, and progress right across Kowanyama.

Community Safety Plan on the way

Your voice matters and over the past few months, we've been actively consulting with the community as part of our review of the Kowanyama Community Safety Plan.

These conversations have been crucial to ensuring that our strategies reflect your priorities and concerns.

Thank you to everyone who has contributed — your input is helping shape a safer, stronger Kowanyama and our final plan will be available soon.

Capital Works on every corner

From road upgrades to facility improvements, our capital works program is in full swing.

If you've noticed construction crews in your area — that's progress in action!

These projects are creating local jobs and improving infrastructure across the community.

We appreciate your patience as these works continue.

Read on for more about what we have achieved together since our last newsletter in July...

Community policing under Council spotlight



Mayor Dick and Torres Strait Island Regional Council deputy Mayor Ranetta Wosomo also joined the launch of a QPS Safe Space initiative designed to create private, trauma-aware and culturally safe environments in police stations.

Mayor Territa Dick, Cr Coralie Lawrence and CEO Kevin Bell attended the Indigenous Mayors Queensland Police Service Summit in Cairns in September.

"The summit provides a platform for Mayors and Councillors to engage directly with senior police, the QPS First Nations police unit and other senior government stakeholders to directly address the different policing and community safety issues confronting our communities," Mayor Territa Dick said. "Presentations from Mayors and government discussing AMPs, policing models, partnerships and communication strategies with a view to better outcomes for our communities were the highlights of the two-day conference."



Kowanyama hosted the Arthur Beetson Future Immortals Tour, which brought rugby league legends and aspiring future stars to our region. "This was more than just a celebration of sport — it was a moment of cultural pride and inspiration for our youth," Mayor Territa Dick said. "A big thank you to everyone who helped make this event such a success."



Council of Elders on pre-Christmas agenda

The community of Kowanyama wants to bring back a Council of Elders to help guide major decisions and give advice on local issues, Mayor Territa Dick says.

"We used to be guided by a Council of Elders," Prescribed Body Corporate (PBC) chair Robert Holness said.

"It's a traditional way for the community to work through issues and come to a common agreement.

"It gives all our clan groups proper representation.

"It's a way that we can recognise and celebrate our cultural law (Lore) and pass that along to younger generations."

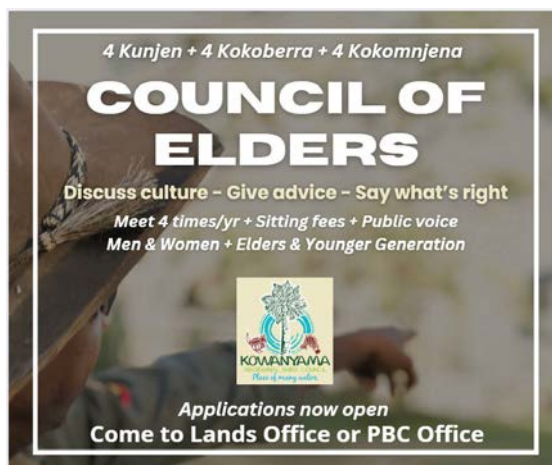
PBC secretary Tania Major said it was a good initiative and she was looking forward to seeing how it could benefit the community.

Mayor Territa Dick said the idea had the full support of the Kowanyama Council.

"Your elected Councillors unanimously support this initiative," she said. "I really encourage our community leaders to step up and make this Council of Elders something that we can be proud of."

CEO Kevin Bell said that when the Council of Elders met, it would have a big public profile.

"We'll make sure that the Council of Elders is on all our social media and our website, so the community can see the good work being done by these leading elders," he said.



Still buzzing from NAIDOC!



Our kids had a great time on the rides at our NAIDOC event in September.

Many parents also came down to watch the fun, listen to entertainment and enjoy a kup-murri cooked by the school, with assistance from Council Rangers and Parks and Gardens.

The night was topped off by a fantastic fireworks display.

Thanks is extended to the Kowanyama Community Support Organisation (previously KSRA) for their contribution to the rides, entertainment and the fireworks.

Then the NAIDOC Ball was held on Saturday, 13 September at the MPC – and what a night it was.

Guests were treated to a three-course meal and a solo dance performance by Toshianna Josiah, followed by entertainment and dancing.

Special thanks to our sponsors Lackon, CEQ, Queensland Police Service, Kowanyama Community Support Association and Apunipima CY Health Council.

2025 NAIDOC Awards

Nominated by community.

Female Elder of the Year:

Cr Coralie Lawrence

Male Elder of the Year:

Wesley Barney

Youth of the Year: Gloria David

Community Person of the Year:

Ian Butterworth

Caring for Country Award:

Fitzroy Lawrence

Mayor's choice for Best Dressed:

Male: Jacob Aidan Junior

Female: Hailee Banjo



A group of senior Kowanyama State School students successfully completed their Construction White Card training at TAFE Queensland in Cairns in September.

The full-day course delivered workplace safety, protective equipment, and industry standards essential for anyone entering the construction sector.

The training formed a key component of their vocational education pathway, opening doors to future employment and work placement opportunities across trades and community projects.

The group also took a guided

trades tour of the TAFE Queensland Cairns campus to showcase pathways in engineering, automotive, electrical and building trades, giving students valuable insight into the training opportunities available after school.

This trip would not have been possible without the generous support of the Kowanyama Aboriginal Shire Council CEO Kevin Bell and Kowanyama State School,

Janene Harrison (Principal), for their assistance with funding and logistics.

Their commitment to supporting youth training and employment pathways continues to make a real difference in the lives of Kowanyama's young people.

Congratulations to all students on this outstanding achievement, and thank you to everyone involved for helping make this opportunity possible.

CONTAINERS FOR CHANGE 70,000+ and counting...!



Our local Container Refund Point has almost hit 70,000 eligible containers returned.

"This is a fantastic result for both our environment and our economy," Mayor Territa Dick said.

"Thank you for doing your part by recycling and supporting this important initiative.

"Let's keep up the momentum!"



**Kowanyama
Aboriginal
Shire Council**



(07) 4083 7100



admin@kowanyama.qld.gov.au



kowanyama.qld.gov.au