



WUJAL WUJAL

ABORIGINAL SHIRE COUNCIL

Newsletter September 2013

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Revenue-raising essential for services

Earlier this year the Newman Government announced the biggest shake-up to the way Indigenous Councils are funded in a generation at a two-day Local Government Association of Queensland Indigenous Leaders Forum in Cairns.

The Government's plan included \$3 million in incentive payments to Councils which have shown improved generation of their own income and established or improved business enterprises.

Mayor Clifford Harrigan said it might be difficult for Wujal Wujal residents to get used to the idea of new charges, if and when they had to be introduced to individual households.

"Some people have come to me and said, 'we've got tons of water coming down, why should we pay for it – it's free,' he said. "I agree, but with this Government we have to start charging for sewage, water and rubbish removal and make sure that the amount we are charging is sustainable.

"Most of these charges will not be paid by residents but by the Department of Housing and Public Works as they manage the 40-year-lease properties.

"We've got to get revenue from somewhere to pay for all these services – it all adds up in the end because the pumps have to be maintained, for example, and we just don't have the money to do that.

"So there may be more bills for agencies and Government Department's in the future, but that is a clear directive from our Minister for Local Government.



Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council Mayor Clifford Harrigan

"I've just come back from a financial sustainability meeting in Townsville, about different funds that are available to different Shires, so we are looking for support. The State Government's financial aid grant has also dropped by about 14%, which is a huge cut and there's no guarantee we will get that back.

"These cuts are to all Aboriginal Shire Councils."

He said there were a number of grants the Council would apply to in order to continue priority capital works projects across the community.

"The Government has made that money available to other grants, which we're applying to, but 17 Councils are going to compete for that money," he said. ...*Continued next page...*



Tight race in Councils' bid for limited funds

Cr Harrigan said there were grants the Council could and would apply for, but they would always in competition with 17 other communities.

"There are two grants in particular, one is around service delivery and the other is a Business Incentive Program which Council have already applied for," he said.

"Those projects have so far come from the 2011 Economic Development Study that was done here by the 20/20 Group, so that document is the guide Council is using for development and new business enterprises.

"The Remote Jobs Program has now started as well, so we also have access to some money to start new projects and they're asking community for ideas – to come up with what other enterprises you could run at Wujal.

"These will be proposed in a Community Development Fund application.

"It's not the role of Council to run enterprises but we are quite happy to help get them started and find some little areas there and then lease them to people."

Cr Harrigan said there was a lot more detail and focus now on Councils actually maximising revenue.

"We're doing everything we can," he said.

"Every office we rent, we get money back from

whoever rents that office.

"In the past there might have been deals around where we want that service to happen here so we'll give you a building or office to use, but none of that occurs anymore."

He also said the community may have noticed a number of changes to staff as a result of some Council restructuring from the 2012/2013 Budget.

"Council has asked our CEO as a matter of policy to restructure people into sharing different jobs across our existing workforce rather than laying people off," he said.

"Wujal Wujal was one of the few Councils which did not announce automatic redundancies from the cuts to State Government Financial Aid Grant.

"That was always really important to us, we have a very stable workforce of committed and dedicated employees and they deserve to be recognised for their hard work.

"There have been some losses in other program funding as well but overall we have to try to increase our revenue and we're doing everything we can to make that as painless as possible for the community."

Introducing the WWASC management team...

Inset: Building Services Manager Mark Zippel
Back Row: CEO Alan Neilan & Technical Services Manager Jaime Guedes;
Seated in Front: Community Development Officer Garry Ashworth and Corporate Services Manager Nerida Carr





Language books re-launched

“Kuku is our heritage and our identity,” Traditional Owner Francis Walker told a crowd of more than 100 in language at the re-launch of two language books at the Wujal Wujal community hall earlier this year.

Wujal Wujal Council has reprinted copies of the ‘*Kuku Yalanji Dictionary*’ and the ‘*Elisabeth Patz Grammar Book of the Kuku Yalanji language*’ in a move aimed at supporting, preserving and cultivating words and phrases unique to local Traditional Owners. The books have been distributed to community members, regional schools and libraries.

‘Kuku Yalanji’ is a cover term for about 12 dialects originally spoken in the area between Mossman and Cooktown.

Only two of the dialects survive as living languages (Kuku Yalanji and Kuku Nyungkal).

Kuku Yalanji is one of about 20 out of 250 distinct Aboriginal languages still learned by children today.

Elisabeth Patz, who worked extensively in Wujal Wujal in 1979 and 1980, came from Canberra for the launch.

Ms Patz also wrote ‘*A Grammar Book of the Kuku Yalanji language*

of North Queensland in 2002’ after recording the Elders of that time speaking Kuku, and telling traditional and current stories in language.

Mrs Walker, speaking in Kuku, told the crowd: “Today we come together to be presented with a book, recorded by Jawun Elizabeth who had worked with our old men and women to compile a dictionary. “Our men and women must have wanted our Kuku to be documented hoping Kuku be spoken strong and will survive. These days English is more spoken and our Kuku suffers because of this. Never forget about our Kuku is our heritage and our identity.”

Traditional Owners and Elders Lily Yougie and Doreen Ball also spoke passionately about

the importance of not only preserving their language, but about using it in their everyday lives and encouraging parents to speak to their children in Kuku to ensure that it was carried on into the next generations.

Wujal Wujal Mayor Clifford Harrigan presented copies of the books to Cook Shire Mayor Peter Scott for use in the Laura, Lakeland, Cooktown and Ayton libraries. Copies were also presented to representatives from Rossville and Bloomfield State Schools.



Focus on: ...Technical Services...

Parks and Gardens are continuing to perform the cycle of maintenance of the town's parks and gardens throughout the dry season, writes Technical Services manager Jaime Guedes...

With the support of the Federal Department of Health and Ageing, 1200 trees and shrubs have been planted along the creek line that flows between the clinic and the service station.

They were planted by CDEP participants with the assistance of the Parks and Gardens crew and the South Cape Catchment Group.

This bush foods re-vegetation program has a double benefit as it will provide traditional foods whilst helping to control erosion in the creek.

They are growing well with only minor losses, and the Parks and Garden crew will continue to maintain and care for them.

The Road Gang has been busy with speed bumps and associated signage which has been installed at four locations within the township.

Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements (NDRRA) road works are now complete and the road gang has been maintaining edges, clearing drains and culverts and routine maintenance on Council roads,

and re-establishing fire breaks in anticipation of the forthcoming fire season.

We have been successful in obtaining grant funding under the Gambling Community Benefit Fund to install solar panels for the Arts Centre & the Sports Hall Water Treatment and Sewage treatment Plant.

These will deliver cost savings on our power bills.

In our constant attempt to induce cost savings whilst maintaining quality, a water demand project proposal was put to the



NEW change sheds at the football oval will be a boon to Wujal Wujal hosting games in future, Mayor Clifford Harrigan says, all that's needed now are some facilities for catering and some stands or shade.

Pictured left is a record of the shed's progress over the year.

Making slower progress is bridge works over the Bloomfield River (above).

"Once that first pylon goes into the river bend, I'll be happy,"

Wujal Wujal Mayor Clifford Harrigan said. As, one suspects, will be many others, and not only those local to Wujal Wujal!



With new mechanic apprentice Lexton Nandy (in front) were Parks & Gardens workers Jackie Ball Jr, Jeffrey Yougie & Charlie Walker

Department of Local Government for funding.

We were successful and the Department has funded Council to carry out a survey of all taps and cisterns in the township (Council buildings, community houses, clinic and police) for leaks and flow rates whilst also investigating any possible leaks in the water mains.

As an add-on to this initiative, and with the support of the Department of Energy and Water, discussions about interpreting any data collected to help us understand where and how our water is consumed are also being held with Griffith University.

Weed spraying has taken place within the Council boundaries. Final eradication of the African Tulip and hymenachne is still underway with assistance from some funding from Terrain Natural Resource Management.

The Vet will continue to visit on a regular basis throughout the year. Impounding and relocating phases of the Horse Management Program have been successfully completed with a total of 32 horses being removed from the Bloomfield Valley as a result. A stock identification form, along with photographs, has been completed for each animal. These horses have been removed from the Cairns, Wujal Wujal and Cook Council Shire Council areas and relocated to Normanby Station.

As always I would like to take the opportunity to thank all of our staff in the Technical Services Department for their commitment and diligence with their daily tasks.





Left: Essential Service Officers Rodney Denman, Ray Sycamore & Johnathan Bassani were keen to share some of their view from the top of the hill with readers.

AUGUST 2012



DECEMBER 2012



Wujal Wujal's new subdivision has gone up very quickly, Mayor Clifford Harrigan says. Pictured top right above was photographed in August last year, the middle in December and below in August this year.

"They took a couple of months in Cairns to build and then they came up the inland road a couple of loads on a semi," he said. "We're allocated 26 houses, so we have three built now and we another 23 to go. We hope to get the tenders for some of the next four or five houses to be built here."

AUGUST 2013



Focus on: **... Community Development ...**

Community Development Officer Garry Ashworth reports on a number of new developments in the community as well as a few losses – some good and some bad...

Carol Toby, a much-valued and long-time member of our staff decided it was time to retire and did so, he says.

She did a wonderful job for many years.

The Library has been revamped, somewhat, so come on in and have a look at what's going on there if you can, everyone is welcome to use what we have there.

For the moment two Community Development Economic Program (CDEP) workers have been in there, but a new librarian will be starting any day now.

Under the new organisational structure, I have some new responsibilities, including Wujal Wujal Community Care and the Life Promotion program.

The Wujal Wujal Community Care building has also moved ahead with some substantial

renovations, including an undercover pick up and drop off area.

Chef Eddy is working there three days a week and enjoying a new mentor role with Community Care staff.

These things are a great feather in our coordinator Sharon's cap who is another long term member of our staff who has shown great commitment over the years.

And the kindy is also undergoing some refurbishments and upgrades with some office space for Coraleen to work from as well as some new doors and fencing.

They've increased their intake of kids again, so that's going along great.

We've got some new things happening down at the Arts Centre and Café with a new menu and some trainees for the Arts Centre's Manager's position.

We've secured some funding for the next three years for the Gallery,

which has been great because they're all doing a great job.

Chef Eddy Diamond works in the Gallery Cafe to train the staff in food management and handling, as well as his work at Community Care. And we have new promotional flags, flyers, menus and shirts to help with the presentation of the area.

A lot of new and different bus tours are coming through which have helped with revenue.

We also have new shade sails on the far side which works as an area for tourists as well as other outdoor activities like painting and pottery and things like that.

It's a growing thing, and Council has also agreed to look for funding for an amphitheatre down there, so overall this is an area going from strength to strength.

The flies in our ointment are the loss of our Healthy Communities and Community Service Officers because funding for those ran out at the end of the last financial year.

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Above: now retired, Carol Toby in December 2008; Right: a new balcony railing and mural have tidied up the front of the Indigenous Knowledge Centre.



...From previous page...

Funding losses rate as 'not-so-good'

Some things are still progressing with the Men's and Women's Groups but without the Alcohol Reform funding they can't do the bigger things which really assist us in a community sense, like the camping, fishing and day trips, CDO Garry Ashworth continues...

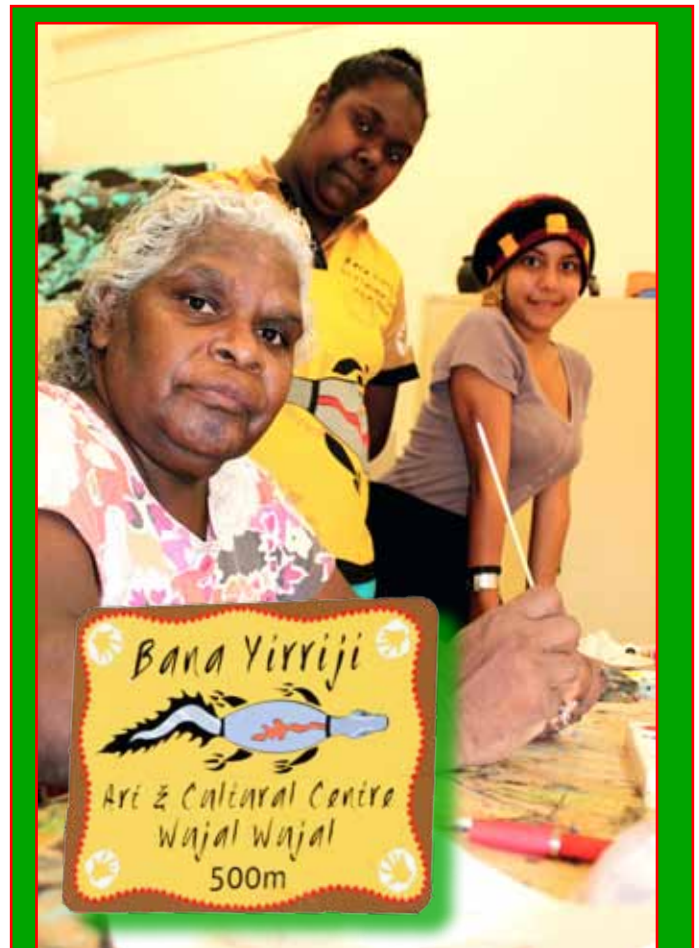
The men do the Pool Comps up there on their own initiative, and the women are still selling products for their programs at the Women's Centre.

That means we also rely much more on Dawn Harrigan's position as Life Promotion Officer to help out with some of the hardship and internal problems the community experiences at times.

She has funding now to carry her through until 30 June next year, which is good.

Dawn does good steady work and has been consistent in her approach to everyone, so we appreciate her work more than ever.

Overall we're progressing very well in many areas and other than the loss of funding I've been happy with this year's direction.



Some critical areas of community development have suffered from a loss of funding over the past few months, writes Wujal Wujal Mayor Cr Clifford Harrigan.

Council sees it as important there are no more cuts to the vital area of preventative work in the community, especially around recreation and mental health. It's been disappointing to see so much energy go into the Men's and Women's Groups, and Sports & Rec, but now there's limited support for that work. People have picked up some of the pieces for themselves, and that's to their credit, but activities central to maintaining a balance, particularly camping and fishing trips and sporting activities away from the community, need funds. Some funds have recently been approved for the Men's program, but everyone needs those opportunities to go out on country and get away to other things – the chance to meet new people, do new activities and bring back new information and ideas.

Council will continue to work with external agencies, particularly health, to identify what is duplication and what is needed. There is also the ongoing work of the Community Safety Committee and Sports Reference Committee to identify preventative programs or make recommendations to Council.



Community Care face-lift reflects ongoing commitment to clients

Wujal Wujal Community Care, a program of the Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council, delivers services to the frail elderly and younger people with disability and their carers in Wujal Wujal and the wider Bloomfield Valley area writes Coordinator Sharon Anderson.

Caring committed and qualified staff deliver these services, she says.

We've had a good retention among our staff over many years, and they do a really good job.

We've recently acquired a new bus, funded by State Government Home and Community Care (HACC) Program, and we're very glad to have the wheelchair hoist that is safe and meets all legislative requirements to transport our clients in wheelchairs as we do have a few.

The old bus has been retired, but will be available for community hire.

We've got a new undercover drive-through area, which will be fantastic in the wet season because we'll no longer get our clients and ourselves wet while we're doing transfers, and we'll be able to deliver the meals and transport food without having to stand out in the rain and the heat.

So that's a wonderful improvement to our service.

The recent capital works, like the new kitchen, were funded jointly by the State Government HACC program and the Wujal Wujal Aboriginal Shire Council.

Some grant funding from Commonwealth Government Health and Ageing, was also approved for Council to undertake renovations.

Everyone is continuing to work hard on quality improvement, and in all aspects and areas of



our service our staff is committed to improving the quality of our services.

A recent addition has been Eddy Diamond, who is working with us to help to train the staff in some new recipes, food handling and menus.

We have a commitment to our clients to provide nutritious meals that are low in fat, salt and sugar as we deal with some clients who have chronic diseases and diabetes is very high among our client base.

Everything is going along well.



Above: Comm Care workers Irene Walker, Eddy Diamond (chef Eddy), Anna Baird & Marella Gibson; Right: Harry Henry & Mary Wallace with Gusto from the Wujal Wujal Primary Health Care Centre



PCYC keeping kids – and the Deputy Mayor – busy!

Deputy Mayor Alister Gibson has been busy in his role as Sports and Rec Officer for the PCYC in Wujal, with rounds of afternoon activities including touch footy, painting, Austag and board games.

“We’ve had a camp up at Buru (China Camp) for two days camp and the kids enjoyed it,” he said.

“We took the elders up and they were telling stories to the kids, and we went night fishing.”

He said he also had Lionel Bounghi working with him and was enjoying his role as Deputy Mayor.

“I’m finding it easy and very good working with CEO, learning more things,” he said.

“Previously I was only a Councillor



and now I’ve just taken that step forward.

“It’s given me that opportunity, and I am learning a lot.

“I’m thinking of doing business at uni, that’s my

goal, I want to do that.

“And once I finish uni I want to come back to my community.

“It’s all about sharing what I’ve learned over the years, my experience.”

Belt-up! Police aim to enforce alcohol and vehicle infringements

This year has seen myself Sergeant Troy Sullivan, take over as Officer In Charge from Sergeant Luke Tulacz writes A/S/C John Melandri...

My wife, Bree and soon to be two children have moved up here with me.

The community has been very welcoming, with my family and I was privileged to be formally welcomed into the community with a smoking

ceremony by the Wujal Wujal elders.

A reminder that there is still no alcohol allowed in Wujal Wujal, including in the south side and wharf area.

We will be enforcing a “zero tolerance” and this means you can be charged for a partial can/cup of alcohol.

Overall the community is well-behaved, it is a minority who are ruining it for the rest of the town.

Everyone in the community needs to stand up and make Wujal Wujal a better place.

On another note, we are disturbed by the amount of people who are not making sure their children are wearing seat belts and in proper child seats.

Even at low speeds around town, a child can be seriously injured if not restrained properly.

The fine is \$330 and three points, and several people have already been fined this year.

Remember, “our children are our future”.

We look forward to working closely with the Elders, Justice Group and community to continue making Wujal Wujal a safe place for children and families.

Stay safe.



Focus on: **... Corporate Services ...**

What is traditionally the busiest time of year for some of us in Corporate Services has now become even more hectic, writes Corporate Services Manager Nerida Carr...

Changes in legislation have meant earlier dates for the adoption of the Council's budget and preparation of the Financial Statements for inclusion in the Council's Annual Report, and requirements in reporting have also increased.

We achieved an unqualified audit again for the 2011/12 financial year, and have worked hard towards our aim of achieving a similarly good result for the 2012/13 year.

This financial year brings new challenges with reductions in government funding. Although the volume of routine work has slowed, higher levels of reporting and compliance requirements have been enforced.

We are also about to embark on a program of accredited training specific to Indigenous councils, thanks to funding secured by the Local Government Association of Queensland.

While the initial offer did not cover all costs associated with training, negotiations to change this were successful.

We have also had a couple of changes in staff due to resignations – Barbara Keats is now the Finance Officer and Ashley Jack is our new cleaner.

Nikita Walker has just resigned from her position as Bank & Postal Agency Officer, where she has worked since December 2009.

A restructure following the 2012/2013 Budget has meant the addition of the Centrelink Agency to Corporate Services, and Lola Daylight has just started in that role.

Anthea McGreen (Housing Officer) is also joining us as Administrative support when she is not required in tenancy liaison. And Wendy Rowlands assists Technical Services manager Jaime Guedes when she is not working with us in finance.



Above: Centrelink Manager Lola Daylight and Bank/ PO Manager Nikita Walker; Right: Council Cleaner Ashley Jack and Left: Payroll Admin Manager Wylma Donahue, Reception/Admin Robyn Bloomfield and Finance Officer Barbara Keats.



Jardine Lloyd Thompson's Regional Risk Coordinator for North Queensland Ian Barton is pictured on the left here with staff L-R: Jaime Guedes, Bill Harrigan, Sharon Anderson, Wilma Donahue, Garry Ashworth, Barbara Keats, Dawn Harrigan, Geoffrey Rosendale, Nerida Carr, Wendy Ashworth and Alan Neilan. Mr Barton said he came to Wujal Wujal to run through the Work Health & Safety Act 2011 for Supervisors and members of the Safety Committee within the Council workforce.

Roll on 2014 footy season!

ESO Johnthan Bassani (right) was picked for the Northern United Representative side in the Remote Area Rugby League earlier this year, after playing off as a member of the Three Rivers team in Cairns.



Brandon Christie also made the team.

"It was good," Johnathan said. "I learned more technique and meeting other friends from different communities around the Cape. Most of all, I enjoyed it. "And especially getting coached

by the ex-coach of Northern Pride Dave Maiden."

The rep side team met Outback Queensland at Cairns at the end of June as a curtain raiser to a Northern Pride Intrust Super Cup match.

Johnathan was the inaugural

winner of the Three Rivers competition

Matt Bowen medal in 2011.

As the 2013 season closes, he said he was looking forward to playing again next year.



Opportunity for young riders

This is a photograph of a group of young people - males and females - who have been trained in the beef and cattle industry - learning how to muster, do fence lines and look after the machinery and animals.

William Walker was part of this group, taken in March, but he is now working at Bulimba Station, near Chillagoe, and looking forward to travelling later this year to Mt Isa for more.

His Mum, Mary Barlow, proudly reports he is 'set for life' now after the work and experiences he has had and is keen to encourage other young people to do the same.

She has all the information about what he is doing and how he has done it if you would like to go and see her at the Clinic.