



FREE!

Issue 424

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PLEASE note there may be images of deceased persons within this publication.

Indigenous Councils meet in Cherbourg for leadership forum



Pics thanks to Dean Saffron, Cherbourg Radio (UsMob) and with thanks to Michael Monk and Cherbourg Aboriginal Shire Council.

In the days leading up to the Federal election earlier this month Queensland's Indigenous leaders met in Cherbourg and Mooloolaba at the Local Government Association of Queensland's (LGAQ's) Indigenous Leaders' Forum (ILF).

The day in Cherbourg opened with a smoking ceremony and Welcome to Country, followed by dancers and a tour of the town, including Cherbourg's famous historical precinct, The Ration Shed, and their hugely successful Cherbourg Materials Recovery Facility (or MeRF) – the only recycling plant within 150km of the community.

Each of the Mayors was presented with a 'shadow box', carved and painted by local workers.

Palm Island Mayor and Local Government Association of Queensland policy executive member Alf Lacey said it was always good

to go back to humble beginnings.

"We all come from the mission, as they were known back in the time – a lot has changed since then," he said.

"I think it's really important, particularly for us as leaders [to know] those pioneers paved the way."

The next day, in Mooloolaba, the Mayors met with the LGAQ's policy executive to discuss and work on their priorities.

Northern Peninsula Area Regional Council Mayor Robert PoiPoi said they all faced similar issues.

"A lot of the issues are similar,

like housing, health, education, but I think we can work on it," he said.

The meeting called on all governments to do something about housing and accused all sides of federal politics of ignoring overcrowding.

"We have entire families living in a single bedroom," Lockhart River Mayor Wayne Butcher said.

"Things have to change.

"It is Federal funding, like the old National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing (NPARIH) scheme, that we need to get more people in more homes."

CONTINUES...

They said overcrowding in discrete First Nations communities had increased in Queensland since the end of NPARIH in 2018.

LGAQ President Matt Burnett said councils welcomed a \$1.5 billion Housing Support Program from the Federal Government, but the ILF member councils desperately needed more support.

“Having visited these communities, it is blatantly obvious overcrowding cannot be allowed to continue,” Mayor Burnett said.

“Our councils are telling us NPARIH made a real difference and that is the type of scheme we need brought back.”

Woorabinda Mayor Terence Munns said his community needed 30 homes now just to keep their heads above water.

“You can’t have a proper home life without a proper home,” he said.

Wujal Wujal Mayor Alister Gibson said his community needed more funding.

“Overcrowding hurts our kids, their education and their potential,” he said.

“More funding would mean more space for families to fulfil their potential.”

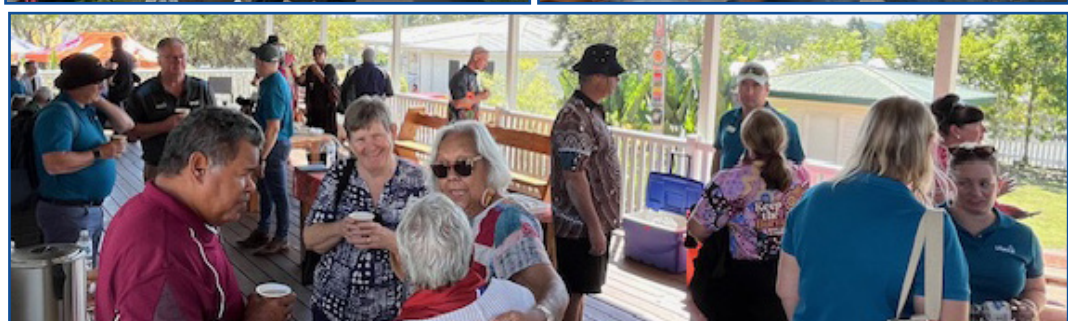
Yarrabah Mayor Daryl Sexton said his community of 4500 people were squeezed into 380 homes.

“We have 420 applicants for homes but we don’t have the land to build on,” Mayor Sexton said.

“When you have four generations of a family in one three-bedroom home it is almost impossible to get to school and work on time.”

Mayor Poipoi said housing funding was falling further and further behind what his community needed.

“Every day without the housing funding, we go further backwards,” he said.



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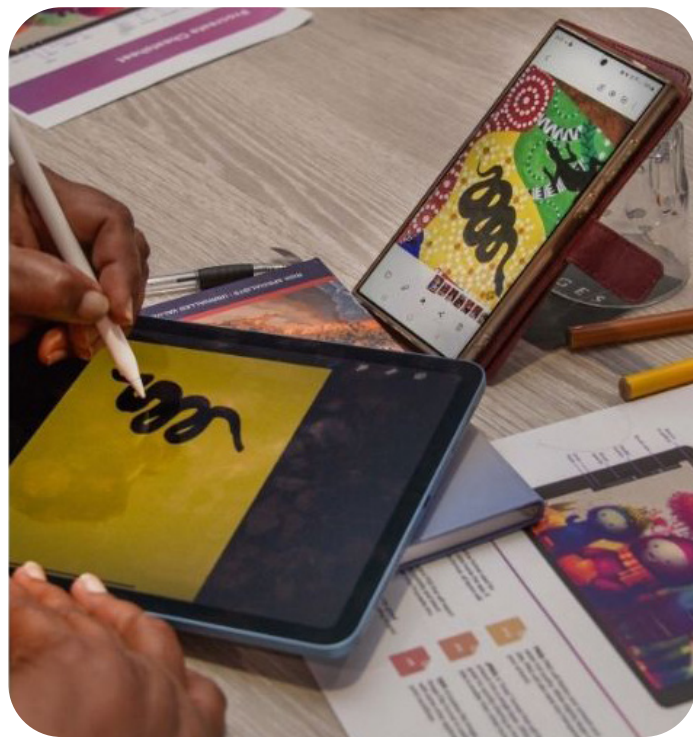
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THE NEXT *Palm Island Voice* DEADLINE*
(Issue 425*) will be Thursday 22 May
for publication on Monday 26 May



The ***Palm Island Voice*** is published *weekly if we have paid advertising, or otherwise fortnightly by the Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council. For advertising rates and/or more information contact the Editor on 0419 656 277 or at howeschowes@gmail.com Members of the Palm Island community and local organisations are welcome to submit birthdays, community information, pics, yarns and letters to the Editor, Christine Howes. You can also follow us on Facebook! We have 2,900 'likes' and more than 3,000 followers! The ***Palm Island Voice*** is free and online at <http://www.chowes.com.au>

Operating Hours for Palm Island Council are Monday–Friday 8am – 5pm

If you have any questions please contact Reception on 4770 1177 or 4770 0200

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