

# Palm Island Voice



**FREE!**

**Issue 454**

**3 August 2026**



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

## Historical walkway funded to go ahead

Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council's proposed Cultural Walk project will receive \$5 million in this financial year's State Government Budget. The project delivers a cultural walking trail and visitor infrastructure, and will be located within the jetty arrival and foreshore precinct.



*Local MP Adam Baillie and Deputy Mayor Mersane Oui having a look at the big picture.*

As a means to present Palm Island's history and identity to visitors, it will complement Council's broader Walking Trails Project designed to create new opportunities for visitors to experience the Island's unique culture, stories and natural beauty, while supporting local employment, community wellbeing and sustainable economic development.

Mayor Alf Lacey said the state's investment was a welcome step forward for the community.

"Projects like the Cultural Walk are important because they not only celebrate our culture and strengthen community pride but also create real economic opportunities for our community," Mayor Lacey said.

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*The former Rainbow Gateway building was demolished last week after a detailed inspection found it had significant mould damage and was unsuitable for repurposing or release. The safe removal of the building was a priority. As demolition activities progressed, the Remote Area Employment Services (RAES) team was temporarily relocated to ensure the safety of staff and community members. RAES participants and community members seeking assistance during these two days were encouraged to visit the team at their temporary upstairs location.*

*The team thanked the community for their understanding and cooperation.*



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“By supporting tourism, local businesses and jobs, initiatives like this help build a stronger, more sustainable local economy,” Mayor Alf Lacey said.

“It’s essential that funding continues to focus on practical outcomes that enable Indigenous communities to participate fully and fairly in a robust local economy.”

Deputy Mayor Mersane Oui said the community welcomed the investment “with open arms”.

“This will enhance tourism and provide local jobs and local investment,” she said.

“We want to be able to get to a position where we can create generational wealth and allow our people to work and build the expertise that they can.

“This government has invested in a lot of our plans and we’re really



looking forward to what the next few years are going to bring.

“Our voices are being heard.”

Townsville MP Adam Baillie said the ferry terminal was the gateway to Palm Island for many visitors and the Cultural Walk would be a welcoming first step to experiencing the Island’s culture and stories.

“Palm Island has an incredible story to share, and the Cultural Walk will give visitors the chance

to learn about its history and experience its culture, while enjoying its natural beauty,” he said.

“We look forward to working in partnership with Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council to deliver this transformational infrastructure, creating more local job opportunities and a cultural landmark that the community can be proud of for years to come.”

Recently, helicopter services on Palm Island were required to divert to the airport on several occasions due to safety concerns associated with litter and debris around the helipad area.

Council staff worked quickly to clear the site and restore safe operations, however, the disruption highlights why keeping the area free of rubbish is so important.

The helipad plays a critical role in supporting medical evacuations, emergency services and

## Help keep our helipad safe

other essential flights.

When the area is unsafe, services can be delayed or diverted, creating inconvenience and potentially affecting people who need urgent support.

We’re asking everyone in our community to do their bit by

disposing of rubbish properly and helping keep the helipad area clean and safe.

One day, it could be a family member, friend or loved one relying on those services.

Thank you for helping keep Palm Island safe.



# Drone pilot course up, up, up and away!



By Regina James

A three-day Drone Workshop successfully equipped several enthusiastic pilots with valuable skills and practical knowledge in drone operations and their real-world applications earlier this year.

The workshop was supported by the State Library of Queensland (SLQ) and facilitated by Paul from She Maps, whose engaging,

interactive and hands-on teaching approach received outstanding feedback from participants.

“The training was highly beneficial,

and Paul from She Maps delivered the course exceptionally well,” one of the students said.

The workshop showcased the increasing importance of drone technology across a wide range of industries, including environmental monitoring, mapping, infrastructure inspection, land management, and community development.

Would-be pilots gained practical experience in operating drones safely and effectively while exploring how this technology can be applied to support local projects and community initiatives on Palm Island.

Overall, the Drone Workshop was a great success, with participants expressing their appreciation for the high quality of the training, the practical skills they developed, and the opportunities that drone technology can create for future employment and community development.

The workshop has strengthened local capability and inspired participants to explore new ways of using emerging technologies to benefit their community.



## Bistro roof upgrade nearly done

The long-awaited refurbishment of the Palm Island Bistro roof is progressing well, with works about 90 per cent complete and final completion expected later this month.

Major roofing works have been completed, with the remaining work focused on final flashings, guttering and other finishing items.

The upgrade was helping to address ongoing roofing issues and protect one of the community's valued assets for future use.

CEO Emma Bradbury said Council was pleased to see the project

nearing completion.

“The Bistro is an important community facility and these works will help protect the building for years to come,” she said.

“It's great to see the project progressing well, with local workers contributing alongside specialist contractors to deliver the upgrade for Palm Island.”

Council acknowledged the efforts of all workers involved in the project and looked forward to sharing the completed results with the community once the work was done.





17-19 July 2026



Pics by Christine Howes





Pics by Christine Howes

# Two recently advertised Council positions, taken up by Milton Thaiday and Isaac Geia, are examples of Council's commitment to developing local capability and creating opportunities for Palm Island people.

Council is thrilled to have former professional athlete Milton Thaiday (pictured on the left) on board as Sports Coordinator.

Son of Mick and Irene Thaiday, Milton has four 'kids' (aged 10–25) of his own and says he is passionate about community engagement, self-recovery, rehabilitation and human rights.

He said he has done lots of work, from roofing in Darwin when he was 18 to some mentoring in northern New South Wales schools before he played rugby for the Warratahs and then the NRL for the Newcastle Knights in the mid-late 2000s.

He is keen about his new position.

"I want to bring sports and activities to the island for our children and community to have something to look forward to," he said.

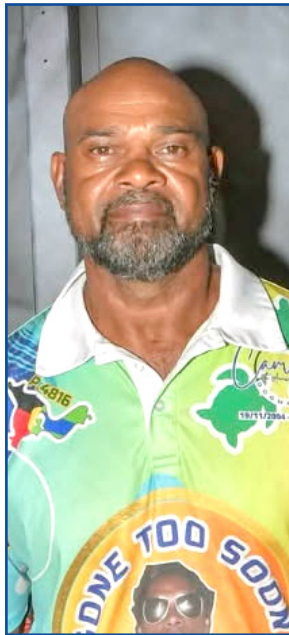
"My ultimate dream is to set up a high-performance development academy to enable our locals an opportunity to train professionally and get an understanding of what it takes to make it to that next level.

"The big picture is to have our netball, touch, footy and boxing back, but this will need to be a community effort.

"One or two or three people aren't going to be able to get this up and running, it's going to take the whole Island to help run things smoothly with volunteers and parents chipping in however they can."

By investing in local talent, Council is building a stronger workforce and ensuring community expertise is at the heart of service delivery CEO Emma Bradbury says.

"We have incredible talent on Palm Island and Council is committed to seeing local people succeed," she said. "Building local capability is one of the best investments we can make in the future of our Council and our community."



MEANWHILE, born and bred Palm Islander Isaac Geia (above right) steps into a new safety leadership role at Council as our new Workplace Health and Safety Officer.

Isaac said he has always taken great pride in his community.

"Palm is home," he said. "It's where I learned, worked, and grew."

After working as a labourer in Townsville, he came home to teach at St Michael's for several years before joining Council in 2017–18 as part of the concreting team, teaching again and then coming back to Council in 2020 to work in Water Operations.

He then studied to finish his Certificate III in Water Industry Operations, building on his technical skills and strengthening his commitment to essential community services. His dedication also saw him qualify as an Airport Reporting

Officer, where he is now entering his fourth year.

As a member of the Council's Civil and Open Spaces crew, he worked his way up to supervisor level before applying for the WHS role.

He said his focus was clear.

"I want to help build a safe, capable workplace," he said.

"One that looks after our people and strengthens our community."

Passionate about mentoring, Isaac hopes his journey inspires young locals to see opportunity close to home.

"If you've been in education, you realise how important it is to help others grow," he said. "That's what I want to bring: safety, skills and pride in our work."



## POSITIONS VACANT

- **Manager - Project Management Office**  
Applications close 5 August 2026
- **Project Manager - Housing**  
Applications close 7 August 2026.
- **Project Manager – Cyclone Shelter (NEMA/QRA)**  
Applications close 7 August 2026
- **Community Night Patrol Coordinator**  
Applications close 10 August 2026

Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council is entering an exciting period of growth as it delivers the bold vision of our Corporate Plan 2026–2031. The current recruitment drive reflects progress and momentum—an opportunity for experienced and emerging local government professionals to join a high-performing, values-driven team committed to lasting change for current and future generations.

These will be hands-on roles where you can learn, grow and build your skills with support along the way. A core focus of this transformation is building local capacity and creating opportunities for local people to step into leadership and grow their careers.

These roles may be based on Palm Island or in Townsville, with travel to Palm Island as required, and preference will be given to Palm Island community members in line with merit-based recruitment practices.

**Submit your resume and cover letter addressing the key responsibilities via Seek.**

**Apply now via the QR code above (and watch this space!) or at:**  
**<https://www.palmcouncil.qld.gov.au/My-Council/Jobs-vacancies>**

### **PLAY ON! APPLICATIONS SPORTS VOUCHERS OPEN**

**Play On! Sports Voucher applications are open now!**

Applications are now open for Play On! Sports Vouchers, providing eligible Queensland families with up to \$200 to help children aged 5–17 years participate in sport.

The program provides practical cost-of-living relief while helping more children play, grow and belong through local clubs, organisations and activities. Families can also search for registered Play On! activity providers in their local area to find opportunities close to home.

Find out more, check your eligibility and apply at  
**[qld.gov.au/playon](http://qld.gov.au/playon)**

### **Palm Island Rent-to-Buy Scheme weekly visits**

#### **Dates / Office Hours**

|                         |                                                               |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4-5 August (Tues-Wed)   | <b>Tuesday: 10:30 – 4pm</b><br><b>Wednesday: 8:30am – 2pm</b> |
| 10-11 August (Mon-Tues) | <b>Monday: 10:30 – 4pm</b><br><b>Tuesday: 8-11am</b>          |
| 17-19 August (Tues-Wed) | <b>Tuesday: 9am – 4pm</b><br><b>Wednesday: 8:30am – 2pm</b>   |

## **Community Dog Safety Notice**

**Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council would like to remind all dog owners of the importance of keeping dogs safely secured within their yards and under control at all times.**

Dogs wandering freely through the community can pose a risk to residents, particularly children, Elders and other community members. Unrestrained dogs may also be at risk of injury, illness, or involvement in incidents with people or other animals.

We encourage all pet owners to:

- Ensure fences and gates are secure
- Keep dogs contained within your property
- Provide adequate food, water and shelter
- Supervise dogs when outside the home
- Report stray or aggressive dogs to Council

By working together, we can help create a safer community for everyone while ensuring the welfare and safety of our pets.

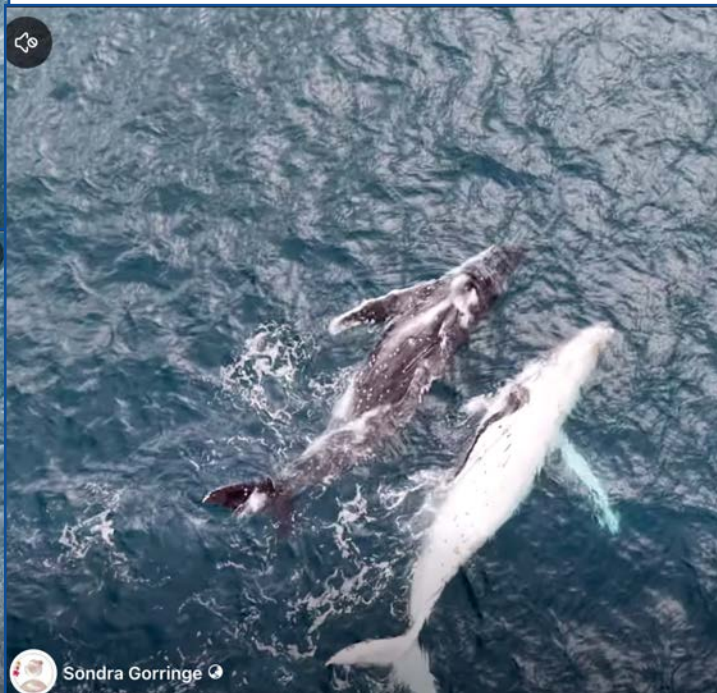
**Let's all do our part to keep Palm Island safe, respectful, and dog-friendly.**

# Whales Spotted!

Have you been lucky enough to spot a whale this week while travelling on the ferry or enjoying the beautiful views along the beachfront?

We'd love to feature your whale-watching photos in an upcoming edition. If you've captured a great shot, please send it through to Christine (details below) for a chance to have it showcased with the community.

*Pics taken from Sondra Gorringe's great drone footage, shot from in front of the farm area — thanks Sondra, well captured!*



THE NEXT *Palm Island Voice* DEADLINE\*

(Issue 455\*) will be Thursday 13 August  
for publication by Tuesday 18 August



The ***Palm Island Voice*** is published FORTNIGHTLY (\*unless we have paid advertising) by the Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council. Members of the Palm Island community and local organisations are welcome to submit birthdays, community information, pics, yarns and letters to the Editor.

For advertising rates and/or more information contact the Editor, Christine Howes, on 0419 656 277 or at [howeschowes@gmail.com](mailto:howeschowes@gmail.com). You can also follow us on Facebook, we have more than 3500 followers! The ***Palm Island Voice*** is also available online at <http://www.chowes.com.au>

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

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

**Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council has more than 8000 'followers' on Facebook!!!**