



CONFIRMED MINUTES

Meeting of the Community Consultative Committee (CCC) of the Shire of Christmas Island held at the George Fam Centre Training Room on Wednesday September 11th 2019 commencing at 3.30 pm

1 Declaration of Opening of Meeting / Announcement of Visitors

- 1.1 Gordon **THOMSON** declared the meeting opened at 3.35 pm.

2 Record of Attendance/Apologies/Leave of Absence/Declarations of Financial, Proximity or Impartiality Interest

2.1 Record of Attendance

President-SOCI	Gordon THOMSON
Council Representative	Kelvin LEE
Poon Saan Club	Patrick CHAN
Union of Christmas Island Workers	Chris SU
CI Women's Association	Nora KOH
CEO-SOCI	David PRICE
Chinese Literary Association	Suzane CHAN
Council Representative	Hafiz MASLI
Christmas Island Neighbourhood Centre	Oliver LINES

2.2 Apologies

Islamic Council of Christmas Island	Greg MCINTOSH
CI Phosphates	Joy WICKENDEN

2.3 Declaration of Financial, Proximity or Impartially Interest

Nil.

2.4 Public Question Time

Nil.

3 Confirmation of Minutes of Previous Meetings

3.1 Resolution:

That the Minutes of 21 August 2019 held at the George Fam Centre, Shire of Christmas Island be confirmed as a true and accurate record.

Moved:	Patrick CHAN	Seconded:	Kelvin LEE
Carried	9/0	Resolution:	CCC9 / 2019

3.2 Business Arising from Previous Minutes

Chris **SU** provided that the Action Items of the last meeting were completed, with members cc'd into email correspondence accordingly as the Action Items were completed. These were:

- a) CCC Secretary wrote to Dept Fisheries requesting copy of science used to create the exposure draft fisheries ordinance on 23rd August. No response received as yet.

- b) Council sent community petition on draft exposure to Dept on August 31st, one day before deadline.
- c) Chairperson sent letter to Minister on fisheries exposure draft with content based on resolutions passed at the August 21st meeting on the 22nd August
- d) Phone Conference with Dr Andrew **DEAN** on Thursday 29th August. Discussion was around fact finding visit to the island, CCC noted it was for Oct 11th to 15th.
- e) Chairperson Gordon **THOMSON** updated the CCC that the Steering Committee idea that was put DIRDC of Enabling Agencies (agencies with legislative responsibilities to land management) was denied. In its stead DIRDC offered a Shire a monthly phone conference to which the Shire accepted.

4 Agenda Business

4.1 Abbott's Booby Conservation Advice. Chair presented ABCA from Dept of Environment to the CCC members.

Chairperson Gordon **THOMSON** informed the CCC that the ABCA Draft Advice had been forwarded to Council from a mainland contact. The ABCA Draft Advice contains a map which strikes out an overwhelming portion of the island for Abbott's booby sanctuary and buffer areas; **THOMSON** felt that such a Government document about such significant land planning should be presented transparently to the island; re-iterated that it was not provided to the island and that it was outside any formal process for consultation that CCC has even received the document at the meeting.

Chris **SU** stated that this form of under-consultation was reminiscent in the recent Fisheries Ordinance Draft Exposure that the CCC met about in August in that it was an imposition of Government policy and regulation without adequate community consultation. CCC agreed that the themes of lack of respect for community interests was present in both.

CCC discussed that this Dept. of Environment document had a similar feel to the 2014 Recovery Plan from the DoE that sought to create an island-wide mandate for itself enforceable by law upon Islanders affecting our ability to plan for the future as per our legislative rights at a local government level and moreover our civil rights as Island residents.

Patrick **CHAN** noted that the areas of buffer zones measured 300m from the actual Abbott 'likely habitat zones' and that should the buffer zones adjacent to the airport as described in the ABCA document are have trees regrow, it could potentially impact upon the airport runway usage significantly. Patrick **CHAN** put forward that all airports have levelled tree free land for a great distance next to runways and that the presence of trees could cause cross-wind turbulence upon descents. David **PRICE** and Patrick **CHAN** also noted the increased dangers of bird strikes if the runways had buffer zones with tree life present.

CCC discussed the fact that without any effort from the Department of Environment or the Government, that it has obtained a copy of the ABCA Draft Advice. CCC concerned with the secrecy of the ABCA Draft Advice and members put forward that it seemed like a return to a depopulation strategy for Christmas Island.

Members recounted the several depopulation strategy events on Christmas Island; Kelvin **LEE** recalled documents from the 1950s from the Dept. of Immigration revealing Government of the day's position on Asian persons and their movement rights, the 1980s Mining shutdown and the 2014 Recovery Plan planning which residents of the day took to mean to pointing towards a depopulation strategy as it would have in the minds of the CCC made the island whole a default national park in its management of land.

Oliver **LINES** observed that the present Federal Government had in his opinion a lacking of environmental stewardship with respect to coal plants reopening, Adani Coal Mining support, lack of interest in renewables and protection of the Great Barrier Reef. Oliver **LINES** had thought that an island as remote as Christmas would fall under the radar and not receive such attention as to develop a blanket protective mechanism in the ABCA Draft Advice. The CCC discussed the nature of possible Government motivations for the island that may run at odds with local motivations for the island. Chris **SU** was concerned about the Government creating barriers to investment thereby frustrating residents to self-relocation, especially the younger generations. Chris **SU** noted that if a generation leaves the island, the island will depopulate as the older generation moves on. Chris **SU** noted that Defence paid for the VOCUS internet cable to come onshore and is also the agency behind the \$200m upgrade on the Cocos (Keeling) Islands; Defence definitely had an interest in the territories.

Resolution:

That the Community Consultative Committee is outraged at the lack of any formal process of consultation being put forward by the Government in respect to the Abbott's Booby Conservation Advice Draft.

In the absence of any formal Government consulting mechanism with the people of Christmas Island, the CCC has obtained a copy of the Abbott's Booby Conservation Draft Advice and provides its initial response to it as such:

It seems to the CCC that the Abbot's Booby Conservation Advice Draft is a new Depopulation Plan for Christmas Island and that we reject it. We demand the science upon which the draft conservation advice depends be examined by independent parties who should inform the Community Consultative Committee of their findings.

That the CCC considers this a matter of great importance and it must be taken to the entire community for their consideration.

Moved: Kelvin **LEE** Seconded: Nora **KOH**
Carried: 9/0 Resolution: CCC10/2019

The CCC agreed to defer all other Agenda Items to the next CCC meeting,

5 General Business

6. Closure of Meeting

6.1 The Meeting closed at 17.15

7 Date of Next Meeting

7.1 The date of next meeting is Wednesday 25 September 2019 at 3.30 pm