



LATE AGENDA

**Ordinary Meeting of Council
To be held on Tuesday 26 August 2025
At 12:00 pm**

Civic Centre, Council Chambers
24 Stuart Highway, Katherine NT 0850

The Chief Executive Officer of Katherine Town Council
hereby provides notice of the Ordinary Meeting of Council
in accordance with Section 92 of the *Local Government Act 2019*

LATE AGENDA ITEMS

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17 LATE REPORTS OF OFFICERS

17.1 2024-25 ACQUITTAL - LGR2015/00010 - PROVISION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICES TO BINJARI

Author: Amanda Haigh, Manager Governance and Risk
Authoriser: Ingrid Stonhill, Chief Executive Officer
Report Type: For decision
Attachments: 1. Acquittal - 2024-25 Binjari LG services - 22 Aug 2025 [17.1.1 - 1 page]

Officer Recommendation

1. That Council endorse the acquittal for 2024-2025 Local Government Grant – Provision of Local Government services to Binjari community, and that the acquittal be forwarded to the Department of Housing, Local Government and Community Development.
2. That Council approve requesting the surplus of \$20,787.85 be retained to provide services as identified in the report.

Purpose of Report

To formally acquit the 2024-2025 Local Government Grant for the provision of services to the Binjari community for the amount of \$139,100 (GST exclusive).

Strategic Plan

1. STRONG LEADERSHIP - 1.5 Financial - Have long-term financial sustainability in Council to allow for continued growth and development.

1.5.1 Collaborate with all three levels of government.

4. GROWTH AND SUSTAINABILITY - 4.2 Lead with Best Practice - Lead by example and set a high benchmark.

4.2.4 Be prudent with our financial management for stronger returns for ratepayers and sustainable long-term finances with current risk management practices current at all times.

Municipal Plan

4.2.4.3 Sustainable long-term finances and current risk management practices - Review financial information and reporting system, Grant Management and acquittals up-to-date

Background

For a number of years Katherine Town Council has received funding from the NT Government for the provision of Local Government Services to the Binjari community.

In 2021-2022 council agreed to a five year funding arrangement with the condition that Katherine Town Council ensure continued delivery of local government services, and agreement with Binjari Community Aboriginal Corporation (BCAC) regarding the nature and frequency of local government services to be delivered in the Binjari community against agreed service level standards.

2024-2025 Financial Year the funding was \$139,100 (GST exclusive).

Discussion

Services were provided by BCAC up until April 2025 when the corporation went into liquidation. BCAC delivered the following services:

- Domestic Garbage Collection (240L Wheelie Bins) weekly service
- Weekly Emu-Bob Service

- Weed Control
- Mowing Service:
 - Fortnightly - Oval, Top and Bottom Parks and Vacant Blocks
 - Monthly - Nature Strips and Parks
 - Quarterly - Workshop, Children's Playground and Community Shed
- Quarterly Fire Break Slashing including Road Verge Slashing annual service of four (4) cuts wide x 8km

Council continued to provide the following services:

- 2 x Vet visits to desex and vaccinate the community's dogs
- Monthly street sweeping
- Weekly clearance of a skip bin located in the community
- Fire Breaks around the community
- Mowing of community oval, verges, and public places
- Roadside slashing
- Weekly Kerbside Collection
- Weed Control
- Weekly Emu Bob service of the community
- Proactive Ranger Patrols
- Irrigation maintenance of the main oval
- Removal of abandoned cars from verges
- Road maintenance including repairs of potholes
- The speed bump located on the access road was repainted

The acquittal is attached to the report. The surplus of \$20,787.85 will be requested to be retained to provide:

- An additional vet visit,
- Supply of the new red lid Katherine Town Council 240 litre wheelie bins for kerbside collection,
- A hard rubbish collection from each property collecting items such as fridges, tyres, metal, and other items ineligible for kerbside collections,
- Signage for the Binjari Oval,
- Replacement of road signs,
- Addition of Waypoint signage to facilities such as the medical centre, night patrol building, recreation hall / basketball court, community oval and administration building, and
- Purchase additional grandstand seating for the oval.



Consultation Process

Report developed with the Manager Environment and Municipal who manages the services in Binjari.

Policy Implications

There are no policy implications resulting from the decision.

Budget and Resource Implications

Funding	\$139,100
Total income	\$146,776.88
Expenditure	\$125,994.03
Surplus	\$20,787.85

2025-2026 is the final year of the funding arrangement with the Department of Housing, Local Government and Community Development.

Risk, Legal and Legislative Implications

There are no risk, legal and legislative implications.

Environment Sustainability Implications

There are no environmental sustainability implications.

Council Officer Conflict of Interest

We the Author and Approving Officer declare we do not have a conflict of interest in relation to this matter.

Katherine Town Council

2024-25 Acquittal of Grant

File number: LGR2015/00010

Purpose of Grant: For the provision of local government services to the Binjari community for 2024-25

Purchases were in accordance with the Northern Territory Buy Local Plan:

☒ Yes ☐ No

Contracted services were successfully managed by the Binjari Community Aboriginal Corporation

☐ Yes ☒ No

(If no to either question above please provide a written explanation with this acquittal)

Services were provided by Binjari Community Aboriginal Corporation until it went into liquidation in April 2025. Council then undertook services for the remainder of the financial year.

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACQUITTAL FOR THE PERIOD ENDING 30 JUNE 2023

Grant	\$139 100
Carry-over funds	\$0
Other revenue raised including waste management services for 2024-25	\$7,676.88
Total income	\$146,776.88
Expenditure (Specify accounts and attach copies of ledger entries and invoices) An 'administration fee' is not to be apportioned to the grant for acquittal purposes.	
Total Expenditure	\$125,994.03
Surplus/(Deficit)	\$20,787.85

We certify, in accordance with the conditions under which this grant was accepted that:

- the expenditure in this acquittal is true and correct and has been actually incurred only for the funded purpose; and
- Council's contracted services have been successfully managed and delivered by the Binjari Community Aboriginal Corporation.

Acquittal prepared by: Amanda Haigh22/08/2025

Laid before the Council at a meeting held on ___ ; ___ / ___ Copy of minutes attached.

CEO or CFO: [Signature]22, 8, 25**DEPARTMENTAL USE ONLY**Grant amount correct: ☐ Yes ☐ NoExpenditure conforms to purpose: ☐ Yes ☐ NoContracted Services certified as successfully managed: ☐ Yes ☐ NoProcurement - Bought from Territory Enterprise: ☐ Yes ☐ No (If no has an explanation been provided: (0 Yes ☐ No)Minutes checked: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Balance of funds to be acquitted: \$ ___ - ___

Date next acquittal due: ___ / ___ / ___

ACQUITTAL ACCEPTED:☐ Yes ☐ No

Prepared by:

Comments:

Manager Grants Program

17.2 FINANCE REPORT JULY 2025

Author: Sheralea Clemow, Acting Finance Manager
Authoriser: Ingrid Stonhill, Chief Executive Officer
Report Type: For decision
Attachments: 1. July - OMC - Finance Report [17.2.1 - 6 pages]

Officer Recommendation

That Council endorses the Finance Report for the Month of July 2025.

Purpose of Report

This report is to present to the Council the Financial Report for July 2025.

Strategic Plan

4. GROWTH AND SUSTAINABILITY - 4.2 Lead with Best Practice - Lead by example and set a high benchmark.

4.2.4 Be prudent with our financial management for stronger returns for ratepayers and sustainable long-term finances with current risk management practices current at all times.

Municipal Plan

4.2.4.1 Comply with legislative requirements - Applications of AASB, NT Local Government Act 2019, Australian Taxation legislation and reporting requirements

4.2.4.2 Prudent financial management for stronger returns for ratepayers - Preparation of Annual Budget and Revisions, CAPEX Budget and Improved debtors management

4.2.4.3 Sustainable long-term finances and current risk management practices - Review financial information and reporting system, Grant Management and acquittals up-to-date

Background

In accordance with the Local Government (General) Regulations 2021 – Part 2 (Division 7), the below monthly report must be presented to the Council at the monthly Ordinary Meeting of Council. Accordingly, the commentary attached presents the preliminary financial position of the council at the end of July 2025 with the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Certification.

Discussion

Total year-to-date (YTD) operating income exceeds budget expectations by 4.85%.

Interest revenue has been adjusted to reflect accrued interest not yet received. Despite this adjustment, actual interest revenue remains 54.99% above budget projections.

Operating grants revenue is currently 95.96% below budget expectations, primarily due to timing. Financial Assistance Grants total allocation for 2025/2026 is \$645,880 however Council is yet to receive funding.

Total YTD operating expenditure is 7.42% below budget, attributed to a lower volume of work undertaken than originally forecast.

Employee-related expenses are 23.53% below the overall budget, largely due to ongoing vacancies in several positions.

Monthly payments have been processed for all approved suppliers, with disbursements occurring on a weekly basis.

Currently, 18.89% of debtors (excluding infringements and rates) have outstanding balances for more than 90 days. Follow-up actions continue through the issuance of monthly statements and calls.

Of the total outstanding rates balance, 46.19% relates to unpaid rates from the 2024/2025 financial year

and prior periods.

Council monthly financial reports are materially impacted by the final outcome for 2024/2025; these financial statements are still being compiled and audited. The attached Financial Reports should be considered with this in mind.

Consultation Process

NIL

Policy Implications

There are no policy implications resulting from the decision.

Budget and Resource Implications

The Report and attachment provide a comparison of Council's YTD actual performance against the budget.

Risk, Legal and Legislative Implications

There are no risk, legal and legislative implications.

Environment Sustainability Implications

There are no environmental sustainability implications.

Council Officer Conflict of Interest

We the Author and Approving Officer declare we do not have a conflict of interest in relation to this matter.

Certification by the CEO to the Council

Council Name:	Katherine Town Council
Reporting Period:	31/07/2025

That, to the best of the CEO's knowledge, information and belief:
(1) The internal controls implemented by the council are appropriate; and
(2) The council's financial report best reflects the financial affairs of the council.

CEO Signed



Date Signed

25/8/25

Note: The monthly financial report to council must either be accompanied by a written certification by the CEO to the council, as set out above, or the CEO is to provide written reasons for not providing the certification. (Regulation 17(5) of the General Regulations)

Table 1.1 Monthly Income and Expenditure Statement

	YTD Actuals \$	YTD Budget \$	YTD Variance \$	Annual Budget \$
OPERATING INCOME				
***Rates	10,005,761	8,916,409	1,089,352	9,990,399
***Waste Charges	1,620,770	1,102,698	518,072	1,645,818
Fees and Charges	244,659	196,779	47,880	2,525,689
**Operating Grants and Subsidies	46,834	1,160,565	(1,113,731)	2,193,222
Interest / Investment Income	74,450	48,035	26,415	576,365
*Commercial and Other Income	41,534	53,153	(11,619)	372,182
TOTAL OPERATING INCOME	12,034,008	11,477,639	556,369	17,303,675
OPERATING EXPENDITURE				
Employee Expenses	418,154	546,790	(128,636)	6,069,690
Materials and Contracts	597,893	544,761	53,132	8,350,845
Elected Member Allowances	20,125	22,960	(2,835)	275,520
Elected Member Expenses	350	37,089	(36,739)	55,000
Council Committee & LA Allowances	-	-	-	29,615
Council Committee & LA Expenses	-	-	-	8,360
Depreciation, Amortisation and Impairment	400,000	400,000	-	4,800,007
Other Expenses	-	-	-	-
Interest Expenses (Finance Costs)	-	-	-	58,416
Gain/Loss from the measurement of Disposal of Assets	-	-	-	465,321
*TOTAL OPERATING EXPENDITURE	1,436,522	1,551,600	(115,078)	20,112,774
OPERATING SURPLUS /(DEFICIT)	10,597,486	9,926,039	32,109	(2,809,099)

Table 1.2 Monthly Operating Position

	YTD Actuals \$	YTD Budget \$	YTD Variance \$	Annual Budget \$
BUDGETED OPERATING SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)	10,597,486	9,926,039	32,109	(2,809,099)
Remove NON-CASH ITEMS				
Less Non-Cash Income	-	-	-	-
Add Back Non-Cash Expenses	400,000	400,000	-	5,265,328
**TOTAL NON-CASH ITEMS	400,000	400,000	-	5,265,328
Less ADDITIONAL OUTFLOWS				
Capital Expenditure	188,876	10,250	178,626	9,705,621
Borrowing Repayments (Principal Only)	-	-	-	-
Transfer to Reserves	-	-	-	-
Other Outflows	-	-	-	-
TOTAL ADDITIONAL OUTFLOWS	188,876	10,250	178,626	9,705,621
Add ADDITIONAL INFLOWS				
Capital Grants Income	-	-	-	5,191,029
Prior Year Carry Forward Tied Funding	-	-	-	-
Other Inflow of Funds	-	-	-	72,178
Application of Retained Earnings	-	-	-	-
Transfers from Reserves	-	-	-	2,000,000
Drawdown of Borrowings	500,000	500,000	-	-
TOTAL ADDITIONAL INFLOWS	500,000	500,000	-	7,263,207
NET BUDGETED OPERATING SURPLUS / DEFICIT	11,308,610	10,815,789	(146,517)	13,815

Council monthly financial reports are materially impacted by the final outcome for 2024-25; these financial statements are still being compiled and audited. These Financial Reports should be considered with this in mind.

***NOTE: Rates Revenue is what is billed and not recieved

***NOTE: Waste Revenue is what is billed and not recieved

**NOTE: Awaiting receipt of Financial Assistance Grants (FAGS)ne

Table 2.1 Capital Expenditure and Funding
By class of infrastructure, property, plant and equipment

CAPITAL EXPENDITURE	YTD Actuals \$	YTD Budget \$	YTD Variance \$	Current Financial Year (Annual) Budget \$
Buildings & Other Structures	97,820	100,000	(2,180)	2,350,000
Improvements	37,685	500,000	(462,315)	4,300,000
Plant & Equipment	-	-	-	300,000
Fixtures and Equipment	-	-	-	150,000
Fleet	-	-	-	240,592
Infrastructure Paths & Cycleways	-	-	-	1,080,000
Infrastructure Roads	45,241	-	45,241	1,035,029
Infrastructure Storm water & Drainage	-	8,000	(8,000)	100,000
Infrastructure - Street Lighting	-	-	-	150,000
TOTAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURE	180,746	608,000	(427,254)	9,705,621
TOTAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURE FUNDED BY:				
Operating Income (amount allocated to fund capital items)	180,746	(58,667)	239,413	442,414
Capital Grants	-	-	-	5,191,029
Utilisation of Retained Earnings	-	166,667	(166,667)	2,000,000
Transfers from Cash Reserves	-	-	-	-
Borrowings	-	500,000	(500,000)	2,000,000
Sale of Assets (Including Trade-In)	-	-	-	72,178
Other Funding	-	-	-	-
TOTAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURE FUNDING	180,746	608,000	(427,254)	9,705,621

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Table 3. Monthly Balance Sheet Report

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 3 APRIL 2025	YTD Actuals \$	Note Reference*
ASSETS		
Cash at Bank		
Tied Funds	20,895,568	(1)
Untied Funds	4,854,862	(1)
Trade Debtors	545,623	(2)
Rates & Charges Debtors	13,129,625	(2)
Other Current Assets	751,482	
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS	40,177,159	
Non-Current Financial Assets	-	
Property, Plant and Equipment	114,410,668	
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS	114,410,668	
TOTAL ASSETS	154,587,827	
LIABILITIES		
Accounts Payable	484,067	(3)
ATO & Payroll Liabilities	30,585	(4)
Current Provisions	567,967	
Accruals	0	
Other Current Liabilities	217,116	
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES	1,299,735	
Borrowings	500,000	
Non-Current Provisions	51,241	
Other Non-Current Liabilities	7,486,931	
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES	8,038,172	
TOTAL LIABILITIES	9,337,907	
NET ASSETS	145,249,920	
EQUITY		
Asset Revaluation Reserve	98,419,938	
Reserves	12,621,899	(1)
Accumulated Surplus	34,208,082	
TOTAL EQUITY	145,249,920	

Note 1. Tied Funds

11210 · Imprest Petty Cash	1,127.68
11220 · Employee Liabilities (Provisions)	619,208.28
11230 · Equity Reserves	12,621,899.04
11240 · Waste Management Make Good	7,486,931.00
11250 · Unspent Capital Grants	-
11260 · Deposits Held	166,401.96
	20,895,567.96

NOTE:

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Untied Funds - Cash and Cash Equivalents less Tied Funds **4,854,861.85**

Note 1. Details of Cash and Investments Held

<i>Cash at Bank consists of Term Deposits of \$24.5M with maturities as detailed below, with the remaining \$2M available at CBA Bank.</i>	
GENERAL FUND	\$
Commonwealth Bank	
Balance as per bank statement as at 30 April 2025	25,750,429.81
Credit card balances	7,700.71
Balance of Imprest and Petty Cash	1,127.68
Plus net outstanding deposits/(withdrawals)	
Adjusted cash at bank balance, 30 April 2025	25,743,856.78

INVESTMENTS							
INSTITUTION	PRINCIPAL \$	INTEREST RATE	EFFECTIVE DATE	MATURITY DATE	FINANCIAL \$	ESTIMATED INTEREST	INSTITUTION %
AMP	1,000,000	4.90%	2-Oct-24	1-May-25		49,000.00	
AMP	500,000	4.90%	14-Oct-2024	14-May-25		24,500.00	
AMP	1,573,184	4.85%	14-Nov-24	14-Nov-25		76,299.40	
AMP	524,092	4.80%	28-Aug-24	28-Feb-25		25,156.44	
AMP	1,051,090	5.05%	27-Jun-24	27-Jun-25		53,080.07	
AMP	1,470,249	5.05%	29-Jun-24	1-Jul-25	6,118,615.76	74,247.59	25.0%
BOQ	500,000	4.90%	08.10.2024	8-Apr-25		24,500.00	
BOQ	500,000	4.80%	4-Nov-24	5-Nov-25	1,000,000.00	24,000.00	4.1%
CBA	1,047,075	4.91%	25-Jun-24	23-Apr-25		51,411.37	
CBA	524,004	4.96%	31-May-24	26-May-25		25,990.60	
CBA	2,622,055	5.40%	23-Jul-24	23-Jul-25		141,590.96	
CBA	522,467	4.75%	1-Aug-24	1-Aug-25	4,715,600.73	24,817.19	19.3%
NAB	1,047,408	4.80%	4-Nov-24	4-Sep-25		50,275.59	
NAB	512,466	5.20%	11-Jul-24	11-Jul-25		26,648.22	
NAB	2,000,000	4.75%	14.10.2024	14.10.2025		95,000.00	
NAB	3,500,000	4.85%	12-Nov-24	11-Nov-25		169,750.00	
NAB	3,000,000	5.20%	30-Jul-24	30-Jul-25		156,000.00	
NAB	1,000,000	5.00%	6-Aug-24	6-Aug-25	11,059,873.97	50,000.00	45.2%
AMP (oncall)	558,429.81		on call	on call 30 days			
Commonwealth Bank	1,018,049.45		on call	on call 30 days	1,576,479.26		6.4%
Total Investments					24,470,569.72	1,142,267.43	100%
Total Funds					25,750,429.85		

Note 2. Statement on Debts Owed to Council (Accounts Receivable)

Council's Summary	Debtor	Current	Past Due 1 – 30 Days	Past Due 31 – 60 Days	Past Due 61-90 Days	Past Due 90+ Days	Total
Rates Debtors		1,142,011	-	-	-	980,375.59	2,122,386
Trade Debtors		268,018	51,915	21,129	12,392	82,302	435,756
TOTAL		1,410,029	51,915	21,129	12,392	1,062,677.16	2,558,142

Note 3. Statement on Trade Creditors

(Council can select timing of the age of creditors)	Current	Past Due 1 – 30 Days	Past Due 31 – 60 Days	Past Due 61-90 Days	Past Due 90+ Days	Total
Trade Creditors	57,403	37,818	213	0	(640)	94,795
Other Creditors	3734.44		-	-	-	3,734
Total Accounts Payable	61,137	37,818	213	0	639.50	98,529

KTC processes Accounts Payable weekly. Balance owing will be paid in the next payment run after the end of the month.

Note 4. Statement on Australian Tax Office (ATO) and Payroll Obligations

Council is a large withholder for PAYG purposes and consequently remits withholdings to the ATO on the day of payroll. As its revenue is GST Free monthly net GST is generally an amount payable to Council unless significant grants are received in the period. Payroll liabilities include Superannuation payable and Salary Sacrifice deductions.

**KTC is due for refund this amount from ATO	137,058
**Prepaid Fringe Benefits Tax	38,907

**Note this is an estimate only due to timing of reports

Note 5. Current Ratio

Current Ratio (current assets/current liabilities)	30.91
Current Ratio adjusted for Tied Funds	14.84

NOTE:

Council monthly financial reports are materially impacted by the final outcome for 2024-25; these financial statements are still being compiled and audited. These Financial Reports should be

Table 4. Member and CEO Council Credit Card Transactions for the Month

Where a council credit card has been issued to an Elected Member and/or the CEO, a list per cardholder of all credit card transactions in the month is to be published including the name of the supplier, the amount for each transaction and the reason for the transaction.

Example:

Cardholder Name: Ingrid Stonhill

Transaction Date	Amount \$	Supplier's Name	Reason for the Transaction
8-Jul-25	\$1,108.80	Dropbox	Dropbox - Subscription
14-Jul-25	\$59.95	Personality.com	Staff personality test - Subscription
15-Jul-25	\$30.52	ChatGPT	ChatGPT - Subscription
15-Jul-25	\$0.76	ChatGPT	Bank Charges - International transaction fee
29-Jul-25	\$134.00	Darwin Airport	Darwin Airport Parking
31-Jul-25	\$25.35	Novotel	Parking
31-Jul-25	\$93.87	Mailchimp	Mailchimp - Subscription
31-Jul-25	\$9.08	Mailchimp	Mailchimp - Subscription
31-Jul-25	\$80.53	Shell Coles Express	Fuel
Total	\$1,542.86		

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17.3 SMEAR CAMPAIGN AGAINST COUNCIL

Author: Mayor Elisabeth Clark
Authoriser: Ingrid Stonhill, Chief Executive Officer
Report Type: For noting
Attachments: 1. Public Smear Campaign Against Council [17.3.1 - 4 pages]

Officer Recommendation

That Council notes the following report.

Purpose of Report

To present a factual response to an ongoing public smear campaign targeting Katherine Town Council, and to formally document the actions taken, false claims circulated, and the resulting financial, operational, and reputational impact on the Council, its staff, and elected members.

Strategic Plan

Not Applicable

Municipal Plan

Not Applicable

Background

Over the past 18 months, Katherine Town Council has been subjected to an array and an extended campaign of false allegations, misinformation, and personal attacks, which have significantly disrupted Council operations, caused reputational harm and significantly impacted the governance and operational workflow.

This campaign has included:

- Public commentary and social media posts misrepresenting and manipulating facts;
- Formal and informal complaints lodged without evidence;
- Repeated public claims about the misuse of public funds and misconduct by Council leadership;
- The disclosure of confidential information in the public arena
- Attempts to escalate matters to external bodies through unfounded accusations.
- Defamatory attacks on the CEO, who, under the CEO Code of Conduct, can not respond.

The scale and frequency of this conduct is unprecedented in Council's history.

A PATTERN OF DISRUPTION

The individual responsible has repeatedly breached core governance expectations and protocols, including:

- The *Local Government Act 2019*, Schedule 1 Code of Conduct;
- Council's Social Media Policy;
- Provisions relating to public comment, use of Council platforms, and respectful interaction with staff.

These breaches have been formally documented and remain ongoing. Despite Council taking formal sanctions to protect the integrity of council operations and to mitigate ongoing reputational harm.

The sanctions imposed but not limited to, included:

- The removal of all social media platforms identifying any individual Councillor;
- Exclusion from representing Council at public events and external forums;
- Removal from all committee responsibilities.

FALSE CLAIMS AND MISREPRESENTATION

One of the most harmful elements of the campaign has been the systematic misrepresentation and manipulation of facts.

These include too many too list but examples offered are:

- Falsely claiming that the CEO referred to an elected member as “unchristian” - a claim refuted by written records;
- Mischaracterising a professional and conciliatory apology as an admission of wrongdoing;
- Publicly denying documented breaches of policy, despite prior written admission by the individual;
- Alleging that legal actions taken in defence of staff were funded by ratepayer money - a claim that is demonstrably false.

All relevant minutes, emails, formal Council communications and substantiated evidence, are held by council in formal records.

LEGAL ACTIONS AND COUNCIL DEFENCE

It has come to our attention that a social media (23 8 25) statement has been made alleging council used rate payers money and staff time to pay for legal representation regarding code of conduct matters, applying to Fairwork to stop bullying order on elected members without first following council policy. As a result of this council was required to seek legal advice to once again refute harmful accusations, that are a manipulation of events. Legal advice and procedural actions to combat this smear campaign, to date, have included:

Against Council

- Council response to a formal Code of Conduct complaint against the CEO - found to be baseless and unsupported by any evidence.
- Defence of a litigation against council seeking a \$50,000 compensation payout – later dismissed

By Council:

- Issuance of a Cease and Desist letter;
- Concurrent Trespass Orders.

Not funded through Council:

- A Defamation notice issued in response to personal and professional attacks;
- A Stop Bullying application lodged with the Fair Work Commission in November 2024, which remains ongoing.

Importantly, Council engaged legal advice to guide and protect the interests of Council. The

statements that claim ratepayer funds have been used for private legal matters are false, given all relate to council dealings. This statement represents either a deliberate lie or a calculated distortion of the truth.

ORGANISATIONAL IMPACT

The effects on the Katherine Town Council have been significant:

- Substantial costs to defend meritless claims and complaints;
- Hundreds of staff hours diverted from service delivery to manage complaints and misinformation;
- Leadership roles, The CEO and Mayor carried an extraordinary load during this period, absorbing the impact of unfounded allegations, intense public scrutiny, and the responsibility of maintaining stability and integrity while under direct and repeated attack.

The cumulative effect of this campaign materially impaired Council's ability to function without disruption, placing enormous strain on internal systems and personnel. Despite these challenges, Council continued to deliver high-quality outcomes for the Katherine community, a testament to the professionalism and resilience of its staff and leadership.

CORRECTING THE PUBLIC RECORD

The report stands as a truth-telling document. Not only to correct the public narrative but to provide a factual account of some events and reaffirm Council's commitment to transparency, integrity, and good governance.

A sustained and targeted campaign has resulted in significant and ongoing scrutiny of the Katherine Town Council. Allegations, many unfounded or grossly distorted, have been repeatedly directed at the Council's CEO and elected members. The cumulative effect has placed the organisation under immense operational pressure.

Despite this, Council has maintained its commitment to transparent process, high standards of conduct, and the ongoing delivery of services to the community.

Where false claims have been made, they have been:

- Disproven through documented evidence.
- Dismissed or resolved through appropriate channels, or
- Addressed via formal legal and procedural responses.

Council continues to operate under elevated scrutiny and pressure, and does so with professionalism and accountability.

CONCLUSION

This report stands as a formal record and a necessary correction of the misinformation that has been allowed to circulate unchecked.

Katherine Town Council remains committed to transparency, professionalism, and service to the community. It will continue to defend its integrity, its people, and its operations from unfounded attack, and will do so through lawful and appropriate means.

Discussion

XXXEnterDiscussionHereXXX

Consultation Process

There was no consultation process required for this report.

Policy Implications

There are no policy implications resulting from the decision.

Budget and Resource Implications

There are no budget and resource requirements.

Risk, Legal and Legislative Implications

There are no risk, legal and legislative implications.

Environment Sustainability Implications

There are no environmental sustainability implications.

Council Officer Conflict of Interest

We the Author and Approving Officer declare we do not have a conflict of interest in relation to this matter.