



LATE AGENDA

Ordinary Meeting of Council

Tuesday, 28 February 2023

6.00pm

Council Chambers, Civic Centre,
Stuart Highway, Katherine

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*.

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17 LATE AGENDA

17.1 CEO REPORT - ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

FOLDER ID : \COUNCIL MEETING ADMINISTRATION\ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL\ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL (OMC) - AGENDA\ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL (OMC) - AGENDA 2023/176814

AUTHOR : INGRID STONHILL, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

AUTHORISER : INGRID STONHILL, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

ATTACHMENT/S : NIL

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

1. That the CEO Anti-Social Behaviour Update Report be received and noted.

PURPOSE OF REPORT

With an increase of anti-social behaviour in Katherine and across the Northern Territory as a whole, Council has received some criticism for its perceived lack of action. Council is not a law enforcement agency and has limited ability and no authority to take direct action towards perpetrators.

What Council can do, within its legislative and budget constraints, is limited in action but not limited in affect. Many of the actions needed, requires Council to work in partnership with key community stakeholders, however this has not limited the council's ability to lead action.

This brief report outlines some of the key lead actions taken by council.

COMMUNITY PLAN/STRATEGIC PLAN

Priority One	Strong Leadership	Strong Leadership	Improve transparency around issues affecting the community
Priority One	Strong Leadership	Financial	Collaborate with all three levels of government
Priority One	Strong Leadership	Community Engagement	Identify a number of tools to ensure our engagement is broad, inclusive and accessible to our diverse community
Priority Two	Community and Families	Safe Community	Improve street lighting for safety
Priority Two	Community and Families	Safe Community	Develop a laneway management policy.

Priority Six	Big Rivers Inter-Government Collaboration	Collaborate with Regional Councils	Work in partnership with the Big Rivers regional councils on primary issues affecting the region
Priority Six	Big Rivers Inter-Government Collaboration	Collaborate with Regional Councils	Ensure a sound understanding of existing policies or agreements on critical matters impacting Katherine
Priority Six	Big Rivers Inter-Government Collaboration	Inter-Government Collaboration and Advocacy	Advocate for the interests of our community

BACKGROUND

The term antisocial behaviour incorporates a range of behaviours from minor offensive or harmful acts to more serious criminal activity. Although a common problem in many communities in Australia and overseas, there is evidence of a growing public perception that crime and antisocial behaviour, particularly among young people, is becoming worse (Roberts & Indermaur 2009). Antisocial behaviour is of serious concern to government, non-government organisations, the private sector, communities, families and individuals for several reasons:

- Antisocial behaviour can have a negative impact on community perceptions of safety and people's quality of life.
- Antisocial behaviour threatens the establishment and maintenance of a safe and secure community, which is an important prerequisite for community wellbeing and cohesion as well as sound economic growth through continuing business activity and investment.
- Individuals who engage in antisocial behaviour risk becoming excluded from important support mechanisms such as school, their families and service providers. They also risk coming into contact with the criminal justice system.
- Involvement in antisocial behaviour can persist throughout adolescence into adulthood, becoming a more significant social issue with long term negative consequences for the individual, their family and the wider community (Armitage 2002).

DISCUSSION

Whilst the call for an emergency response was made from Alice Springs Mayor to the Commonwealth Government, Katherine Town Council has ensured that it has not been left behind. The Katherine Mayor has highlighted and raised our concerns about crime displacement, which is the relocation of crime from one place to another, usually a result of some crime prevention initiative, such as the recent sale of alcohol ban in Alice Springs. Katherine Town Council supports a blanket approach across the NT for all initiatives offered to Alice Springs to ensure that problems are addressed with equity.

Recent media (ABC Mt Isa Mayor interview) suggests that crime displacement as a result of Northern Territory initiatives, is occurring in Mt Isa, Townsville and Cairns, Queensland.

Katherine Town Council acknowledges it has a responsibility to its employees and its community. As a council with only 65 employees addressing the victimisation of a town population of approximately 10,000 has put additional strain on employees, budgets and resources. The ratio sits at 1:155 ie one employee to every 155 residents.

Katherine Town Council whilst continuing to address increased service demand clean up and response to public property crime, litter, graffiti, loitering, alcohol related harm, has acted strategically, taking decisive action consistent with the strategic direction of the Katherine Town Council plan, despite the ambiguity, complexity, and at times chaos of increase anti-social behaviour.

The table below outlines the identified issue the Council targeted, the strategy and the implementation actions to address the issue. This is not a complete list, but rather key areas addressed, without additional resources or staff.

Identified Issue	Strategy	Implementation Steps
<p>Address misinformation which leads to heightened emotions: more information available on social media leading to heightened emotions and reaction from the community. Information being spread is incorrect and misrepresents the issues at hand.</p>	<p>To disseminate factually correct information to community and to consult with relevant stakeholders</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Government partnership identification and collaboration 2. Obtain and analyse factual information and data 3. Preparing external communication strategies that deals in facts 4. Internal and external Stakeholder management 5. Consistent, targeted messaging
<p>Council property utilised to facilitate increased crime (laneways)</p>	<p>Identify and analyse Council laneways connected to hotspots where ongoing crime and antisocial behaviour torments residents and take remedial action</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consult police and canvas residents around laneways 2. Analyse feedback and complaints received regarding antisocial behaviour occurring in and around Council owned laneways and parks 3. Develop laneway management policy (public consultation and approved by Council) 4. Identify 'hot-spot' crime areas which will be analysed to ensure any crime prevention initiative does not cause displacement of crime 5. Trial closure of laneways to decrease access and redirect foot traffic

Identified Issue	Strategy	Implementation Steps
		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. Identify and rectified Council overgrown parks which allow for easy hiding 7. Monitor, review in 6 months 8. Communicate to affected residents through a targeted mail drop. Place signs in both English and kriol on each laneway closure fence 9. Providing council contact information to receive feedback
Victims of Crime	Support and empower victims of crime	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify and approach appropriate specialised stakeholders and support agencies 2. Offer free training sessions for victims of crime regarding home security and funding available to install security measures 3. Offer free personal safety workshops to community members through neighbourhood watch 4. Organise a business community meeting to support businesses who have been victims of crime 5. Repetitive consistent targeted messaging
Council owned property break-ins	Reduce incidents of crime on council property. Therefore, reducing the financial burden on rates payers. Ensuring public safety.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review deficiencies in Council security and introduce new access systems and permissions 2. Install security cameras in identified Council facilities 3. CPTED review of Council facilities which resulted in increased lighting at identified hotspots 4. Successful application of grant funding to purchase mobile lighting tower 5. Review of Council's Afterhours On Call arrangements and response protocols. Implementation of that review.

Identified Issue	Strategy	Implementation Steps
		<p>6. Review Council's vehicle tracking management, in response to potential theft.</p>
<p>Antisocial Behaviour in Public Spaces (daytime)</p>	<p>Reduce the incidents of anti-social behaviour within Katherine.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promote community members to call the police and report all incidents of crime 2. Provide training and development for Council staff competencies to handle aggressive people. 3. Updated policy and standard operating procedures to incorporate crime prevention initiatives (eg. Working Alone Policy, Preventing Workplace Aggression Policy, Work Health and Safety, Office Opening and Closing Procedures, On-Call Procedures). 4. Council staff and community Mental Fitness training. 5. Reinforce the No School No Service Campaign across Council services 6. Conduct specific stakeholder consultation and coordination (eg. Truancy officers) 7. Engage Interpreter services for identified Council areas. 8. Advocate and identify funding for crime prevention strategies and initiatives, such as the mobile lighting tower. 9. Proactive measures such as 'Activating Katherine' to reduce underutilised spaces. 10. Increased response and maintenance of the town centre, to demonstrate that Katherine is cared for. 11. Promotion of "beautification" of council assets such as Ryan Park toilets and Adventure playground toilets to

Identified Issue	Strategy	Implementation Steps
		create pride in Katherine and activate spaces.
Antisocial Behaviour in Public Spaces (night-time)	Reduce the incidents of anti-social behaviour within Katherine.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Engage with external stakeholders and map current service delivery during night-time hours. e.g. Night Patrol, Sobering Up Shelter, Katherine Youth Outreach Engagement Services. 2. Identify the resourcing gaps to enable program improvements and expansions. 3. Promote the proposal of a Katherine Community Patrol to be the eyes and ears of the Police. Modelled on the successful New Zealand Community Patrol organisation. 4. Apply a Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) resource to review all of Council facilities. 5. Implement, via priority, the results of that review, such as increased lighting at identified hot spots, sportsground, unlit carparks, civic centre. 6. Advocate for funding for services to Katherine to reduce the harm of anti-social behaviours.
Raising Awareness and lack of financial capacity to respond to increased anti-social behaviours	Advocacy for Katherine and the required funding and services to combat anti-social behaviours	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Make a submission on the NT Liquor Act review 2. Write to the Chief Minister, Local Government Association Northern Territory to request that the consistent application of all crime preventions measures are implemented across all areas of the Northern Territory to stop crime displacement. 3. Advocate and advise through media releases and interviews, Katherine specific issues.

CONSULTATION PROCESS

I wish to acknowledge the support of the Chief Minister and Cabinet Katherine and Big Rivers Region team, Katherine Police and all other government agencies who have supported our involvement and work to date. Special mention to Jawoyn Aboriginal Corporation who has assisted us with CPTED clean up priority projects.

POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Nil

BUDGET AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The response to crime will affect the Council's operating budget. It is anticipated these will see increased out of hours response costs. Productivity affects of normal operational budget being used to rectify vandalism and unprecedented levels of destruction. Predictions of increased insurance costs. Additionally, speciality purchased resources to combat crime. Extended operational times.

The actual figures and effect on budget are not yet finalised.

RISK, LEGAL AND LEGISLATIVE IMPLICATIONS

Local Government Act 2019

Submission to the 3 year Review of the Liquor Act 2019

COUNCIL OFFICER CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No conflict of Interest