Norfolk Island Governance Committee

Final Communique

The Norfolk Island Governance Committee (NIGC) held its final meeting on 15 October 2026, marking the conclusion of its extensive work to develop recommendations for Norfolk Island's future governance arrangements.

The NIGC welcomes the Australian Government's August 2026 announcement regarding a staged approach to establishing Norfolk Island's governance model through primary legislation, including the standing-up of a Transition Assembly.

The NIGC recognises that the Transition Assembly will succeed the NIGC as the next stage in the development of a future statutory Norfolk Island Assembly and sees this as a natural transition point. The NIGC's work will now conclude, with responsibility for the next phase passing to the Transition Assembly following its election - informed and supported by the NIGC's work and decisions.

Since its establishment in October 2023, the NIGC has brought together community representatives, the Administrator of Norfolk Island, and Australian and Queensland Government representatives to work collaboratively on the development of a future governance model for Norfolk Island.

From the outset, the NIGC recognised that a governance model for Norfolk Island necessarily comprises several important elements, including the governance body itself, a sustainable financial model, and administrative arrangements to support the body.

Over the past three years, the NIGC has made significant progress in developing recommendations and policy proposals to support the first of these - the establishment of a statutory Norfolk Island Assembly.

Drawing upon contemporary models of state, territory and local governance, the NIGC considered and made recommendations about the Assembly's powers and responsibilities, revenue and financial frameworks, integrity and accountability mechanisms, electoral arrangements, and transition planning. The recommendations and working documents of the NIGC will be provided to the Minister to support the next phase of the Transition Assembly. Over the course of its work, the NIGC has developed a substantial body of material to support the establishment of a statutory Norfolk Island Assembly. A summary of recommendations agreed by the NIGC to establish and empower the Norfolk Island Assembly is reflected in Attachment A.

The next phase includes considering and informing policy elements such as management of Crown land, integrity mechanisms for the Assembly and the administrative service supporting the Assembly, the dismissal and discipline of Assembly members and the extent of legal powers for the Assembly to exercise.

Throughout its deliberations and community engagement activities, the NIGC consistently emphasised the community's preference for a governance model established under the *Norfolk Island Act 1979*, rather than through an ordinance-based approach. The Australian Government's August 2026 announcement confirming that the future governance model will be implemented through amendments to the *Norfolk Island Act 1979*, reflects the NIGC's work and the clear preference expressed by the community.

The NIGC welcomed community engagement throughout its time, including those that participated in public consultation sessions, the written submissions and targeted engagement on key elements of the proposed governance model.

A particular focus of the NIGC's work was consultation on a proposed Preamble to the amended *Norfolk Island Act 1979*. Recognising the importance of the Preamble as a statement of Norfolk Island's history, identity and aspirations, the NIGC notes that the Minister has committed to reinstating a Preamble within the legislative framework.

The NIGC members look forward to the next phases of establishing the governance model for Norfolk Island, including finalisation of a sustainable financial model, and the draft principal Act to establish the Norfolk Island Assembly.

As it concludes its work, the NIGC thanks all community members who have contributed their time, ideas, feedback and expertise throughout the process and continues to encourage all members of the Norfolk Island community to participate in the upcoming Transition Assembly's work.

The NIGC acknowledges the commitment and contribution of all past and present NIGC members and thanks them for their service.

27 October 2026