



Norfolk Island Governance Committee

Communique

Meeting – 17 April 2024

The Norfolk Island Governance Committee (NIGC) met virtually on Wednesday, 17 April 2024.

Attendees at the meeting included the three democratically elected community representatives Chris Magri, Alma Davidson and Chelsea Evans, the Administrator of Norfolk Island George Plant, Australian Government representative Sarah Vandenbroek and Queensland Government representative Rachel Welch.

The NIGC focused discussion on the development of the new bespoke local governance model, including the division of administrative arrangements and foundational elements. The NIGC agreed to the following six foundational elements as the basis for developing a proposed model for consideration by the Australian Government:

1. Recognition of Norfolk Island as a distinct and separate Territory under the authority of the Commonwealth of Australia
2. The future relationship between Norfolk Island and Australia will be founded on the principles of democracy, preservation of the island's history and cultural identity, formal cooperation, and mutual respect for each other's needs and interests.
3. Develop a mutually respectful and enduring alliance between Norfolk Island and Australia, advance the shared aspirations and future direction of the relationship, and maintain a shared commitment to the ongoing success of the new governance model.
4. Promote local capacity building, financial sustainability, cost efficiency, and mutually beneficial outcomes.
5. Recognition of the unique heritage, culture and traditions of the island's culturally distinct people and their desire to preserve their enduring connections with and to their homeland, its important sites, and surrounding sea
6. Enactment of a modern, democratic governing constitution through Commonwealth legislation, that includes: a preamble that reinstates the original wording from the Norfolk Island Act 1979 (Cth), with additions reflecting Norfolk Island's culture, traditions, heritage and history, the nature of the relationship between Norfolk Island and Australia, and the shared aspirations for the future direction of the relationship.

The NIGC discussed the challenges associated with establishing a new bespoke local governing body by December 2024. The NIGC intend to submit the new governance model to the Hon Kristy

McBain, Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Territories, in early July 2024, so the Government can consider the model and make a decision by December 2024. However, it will not be feasible to complete all the work required to establish the new local governing body by December 2024. The NIGC remains committed to working with the community to ensure Norfolk Island's views and aspirations are considered and the proposed model has broad community support.

With the Norfolk Island Regional Council currently due to exit administration on 6 December 2024, interim arrangements are required until the new governance body is elected. The NIGC members are considering the options for the interim period and will make a recommendation to the Minister for her consideration once a position is agreed.

The NIGC also agreed to a public Register of Matters, to provide the community with information on the matters it is considering, and any decisions it has reached on these. The Register of Matters will be available on the NIGC's website and on DITRDCA's website.

Communiques and other public information about the NIGC will be distributed through Norfolk Island media and online at <https://www.norfolkislandgovernance.com/> or on DITRDCA's website at <https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/territories-regions-cities/territories/norfolk-island/norfolk-island-governance-administration/norfolk-island-governance-committee>.

Contact NorfolkIslandGovernance@infrastructure.gov.au or the community representatives directly on NIGCcommunityreps@gmail.com.