

NOTES FROM STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKSHOP, WAGAIT SHIRE COUNCIL

10 am to 1 pm, Saturday, 10 November 2018

Facilitator: Jane Munday of True North Strategic Communication

Welcome and introduction by President Peter Clee

1. **What do we want to get out of today?**

Jane: Objective of today is to gather community input to the Shire's five-year strategic plan. We'll look at a 10-year horizon, but it's a five-year plan. Your input today, and other material, eg Progress Association letter and survey, will go to the Councillors to inform their discussions on the strategic plan, which will be written by the CEO and distributed early next year for public feedback. We'll also distribute notes from the meeting for feedback and to allow input by people who couldn't get to this workshop.

Strategic planning: Is about looking to the future, what sort of place do we want to live in, what are our shared values, aspirations and priority goals. A blueprint for the future, provides a roadmap for where council devotes its time, money and energies to ensure these reflect residents' priorities. A small council with a small budget can't do everything, so needs to be guided by what's most important in planning for the future. We'll look at some higher level goals and values, do a SWOT analysis and discuss some key actions.

Shire President, CEO Mark Sidey and councillors (Peter Clee, Tom Dyer, Neil White, Graham Drake, apologies from Michael Vaughan who was away):

- Here to listen
- Aim of today isn't to resolve operational issues
- Want to hear your vision of what you want over the next few years, going forward, not looking backwards, will make it easier for us to plan
- A respectful exchange of ideas that will give me and councillors some clear ideas that will help us develop a roadmap for the benefit of the entire community for the future
- New to council, hear to listen, we have a unique lifestyle and it's worth protecting

Community members

- The big picture, instead of just two or three years ahead, what will Wagait look like in 10 or 20 years
- That we go away with clear vision of what we are trying to achieve, we are confident that the community has input to that vision and we will be told about it as it progresses and changes
- Walk out of here with a vision and a collegiate approach to achieving what we want to achieve
- What do people expect and what do they see as the future of this community
- More transparency in council
- Have been raising concerns over the past 10 years
- Want to be kept informed about what is happening
- Getting told things beforehand, rather than finding out later

- To see change, to hear about what people want, but mainly to maintain what we have now
- To hear what people want
- Council to work towards reticulation of the community over the next 10 years
- Transfer station: advancing the timeline of the new facility
- Boat ramp, even if it's not council's responsibility
- The ferry
- Tourism: what is the area going to do in the way of tourism
- Infrastructure for the benefit of the community
- Protect what we have here, which is just a wonderful community, people with great talents that often aren't recognised
- Love the bush and the lifestyle, wallabies and weed management
- What is going on with Kenbi, who will be living next door, how is that going to impact us, good or bad
- Here to listen and absorb, hear other opinions, get up to speed, have four young kids
- Representing the younger demographics of the community, here to listen
- Have a small child, want to know what the future's going to be
- Here to listen to what everyone else wants for our vibrant community
- A visitor, never seen a community like this only 15-20 minutes from the city
- New to the area, just here to see what's going on
- First CEO of the council, for 7 or 8 years, a lot has happened since then which is of benefit to the community.

2. What are our values? (Expressed as what we like about our community)

- Close community
- Community spirit (x2)
- People look out for each other, people help others (x2)
- Community, sense of community (x6)
- Strong community involvement
- Small community
- Social
- Quiet, peace, space (x4)
- Privacy
- Peacefulness in the morning, no traffic
- Isolation
- No crime, safe/very little crime (x3)
- Natural surroundings
- The wildlife/flora, natural bush (x4)
- Small rural community next to the CBD, being only 15 minutes from Darwin, see Darwin but not there (x3)
- Unique lifestyle in a socially mixed society 15 minutes from a CBD area
- Rural lifestyle, away from the burbs, bush living (x3)
- Best of both worlds: rural and urban
- Beach, access to beach/sea (x2)

- Water, ocean great (x2)
- Open spaces
- Spacious bush blocks, large block sizes (x2)
- Freedom from too many rules
- People and lifestyle (x4)
- Diversity of location
- Uniqueness
- Family (x2)
- I love curiosity that leads to innovation

3. What worries us, keeps us awake at night?

- Solar street light on corner opposite Wagait Power and Charles Point Road
- Limited access to the land that surrounds us
- Cliquey
- Carting water
- Limited services
- No dump/transfer station, rubbish removal/tip (x2)
- Anti-social behaviour at the jetty
- 'them and us' or 'them and me', divided community (x2)
- attitude of recent council
- transparency of decisions
- Isolation
- Plumbers – we don't have one
- Boat ramp
- Security at jetty carpark
- Essential services (medical)
- Infrastructure (water/other) (x2)
- Transport
- Logistics of living here: transport/remote
- Cost of the ferry
- Ferry is everything
- Water reticulation (x3)
- Kenbi/tourism
- Criminal elements from Darwin/outside
- It worries me to lose power. That keeps me awake at night (power went out the day before)
- Why does the shire have trouble creating policies/by-laws
- Dogs attacking my kids as they walk/ride to friends' houses
- Dog management

Comment: The values of these community appear to be shared and consistent. They are around a strong sense of community spirit, the rural lifestyle (safe, peaceful) and natural surroundings. For actions in the strategic plan to win community acceptance, they would need to be aligned with these deeply held values.

4. **Who will live in Wagait in 10 years' and what are the implications for our short-term (next year), medium term (five years, which is the scope of the Strategic Plan) and long-term (10 years)? (See also demographic summary document for an outline of current population characteristics). Outline key goals and actions that might be prioritised in the strategic plan.**

Group 1

Who will be here in 10 years?

- Current issues preventing people moving in, water costs, safety for kids, school
- Will change – population will get younger?
- Assumption – we don't expect huge population growth in 10 years, perhaps some growth
- Really depends on infrastructure
- How will Kenbi impact on us, will NLC develop their land
- Lithium mining – how will it impact us, traffic through Berry Springs
- Mismanagement of weeds may have big future consequences (eg Batchelor)

Protecting lifestyle: Don't expect a huge population growth – a see saw between protecting lifestyle and the infrastructure

- Dog laws
- Kenbi land claim and access
- How do we influence planning process of Kenbi, Wagait Beach
- Minimum block size guidelines, development guidelines
- Keeping nature
- Management of weeds, Gamba
- Land clearing policies

Infrastructure (how to balance with above, the goals affect each other)

- Road safety and access
- Kits catching bus
- Older people getting around
- Drainage (WTR), covering drains
- Bike path
- Ferry access (disabled, young kids)
- Green zones
- Tourism, eg beach land

Depends on engagement strategy

- Only get into fights you can win
- Need a channel of communication to those in power
- working with wider Cox Peninsula, we will have less of a voice if we remain divided.
- Concern: disconnect between our goals and other powers already moving and making decisions without us.

- Properties not moving, some people can sell

Group 2

Not likely to be a huge population growth.

It's about money and people.

Goals:

- Infrastructure (ferry, aged care facilities)
- Money (grants) – where is it going to come from
- People (volunteers) – we rely a lot of volunteers to maintain services we have now.

Actions:

- Facilities for young people (sportsground, sports club) – at 18 they leave
- Picnic area near ocean
- Walking track, safe/crocs along beach, RUA (means?)
- More ferry services in evening (kids' sports in the evening, night classes)
- Viable boat ramp, ferry terminal, marina
- Facilities for aged, retirees – care, help, home activities – whether it requires an amalgamation to get those facilities, eg Coomalie, Belyuen
- Festivals

Group 3

Population to be the same, from 400 where we are now to a maximum of 1000, comfortable with that.

Likely to be increased number of families and children

Hope population is the same, uniqueness, 15 minutes from Darwin

Possible ecotourism

- keep community feeling
- pre-school or primary
- public bus
- maintain ferry and increase Darwin parking
- recreation paths
- aged and healthcare
- jetty
- Water
 - Reticulated
 - Advocacy for bringing 10-20 year pipeline into next 10-year or local solution, eg use current infrastructure
 - Work with Kenbi on water

- Transport
 - Jetty, ferry, public bus, Darwin parking and Mandorah parking
 - Safe access
 - User group: there is a lot of work going on, but a potential user group could be a useful way of maintaining advocacy
- Recreation: access to land, paths, sports, fishing
 - Work with community and council to work out what is important, prioritise and then nut it out
- Services: provide health, aged care, pre-primary and primary education
 - Option 1 advocacy
 - Option 2 does council consider a bigger role in service provision, which is a big step
- Community: Bush, rural community lifestyle, family friendly, safety, unique culture
 - Work with community to identify and prioritise to we maintain it.

5. **SWOT (with top issues highlighted) – planning is about what you want for your community and what you need to get there in the next 10 years. SWOT is about what is going to change around you, things you may not have control over, what are the opportunities on the horizon we can capital on.**

<p>Strengths (internal) <i>Sense/strength of community: cohesive but diverse</i> <i>Location: whether it's the bush or the sea, the fact that Darwin is close or far away, 12 minutes from the CBD.</i> Lifestyle, massive freedom No crime, people feel safe Big volunteering community, we look after each other Ferry is a common ground, water tank is common ground Demographics very mixed- we work together Beach, sea, bush all there – feel like it is our area Social community Smallness of council, we own it Talented people Close to Darwin, access to Darwin – keeps Darwin away Club, sports ground, park, shop Council run event + MUFF, WAG (means?) Council has what it needs Rates, cash reserve, council has positive cash Close to natural things, Finnis, Litchfield and Hills Accessing remote Australia services 12 minutes from the CBD</p>	<p>Weaknesses (internal) <i>Small population, which leads to a whole lot of other 'lack ofs' because we don't have a people base to support things other people take for granted.</i> <i>Lack of transport options: it impacts on the whole community, whether it's getting off the ferry at midnight and having no transport or whether it's just the fact that if the ferry doesn't go you are looking at a 140 k drive.</i> Narrow revenue stream Lack of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participation • government support • local cohesion • transparency • transport options Improved waste disposal and recycling Minimal social and human services No say on 'other side' facilities (ie Cullen Bay) Limited access to recreational fishing Too many rumours Resistance to change Non-resident land owners and vacant blocks</p>
<p>Opportunities (external) <i>Under tourism, would be to foster a community</i></p>	<p>Threats (external) <i>Uncertainty – not knowing what is going on</i></p>

<p><i>that focusses on art, music, food, because it seems to be happening organically anyway. Some others would be Wagait being a base for outside development, eg we house workers for Kenbi developments, community support, mining support (wasn't popular but it is an opportunity).</i></p> <p>Tourism:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • coastal life • fishing • exploring • grey nomads • art, music food <p>Kenbi development support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • housing • services <p>Aged care support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • medical • at-home care <p>Community services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • youth programs • health • sport <p>Mining support (not well-supported but still represents an opportunity)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • housing • social facilities • mine work <p>Work closely with government</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • foster close relationships 	<p><i>with development in the surrounding area, whether that be mining, housing, pressure on existing infrastructure</i></p> <p><i>Complete loss of transportation services – there is a single provider for the ferry. In a natural disaster or cyclone we are isolated.</i></p> <p><i>Future sub-divisions threatening our values and lifestyles, eg we live on 4000 metre blocks, what would happen with higher density development.</i></p> <p>Interference from bureaucrats</p> <p>Size of the shire – forced amalgamation</p> <p>Loss of transport services, eg ferry</p> <p>Carpark on the other side</p> <p>Competition for contracts from other organisations</p> <p>Possible future sub-divisions challenging values and lifestyles, eg from 4000 square metres to 500</p> <p>Legitimate funding without the Aboriginal tag</p> <p>No functioning boat ramp</p> <p>Air strip</p> <p>General downturn in real estate</p> <p>Constant changes to Ministerial representation and polities</p> <p>Changes to funding – getting and keeping Commonwealth and local funding</p> <p>Disaster recovery: brown outs and cyclones</p> <p>Uncertainty:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • development (of?) roads in surrounding area • mining and other development • pressure on existing infrastructure
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6. A quick voting exercise (reflecting key issues raised in survey and by Progress Association)

Jetty: (Discussion about this being a government responsibility and what is council's role, does it belong in the strategic plan)

- safety and security (x2)
- disabled access (x5)
- more ferry services (x10)
- Caravan park: Nil – and discussion about strong opposition
- Communication/transparency (x3)
- Consultation/cohesion/working together (x2)
- Dogs (x1)
- Recreation, parks, bikes (x3)

- Roads (x2)
- Boat ramp (x4)

7. **Some quick discussion about four key actions (quick as not much time left!)**

JETTY

- a) What are the key barriers to getting the jetty problem resolved?
 - funding, timeline, planning and design (consultation of all parties, users/providers)
 - allowing for increased use
- b) What are the opportunities?
 - tourism, increased use, hotel, resort
 - Return to Country program
- c) Link to council strategic plan
- d) Business case for government to spend money, what government objectives does it support?
 - Business opportunity, maintenance
 - Equal opportunity for access (disabled, kids)
 - Public safety
 - Increased development
 - Asset development
 - Liability
 - Future sub-division, land development, allowing for population growth
- e) Who might support your campaign, who needs to be your new best friend?
 - Community development
 - Ferry service provider
 - Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Logistics (DIPL)
 - NT Police
 - Department of Health
 - Department of Aboriginal Affairs (Commonwealth)
 - Northern Land Council, Larrakia Development Corporation
 - ALPA (Arnhem Land Progress Association? Why?)
 - Belyuen
 - Member for Daly
- f) How might you build support?
 - Wagait Shire
 - Wagait Progress Association
 - Local business
 - Other providers (competition)

- Essential service providers.

CARAVAN PARK/PLAYGROUND – outline of a process you might adopt for consultation on this or similar contentious issues. Don't start with the specifics but address the need or shared interest: eg accommodation instead of caravan park, transport instead of ferry, recreation instead of playground

- Is the idea in line with the short or long-term objectives of the Shire/community?
- Is the concept in line with community values?
- Generate a range of options that could be considered, eg location, type of venture.
- What are some of the pros and cons?
 - increased tourism and money spent in the community
 - broaden council's revenue base (discussion about whether council or private)
 - services: water, sewerage and waste
 - may attract undesirable tenants.
- What information does the community need for constructive dialogue (eg costs, draft designs, security and safety issues, feasibility issues, access to water, land tenure, market research, additional services, management)
 - location – where
 - size – how big
 - business case
 - who runs it
 - controlling/restricting long-terms
 - environmental constraints.
- What decision criteria might you use to rank options?

LEVEL OF CONSULTATION

- **Inform:** We delegate operational decisions to you, just keep us posted and tell us if we are going to be affected:
 - weed spraying
 - to build trust
 - communicating to see performance and make informed decision-making.
- **Get feedback:** Send us discussion papers or options for us to give feedback if we want to (eg through surveys or submissions):
- **Consult:** Get our ideas and listen to us before you make decisions. Let us know how our input influenced the decision:
 - things not in the strategic plan (suggest also bigger items in the strategic plan, particularly if they are likely to disturb community amenity, community, values).
- **Collaborate with us:** We want to be actively involved in the planning and decision-making, eg through work groups and dialogue:
 - large new initiatives.
- **We'll decide and ask council for support:** We'll come up with some good ideas of our own and ask council for moral or financial support:
 - WAG (?)
 - Fires (?)

- Club
- Progress (?Association).

PRIORITISE COMMUNICATION (Based on Steve Covey’s Time Management Matrix, 7 Habits of Highly Effective People.) Where should council prioritise scarce time and budget to provide efficient and effective communication?

<p style="text-align: center;">Urgent/important</p> <p><i>(Responding to crises, pressing problems, eg bushfires, workplace fatalities, deadline driven projects)</i></p> <p>Detailed minutes (very important)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • less emphasis on Agenda • details of meetings • correspondence lists to be published <p>Budget publication</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Not urgent/important</p> <p><i>(The things that require reflection, quiet time, concentration, eg strategic planning, problem solving, relationship-building, planning)</i></p> <p>Detailed agenda</p> <p>Questions from the public, need to be acknowledged and answered.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Urgent, not important</p> <p><i>(Reactive tasks, responding to emails, phone calls, pressing things, things that interrupt, some meetings)</i></p> <p>Public notices</p> <p>Releases to be regular</p> <p>Media releases</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Not urgent, not important</p> <p><i>(Pleasant time-wasting, trivia like doing the crosswords)</i></p> <p>Council newsletter, a waste of resources</p>

NB: This exercise was also intended to have you thinking about where you want Council to devote its time. We tend to spend too much time in the reactive ‘Urgent and non-important’ quadrant, responding to emails and phone calls rather than on tasks categorised as ‘non urgent but important’ that require thought and time, such as preparing the strategic plan. Questions from the public might be not urgent and not important. With limited time, you would expect Council to prioritise its time on the important ones or find more efficient ways to deal with the non-urgent questions rather than being expected to respond immediately.

Are there ways to be more strategic about communication, eg scheduling regular meetings with councillors in place of myriad ad hoc requests to the CEO, Council investing more time and resources in proactive communication so people feel they are being kept informed and don’t have to ask questions? If people have trust and confidence, they are less likely to ‘sweat the small stuff’.

Possible goals for the Strategic Plan could be:

- A collaborative, diverse and inclusive community
- Relaxed, family-friendly rural lifestyle
- Quality municipal services and facilities, such as recreation, roads, rates and rubbish

- Socially and environmentally sustainable economic development - that aligns with community values (explore what this means, Council to lead, advocate for, develop relationships), eg tourism, a thriving arts and food culture
- Effective governance: transparency, trust, consultation, communication, financial viability.

Actions under these might include advocacy for infrastructure that supports this unique lifestyle and enables economic development.

