

ORDINARY MEETING 22 NOVEMBER 2017	11
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MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN CAIRNS REGIONAL COUNCIL AND JAMES COOK UNIVERSITY – PROGRESS UPDATE

A Finocchiaro | 1/8/2 | #5537968

RECOMMENDATION:

That Council notes this report which outlines the projects and initiatives that have been delivered between 1 May 2016 and 31 October 2017 under the 2014 Memorandum of Understanding between Council and James Cook University.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Council and James Cook University (JCU) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on 19 May 2014. The aim of the MOU is to establish a collaborative relationship which enhances and progresses mutually beneficial outcomes to the benefit of the broader Cairns community and Tropical North Queensland.

The core areas of interest included within the MOU reflect a Quadruple Bottom Line approach under which possible projects are considered in the context of their contribution to our economy, community, environment and governance.

Some of the key projects where collaboration has occurred pursuant to the MOU between 1 May 2016 and 31 October 2017 include:

1. Public Art Linking Project
2. 2017 Mountain Bike World Championships
3. Cairns Festival
4. Cairns City Centre Master Plan Review
5. Adjunct Senior Lecturer – College of Science and Engineering
6. Sponsorship of Planning and Sustainability Student Awards
7. Our Cairns Community Survey and Industry Consultation
8. Student Work Placement Agreement established
9. Financial and in-kind support of ECOfiesta
10. Volunteer Work Placements supporting sustainability initiatives
11. Smart Cities Sensor Project
12. Advancing Regional Innovation Program
13. State of the Arts – a five year joint research project
14. Work Integrated Learning Program
15. 2016 Tropical North Queensland Innovation Awards

Further detail on the initiatives listed above is contained in the body of this report.

BACKGROUND:

Council and JCU work collaboratively to enhance and progress mutually beneficial outcomes to the benefit of Cairns and Tropical North Queensland.

In 2011, Council and JCU signed a MOU which subsequently expired in March 2012. A review of the MOU was undertaken in consultation with JCU and a revised MOU was signed on 19 May 2014 (DM5#4119330). The current MOU runs for a period of five years (expiring 19 May 2019) with an option to extend for a further four years by mutual agreement.

The agreed aims of the MOU are:

- To work in partnership to foster a learning community;
- To address issues and identify opportunities to undertake research and development beneficial to both parties and/or the wider community;
- To complement and strengthen the capabilities of both parties through sharing knowledge information and resources;
- To develop JCU as the primary higher education facility and research service provider in Far North Queensland and to build a higher education critical mass in the region;
- To enhance informed decision making and governance to deliver better outcomes;
- To act together and with stakeholders to be a repository of regional knowledge and research capacity; and
- To work cooperatively and to support one another to identify and secure available funding from a wide range of sources including all levels of Government and other potential external partners and sources.

The MOU establishes a set of overarching principles under which interactions between Council and JCU will occur, namely:

- Both parties endeavouring to work together, and where required with other stakeholders from the community, on issues and opportunities of a mutual interest to create lasting educational, intellectual, cultural, social, health, environmental and economic benefits for the region;
- Providing clarity to the alliance between Council and JCU in identifying areas of interest/ issues and the planning and implementation of projects of mutual interest through individual collaboration agreements;
- Creating a forum to facilitate effective dialogue to gain information, knowledge and insight to inform decision making and change; and
- To foster and reinforce good corporate governance through skills development, education, training and knowledge transfer.

COMMENT:

Collaborative projects/initiatives supported under the MOU include:

Project Name / Initiative	Synopsis
Public Art Linking Project	To celebrate JCU's Cairns campus' 20-year milestone, Cairns Regional Council and JCU reinforced and promoted their relationship through the commission of two separate, but inherently linked, public artworks. The two artworks, titled Embrace and Reflection were designed and made for two significant locations in Cairns, the newly redeveloped Munro Martin Parklands, in the Cairns CBD, and the JCU campus Founders Green in Smithfield.
Student Work Placement Agreement Established	Council and JCU established a Student Work Placement Agreement in July 2017. The purpose of the three year agreement is to outline the responsibilities of both JCU and Council in relation to the placement of students during a practical and/or clinical component of their studies at JCU. A number of JCU students have undertaken work placements at Council pursuant to this program.
2016 Tropical North Queensland Innovation Awards	JCU supported and sponsored the 2016 Tropical North Queensland Innovation Awards
Cairns Festival	JCU sponsorship of 2017 Cairns Festival.
ECOfiesta	Financial support and in-kind partnership provided by JCU for delivery of the Cairns ECOfiesta 2017.
Sustainability Students	Volunteer work placements for projects including the Great Northern Clean-up Sustainable House Day and ECOFiesta.
Smart City Sensor Project	Smart City Sensor Project considering storm water quality.
Advancing Regional Innovation Program	Council has actively worked with JCU and other stakeholders to build the innovation ecosystem in FNQ and facilitate the establishment of Ignite FNQ Limited.
<i>State of the Arts</i> – a 5 year joint research project.	Council has worked with JCU to achieve an evidenced-based and holistic understanding of the value of Council's investment in the five-year planning cycle.
Work Integrated Learning (WIL)	JCU students in their 3 rd year of study complete 100 hours of work under an internship arrangement within Council's Asset Accounting unit. Three JCU students have utilised the WIL program in 2016/17.
Cairns City Centre Master Plan Review	Design workshop held as part of the City Centre Master Plan review. JCU students also undertook data collection for the consultant team.
JCU Urban Design Studio	Presentation to JCU Urban Design Students on History of Masterplanning in the City Centre,

Project Name / Initiative	Synopsis
	Tropical Urbanism and Cairns City Centre Constituencies. Attended and critiqued student project work at completion of studio.
Adjunct Senior Lecturer – College of Science and Engineering	Debbie Wellington (P&E) accepted an offer of an appointment as an Adjunct Senior Lecturer in the College of Science and Engineering. The benefits of the appointment will include collaboration with students and staff on projects related to tropical urban design and development.
Sponsorship of Planning and Sustainability Student Awards	Council provides sponsorship of the JCU awards for Outstanding Student in Planning, and Outstanding Student in Sustainability.
Video Interview for EV1010 The Environmental Professional	Interviewed and lesson recorded to form part of Bachelor of Environmental Practice Program.
Economic Benefits of Urban Comfort	The purpose of this project with JCU is to investigate the relationships between urban comfort and the economy in Cairns.
Sensing Cities: Smart Thermal Comfort and Climate Adaptation	JCU Smart City Sensor Project to provide real time data for meaningful urban climate data collection for the Cairns CBD. Collaboration on funding application.
Our Cairns Community Survey and Industry Consultation	JCU participated at an industry forum for Our Cairns as part of Council's Corporate Plan development.
JCU Internet of Things (IoT) lab tour and demonstration	Guided tour of the new IoT lab and live smart water meters demonstration by Professor Wei Xiang, Head of Discipline, Electronic Systems and Internet of Things Engineering.
Understanding Pollution Loads Project	Partnership with JCU on understanding pollution loads from sewage pump station wet weather overflows.
Hydrology field studies	Council participation in hydrology field studies on water quality management in Barron River catchment.
Water quality investigations	Council participation on water quality investigation of Thomatis Creek with the Holloways Beach Environmental Education Centre and JCU.
International student placement (Singapore)	JCU has an opportunity to bring two students out from Singapore to do a four month work placement with Water and Waste.
JCU Cadet Engineer	The cadet has been involved in the Review and Optimisation of the Chlorine Addition System project at Council.
2017 MTB World Championships (previous Mountain Bike World Cup events in 2014 & 2016)	Delivery of Venue Agreement for the 2017 MTB World Championships including establishing the site as an event village suitable for holding a major international event. Council and JCU formed part of the overall organising committee for the delivery

Project Name / Initiative	Synopsis
	of the event which was a resounding success held in the region from 5-10 September 2017. Previous events have included the 2014 MTB World Cup in April 2014 and the 2016 MTB World Cup in April 2016.

OPTIONS:

The report is for noting.

CONSIDERATIONS:**Risk Management:**

JCU Cairns was established in 1987 and is a key driver of the local economy with over 4,000 students studying at JCU Cairns, including about 380 international students. JCU is ranked as one of the world's top universities and has reputation as a leader in tropical research. JCU's established reputation and standing mean the reputational risk of collaborating with JCU via the MOU is considered low.

The risks of individual projects developed under the MOU are considered and managed on a case by case basis.

Council Finance and the Local Economy

The MOU provides a platform for a vast array of collaborations to occur which may result in potential savings through shared project ownership, operational efficiencies, investment attraction, research partnerships etc.

The MOU states 'that each party shall agree to be responsible for its own respective costs associated with undertakings of the MOU and subject to their own internal approvals processes' thus not imposing any cost on either organisation as a part of the MOU.

Community and Cultural Heritage

The MOU between Council and JCU enhances and progresses mutually beneficial outcomes to the benefit of the broader Cairns community.

Corporate and Operational Plans:

The MOU with JCU aligns with and assists in the delivery of all of Council's strategic goals as outlined in Council's Corporate Plan 2017-2022, being:

1. Economy
2. Natural Assets
3. Liveability
4. Community and Culture
5. Serving the Community

Statutory:

The *Local Government Act 2009* outlines key principles including good governance and transparent and efficient processes and decision making in the public interest. This report aims to provide good governance through transparent reporting of the collaboration that has occurred between Council and JCU pursuant to the MOU.

CONSULTATION:

James Cook University

Angelo Finocchiaro
Program Leader Economic Development

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nick Masasso', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Nick Masasso
Executive Project Officer