

Flying Fox Management

Happy New Year everyone! Here's hoping for a prosperous and happy 2020 to come your way.

Unfortunately my first topic of discussion for the year is not what I was hoping for - flying foxes.

Council understands the sheer pain and frustration that our residents are experiencing and is deeply annoyed at its inability to drive a solution. The reality is that under the present legislative regime effective mechanisms to drive flying foxes away are not allowable.

Late last year saw the return of the little reds, the species that migrates around in the thousands.

It is the little reds that push the limits of the roost at the Botanical Gardens. That is when we see incursions into other areas, one particular area of concern being the fig trees behind the Ingham State School. This in fact occurred during the Christ-

mas break and Council staff were deployed to chase the animals back to the main roost. Council will continue to monitor the situation and act accordingly.

Council's statement of intent at present remains at ensuring that no new roosts are allowed to establish on public lands outside of the Government recognised Botanical Gardens roost. We cannot attempt to disperse the Botanical Gardens roost, as we simply have no means of controlling where the disturbed animals will go because of the legislative constraints surrounding what Council can and cannot do. If we were to attempt to disperse, all that we will achieve is to spread the problem elsewhere - into everyone's back yard. This fear is based on similar attempts and experiences elsewhere in the past, with dispersal creating problems for people who don't have a problem.

Roost dispersal activities have not been successful in the past. Limited success has been achieved where roosting trees have been totally removed. Given the extent of trees involved in the Ingham Roost, we do not consider removal of the trees achievable.

What we are working to achieve is relocation of the roost - not a dispersal activity.

To achieve relocation, an intended destination, as well as a means of effecting the relocation (a means of guiding the animals) is required. That is what the Queensland State Government project at Charters Towers, valued at \$900,000 is supposed to look at. We have not had any reports or recommendations from that study as yet.

Cairns City Council is also looking to undertake a trial with State assistance and all Councils are anxiously looking on to see which new

techniques may or may not work.

At its December 2019 meeting, Council received a report from officers outlining key points arising out of a recent meeting between Council Officers and officers from the Department of Environment and Science (DES). The objective of the meeting was to explore opportunities for the department to assist Council in determining protocols for the identification and location of suitable alternate roosts away from town and acceptable methods for relocation attempts.

Council officers reported that not much progress on the objectives was achieved but instead, Council officers were informed:

A. That Council should give consideration to establishing the roost as a tourist attraction stating the uniqueness of the roost as a good

opportunity to capitalise on tourism dollars and, in turn, educate the community;

B. That there are still big roosts in the Cape that will come down as it gets hotter. They also advised that flying foxes are moving north due to the bush fires and starvation event in South East Queensland. It was determined that Hinchinbrook will almost certainly have more animals moving in. On this basis DES officers stressed the importance of communicating with the community; and

C. Animals have been collared to monitor movements across the State/Country. There may be funding opportunities for more collaring but that is a matter for CSIRO and that there may be potential for DES to offer

some funding towards researching alternative roost sites".

As overcrowding occurs in the established roost, animals will continue to attempt to find new roosting areas, including in trees on private property.

If flying foxes land in your trees, you are allowed to dissuade them from staying by use of non-destructive disturbance techniques including smoke, water sprinklers, visual deterrents such as imitation predators and bright lights and noise from various commercial or improvised products.

For further information on what you can and cannot do with flying foxes, please visit the Department of Environment and Science website at www.des.qld.gov.au.

Ramon Jayo
Mayor

Positions Vacant

A career with Council offers challenging and rewarding work as we strive to shape a positive future for the Hinchinbrook community. Council is excited to offer the following opportunities to be part of a large and diverse organisation with a strong community connection.

- Media and Communications Officer V01/20
- Waste and Compliance Services Coordinator V02/20
- Tourism and Business Officer (12 month Maternity Relief) V03/20
- Disaster Management Coordinator V04/20
- Human Resources Trainee V05/20
- Business Administration Trainee (3 positions) V06/20, V07/20 and V08/20
- Regulatory Services Manager V09/20
- Public Spaces and Biosecurity Manager V10/20
- Director Community and Development Services V11/20

Applications close 5.00pm Monday 27 January 2020.

Further information is contained in the Job Application Packages which can be obtained via Council's website, *Current Vacancies* page or by phoning Human Resources on 4776 4767.

Please note: Applicants must specifically and individually address all essential and desirable selection criteria (included in the Job Application Package), provide a current Resume and two recent Referees in order to be considered for interview.

Hinchinbrook Shire Council is proud to be an equal opportunity employer.

Community Activity Grant Applications Open Now!

Community Activity Grants provide funding to not-for-profit organisations, supporting self-sustainable activities, events and individual national sporting achievements.

In the 2018/2019 Financial Year Council supported over 50 local events/activities/individuals, why not take advantage of this funding opportunity and submit your sponsorship application regarding community activities and events occurring between **1 April 2020 and 30 June 2020**.

For more information, please visit Council's website, *Grants and Funding* page.

Applications close Monday 27 January 2020.



Australia Day

SUNDAY 26 JANUARY 2020

Join us on Australia Day as we come together as a nation to celebrate what's great about Australia and being Australian.

OFFICIAL AWARDS AND CEREMONY

Join Hinchinbrook's official Australia Day Ambassador in celebrating a family friendly Australia Day with free festivities including Australian Concert, Australia Day Awards, Citizenship Ceremony and cutting of the Australia Day Cake.

When: 9.00am - 11.00am

Where: Hinchinbrook Shire Hall

FAMILY FUN DAY - FREE ENTRY

Bring the family to the pool for some fun in the sun! Get involved in pool games, win some prizes and grab something from the BBQ!

When: 1.00pm - 5.00pm

Where: Hinchinbrook Aquatic Centre



**CONNECT
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