

At a meeting in Cloncurry on 1 December 2017 the eight councils of the North West Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils (NWQROC) agreed on a course of action to re-invigorate the ROC. They wanted it to make a difference and to take a leading role in the development of the State's North West Region.

The councils realised that the organisation, formed in 2013, lacked a clear strategic direction focused on their priorities and its agendas were being driven by external stakeholders. It was unable to deliver on its Charter because the operating model and resources did not support the activity required to identify and deliver on outcomes that would progress the interests of the councils, communities and people of North West Queensland.

The "new" NWQROC is well and truly up and running with key changes in place and clear priorities that are now being implemented. Actions and outcomes to date include:

- Strategic Plan 2018-21 adopted with a focus on six priorities:
 - *Effective Political and Stakeholder Engagement*
 - *Supporting Regional and Economic Development of the State's North West*
 - *Developing Regional Infrastructure, Transport Networks and Workforce Capability*
 - *Protecting the Region's Environment, Natural Assets and Adapting to Climate Change*
 - *Provision of Equitable Health, Medical and Educational Services*
 - *Affordable Access to Telecommunication and Broadband Services*
- Revised Charter streamlining operations focused on council priorities.
- Increased meeting opportunities - quarterly face-to-face meetings across the region and monthly teleconferences to keep things moving.
- Ramped up engagement with the State and Federal Government.
 - Meeting at Parliament House, Brisbane in May attended by four ministers, Opposition Leader and three shadow ministers, and local member, Robbie Katter.
 - Meeting in Karumba in August attended by a Federal minister and advisors, and State government officials involved in the implementation of the North West Minerals Province Blueprint.
 - Meetings with Directors General and senior departmental officers positioning the ROC for direct consultation on policy and funding arrangements for the region.
- Submissions made to:
 - ACCC on high regional airfares and poor service.
 - Senate Economics Committee on solutions to regional inequality.
 - Tourism bodies on the excessive rental car costs in the region.
 - Federal Minister David Littleproud on funding for control of prickly acacia.
- Ramped up Communications & Media Profile through new:
 - Website – www.nwqroc.com.au
 - Social media platforms – Facebook: /nwqroc and Twitter: @nwqroc
 - Relationship with regional media outlets – ABC & North West Star
- Appointment of first Executive Officer – Greg Hoffman PSM, former General Manager – Advocacy at LGAQ.

The top priority over the next six months is a campaign leading up to the Federal Election due by May 2019. What are we doing?

- Developing an election strategy to put to all parties to grow the North West based on a fair reward and recognition of the significant contribution the communities of the NWQ make to the Queensland and national economy.
- Focus the strategy on the themes of:
 - Fair funding for our beef, freight, and tourism roads and railways
 - Investing in water infrastructure and dams
 - Power policy for the real world including remote Australia
 - Build and sustain our productive region with a sustainable population
 - First world telecommunications and connectivity
 - Funding and delivering services in a way that works for remote areas.
- Publicly launching the campaign in November and mounting a campaign to take the message to Canberra and beyond.
- Professional election strategists have been engaged to ensure the campaign is targeted for maximum effect and response.

To keep an eye on progress of the election campaign and other issues being dealt with by the NWQROC sign up to our Updates and News at www.nwqroc.com.au and join us on Facebook: /nwqroc and Twitter: @nwqroc.

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