

Media Release

30 November 2023

November Council Meeting wrap up

Alice Springs Councillors met on Tuesday 28 November 2023 for their monthly Ordinary Council Meeting. The following is a summary of some of the matters discussed. To see full Council reports and minutes visit the ASTC website. A full video of the meeting is available on Council's [Vimeo channel](#).

Gaining the upper hand on grass management

A wet 2022 and 2023 has led to an explosion of buffel grass throughout our town and the entire Central Australia region. This buffel, along with other grasses and weeds, has significantly increased the fuel load in Alice Springs and has resulted in our community being at a higher risk of fires.

A key function of Council is maintaining grass at a safe and reasonable level. The rapid growth of buffel in particular makes this a difficult task, so Council are reaching out to the Northern Territory Government for assistance. Council will write to the Minister for Environment outlining our concerns with the management of buffel grass within the Alice Springs municipality, and request their expert advice on solutions and better practices for management.

Art on show for the whole community

Council is proud of our remarkable Alice Springs Art Collection with works from some of Central Australia's most prominent and talented artists. In collaboration with the Alice Springs Art Foundation and The Alice Prize, this community collection houses incredible pieces of work that deserve to be seen by everyone. At current, the Collection is not on display all year long and this means the public can't access it at certain times. With that sentiment in mind, Council will undertake a review of our agreement with Araluen Art Centre for storage and exhibition of the Alice Springs Art Collection. This will help ensure we have the best arrangement for the entire community to discover and enjoy the collection for years to come.

Planning for a fun and exciting summer holidays

Alice Springs Town Council is taking a proactive role this summer to ensure young people throughout our community are engaged through the holiday period. With funding assistance from the Northern Territory Government and the National Indigenous Australian Agency, we have put together a fulsome school holiday program that will see activities on each day of the holidays. This will include weekly cinema screenings, tenpin bowling sessions and the return of an ice-skating rink! A full calendar of events will be released shortly, so stay tuned!

Through the holiday period, Council will also be working to maintain public amenity across our town. Our team will be on call to deal with graffiti removal, abandoned vehicle removal and abandoned trolleys as part of the NT Government's Summer in Central Australia Plan. You can report an issue to Council through this period by using the Neat Streets phone app, or by visiting www.neatstreets.com.au.

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Emphasising the interests of the community

Elected Members received several representations from concerned residents about crime, questioning whether the justice system is appropriately representing our community due to high rates of recidivism and the immediate releasing of juvenile offenders despite their lengthy history of criminal activity.

Council are working collaboratively with the Northern Territory Government as a participant in the Summer in Central Australia Action Plan, welcoming the focus of Government agencies working collaboratively. It is difficult, however, to see how we can avoid a repeat of last summer under the current legislative framework that is providing offenders impunity to re-offend. There is also seemingly an apparent lack of success that diversion and 'wrap-around' programs are having given the same group of offenders show no signs of changing their criminal activity

Council will write to the Chief Minister and Cabinet to highlight these concerns in the hopes of implementing a system that emphasises the interests of the community, ensuring they are given more weight than those of repeat offenders.

Investing in our future

Reinvigorating footpaths through the Alice Springs CBD, sealing Jane Road and resurfacing both the tennis and netball courts are just some of the projects that have received funding through the 2023/24 Alice Springs Town Council budget revision process. Each year, Council is required under legislation to review and revise its budget by 31 December. This process follows the 2022/23 Annual Report and finalises Council's cash position, allowing Council to carry forward unspent funds to complete capital and operational projects.

Some capital projects that have received funding through this process include:

- The sealing of Jane Road
- Resurfacing of both the tennis and netball courts
- A CBD footpath upgrade program
- Installation of a new Niche Wall at the cemetery
- Contribution towards installation of roundabout art through the CBD.

An eye has also been cast towards the future planning of Alice Springs with more than \$8,000,000 being transferred to Council Reserves for asset renewals. This guarantees sustainability within Council, ensuring future generations are not negatively impacted by today's legacy decisions. More details can be found here <https://alicesprings.nt.gov.au/council/media/media-releases/2023/investing-in-the-future>.

Ends.

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