

# Minutes

## International Relations Advisory Committee Meeting

Wednesday, 24 June 2026

Unconfirmed



**MINUTES OF CITY OF DARWIN  
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING  
HELD AT THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS DARRANDIRRA, LEVEL 1, CIVIC CENTRE, HARRY  
CHAN AVENUE, DARWIN  
ON WEDNESDAY, 24 JUNE 2026 AT 11:00 AM**

**PRESENT:**

Sister City Advisory Committee Kate Heelan  
Acting General Manager Innovation, City of Darwin Nick Fewster  
Charles Darwin University Adam Lam  
Dept of Trade Business and Asian Relations David Orr  
Port of Darwin Ben Cheng  
Tourism Top End Jason Yule

**OFFICERS:**

Susannah Penman, Executive Manager Place and Economic Development  
Vanya Bosiocic, Manager Economic Development  
Cherry Cai, Manager International Relations and Sponsorship

**APOLOGY:**

Lord Mayor Peter Styles (Chair)  
Deputy Lord Mayor Jimmy Bouhoris  
Chamber of Commerce NT Glen Hingley  
Dept of Foreign Affairs and Trade NT Suzy Wilson-Uilelea  
Larrakia Nation Michael Rotumah

**Order of Business**

|           |                                                                         |          |
|-----------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| <b>1</b>  | <b>Acknowledgement of Country .....</b>                                 | <b>4</b> |
| <b>2</b>  | <b>Meeting Declared Open .....</b>                                      | <b>4</b> |
| <b>3</b>  | <b>Apologies and Leave of Absence .....</b>                             | <b>4</b> |
| <b>4</b>  | <b>Electronic Meeting Attendance.....</b>                               | <b>5</b> |
| <b>5</b>  | <b>Declaration of Interest of Members and Staff .....</b>               | <b>5</b> |
| <b>6</b>  | <b>Confirmation of Previous Minutes .....</b>                           | <b>5</b> |
| <b>7</b>  | <b>Moving of Items .....</b>                                            | <b>5</b> |
| 7.1       | Moving of Items into Confidential .....                                 | 5        |
| 7.2       | Moving of Confidential Items into Open .....                            | 6        |
| 7.3       | Moving Confidential Items to open at the Conclusion of the Meeting..... | 6        |
| <b>8</b>  | <b>Deputations and Briefings .....</b>                                  | <b>6</b> |
| <b>9</b>  | <b>Officer Reports.....</b>                                             | <b>6</b> |
| 9.1       | Darwin Fusion Update.....                                               | 6        |
| <b>10</b> | <b>Member Reports .....</b>                                             | <b>6</b> |
| <b>11</b> | <b>General Business.....</b>                                            | <b>6</b> |
| 11.1      | Verbal Member Updates .....                                             | 6        |
| <b>12</b> | <b>Date, Time and Place of Next Committee Meeting.....</b>              | <b>8</b> |
| <b>23</b> | <b>Closure of Meeting to the Public .....</b>                           | <b>8</b> |
| <b>14</b> | <b>Adjournment of Meeting.....</b>                                      | <b>9</b> |

## 1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

*City of Darwin acknowledges that we are living and working on Larrakia Country.*

*We acknowledge the Larrakia people as the Traditional Owners of the Darwin region. We pay our respects to the Larrakia elders past and present and support emerging Larrakia leaders now and into the future.*

*City of Darwin is committed to working together with all Larrakia to care for this land and sea for our shared future.*

## APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

### COMMITTEE RESOLUTION IRACC015/26

Moved: Acting General Manager Innovation, City of Darwin Nick Fewster

Seconded: Port of Darwin Ben Cheng

THAT Kate Heelan is appointed chair for the meeting.

**CARRIED 6/0**

## 2 MEETING DECLARED OPEN

### COMMITTEE RESOLUTION IRACC016/26

Moved: Tourism Top End Jason Yule

Seconded: Charles Darwin University Adam Lam

The Chair declared the meeting open at 11:02 am

**CARRIED 6/0**

## 3 APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE

### 3.1 APOLOGIES

### COMMITTEE RESOLUTION IRACC017/26

Moved: Dept of Trade Business and Asian Relations David Orr

Seconded: Tourism Top End Jason Yule

THAT apologies from the following committee members be received.

- Lord Mayor Peter Styles (Chair)
- Deputy Lord Mayor Jimmy Bouhoris
- Chamber of Commerce NT Glen Hingley
- Dept of Foreign Affairs and Trade NT Suzy Wilson-Uilelea
- Larrakia Nation Michael Rotumah

**CARRIED 6/0**

**3.2 LEAVE OF ABSENCE GRANTED**

Nil

**3.3 LEAVE OF ABSENCE REQUESTED**

Nil

**4 ELECTRONIC MEETING ATTENDANCE****4.1 ELECTRONIC ATTENDANCE GRANTED**

Nil

**4.2 ELECTRONIC ATTENDANCE REQUESTED**

Nil

**5 DECLARATION OF INTEREST OF MEMBERS AND STAFF****5.1 DECLARATION OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS**

Nil

**5.2 DECLARATION OF INTEREST BY STAFF**

Nil

**6 CONFIRMATION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES****COMMITTEE RESOLUTION IRACC018/26**

Moved: Port of Darwin Ben Cheng

Seconded: Sister City Advisory Committee Kate Heelan

THAT the minutes of the International Relations Advisory Committee Meeting held on 25 February 2026 be confirmed.

**CARRIED 6/0****7 MOVING OF ITEMS****7.1 MOVING OF ITEMS INTO CONFIDENTIAL**

Nil

**7.2 MOVING OF CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS INTO OPEN**

Nil

**7.3 MOVING CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS TO OPEN AT THE CONCLUSION OF THE MEETING**

Nil

**8 DEPUTATIONS AND BRIEFINGS**

Nil

**9 OFFICER REPORTS****9.1 DARWIN FUSION UPDATE****COMMITTEE RESOLUTION IRACC019/26**

Moved: Charles Darwin University Adam Lam

Seconded: Port of Darwin Ben Cheng

THAT the verbal update on Darwin Fusion Update be received and noted.

**CARRIED 6/0**

**10 MEMBER REPORTS**

Nil

**11 GENERAL BUSINESS****11.1 VERBAL MEMBER UPDATES****COMMITTEE RESOLUTION IRACC020/26**

Moved: Tourism Top End Jason Yule

Seconded: Charles Darwin University Adam Lam

THAT the Verbal Member Updates be received and noted.

Tourism Top End, Jason Yule

- flights from Dili recently arrived with international delegations and tourists
- cruise ships are still in operation with a few international visitors
- tourist season is starting to build up but with concerns regarding fuel supplies, and
- permit request submitted for the upcoming big ship cruise season from October to April.

## Department of Trade Business and Asian Relations, David Orr

- the Department remains committed to positioning Darwin as Australia's Northern Gateway and it is a message carried in all the Department's activities, both domestic and abroad
- update on air connectivity:
  - AirAsia recently withdrew from their Kuala Lumpur and Denpasar routes
  - China Southern is looking to increase flights by November to three times a week
  - Aero Dili has commenced service into Darwin – strong value proposition for both inbound and outbound visitation with a service from Dili to Kuala Lumpur and Dili to Denpasar aligning well with the Darwin service
- the Department is likewise working on its workforce strategy, which will tie into population growth. The strategy will identify opportunities presented by major projects currently being pursued by the Northern Territory Government
- the second Northern Territory Investment Summit this year (July 2026) is expected to have over 160 C-suite executives from 12 nations participating and will feature the three projects being pursued by the NTG:
  - Beetaloo Subbasin Gas Project and associated infrastructure
  - Territory Energy Link, which is a service corridor from the Beetaloo to Darwin
  - continued development and engagement with proponents on Middle Arm
- update on ministerial travels and international engagements:
  - Minister Cahill has undertaken trips to Japan, Korea, Taiwan, and Timor-Leste for a range of market engagements and future travel plans to Vietnam, the United States, New Zealand, Indonesia, and China, with travel dates and activities yet to be confirmed
  - Minister Boothby travelled to China for tourism engagements
  - Minister Hersey travelled to Timor-Leste on education engagements
  - Minister Maley travelled to Indonesia to undertake engagements with the cattle industry.

## Acting General Manager Innovation, City of Darwin Nick Fewster

- current focus is on the successful delivery of Darwin Fusion 2026 event.

## Charles Darwin University, Adam Lam

- international student numbers have decreased due to visa difficulties
- Interim Vice Chancellor conducted a trip to Southeast Asia, including Philippines, Malaysia, and Vietnam, to promote CDU, and especially Darwin, as a study destination for higher education, and
- further, a trip to meet CDU's strategic partners at its university in Shanghai, with Jiangwan City welcoming an additional 6 PhD students.

## Port of Darwin, Ben Cheng

- Darwin Port continues its strong performance this financial year
- with the upcoming wet season, there will be more cruise ships coming
- this April, there will be bulk ore exports and Australian cotton industry exports almost 50% of cotton to Qingdao, and
- a delegation from China and Singapore are arriving from Dili to Darwin for business and investment opportunities in natural gas and other mineral projects.

**CARRIED 6/0**

**12 DATE, TIME AND PLACE OF NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING**

Nil

**23 CLOSURE OF MEETING TO THE PUBLIC****RECOMMENDATIONS**

THAT pursuant to Section 99 (2) of the *Local Government Act 2019* and Regulation 8 of the *Local Government (General) Regulations* the meeting be closed to the public to consider the Confidential Items of the Agenda.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

That the Committee considers the confidential report(s) listed below in a meeting closed to the public in accordance with Section 99(2) of the *Local Government Act 2019*:

**18.1 Update on the International Relations Advisory Committee**

This matter is considered to be confidential under Section 99(2) - 51(e) of the Local Government Act, and the Committee is satisfied that discussion of this matter in an open meeting would, on balance, be contrary to the public interest as it deals with subject to subregulation 51(3) – information provided to the council on condition that it be kept confidential and would, if publicly disclosed, be likely to be contrary to the public interest.



**14 ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING****RECOMMENDATIONS**

THAT the open section of the meeting be adjourned at 11:28 am.

THAT the open section of the meeting be resumed at 11:34 am.

THAT the chair declared the meeting closed at 11:34 am.

**The minutes of this meeting were confirmed at the International Relations Advisory Committee Meeting held on.**

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**CHAIR**