



GOVERNMENT OF NORFOLK ISLAND

GENERAL ASSEMBLY MEETING:

10 October 2026

NOTICE PAPER ITEM:

4. COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

4.1 Population, Immigration and Sustainable Capacity of Norfolk Island

Purpose:

To seek General Assembly support for a community-wide assessment of how current immigration, residency and population arrangements are affecting Norfolk Island, and to establish an evidence base to inform future decisions about the Island's population and sustainable capacity.

Motion

That the General Assembly supports the Government of Norfolk Island establishing a community mechanism to identify and report the impacts of current immigration, residency and population arrangements on Norfolk Island, with the findings to be compiled and presented to a future General Assembly to inform consideration of further action.

Background

At the General Assembly on 22 August 2026, a community member called for immediate action in response to concerns about immigration and permanent settlement on Norfolk Island.

The concerns raised went beyond immigration alone. They included the relationship between population growth and Norfolk Island's finite land and natural resources, housing, health and aged care, water, electricity, food and freight security, waste, infrastructure, employment, environment, culture and community identity.

The House has considered the motion and agrees that these matters warrant further examination.

Responsibility for immigration is presently exercised by the Australian Government. Previous representations seeking restoration of Norfolk Island control have not altered those arrangements. The House considers that before determining what further action may be warranted, Norfolk Island needs a clearer and more comprehensive account of what is actually being experienced by the community.

The proposed assessment is intended to provide that evidence.

What is Proposed

The community will be invited to report its experience of current population, immigration and residency arrangements, including both benefits and pressures.

The assessment will consider matters including:

- housing, land and essential services;
- water, energy, food, freight, waste and infrastructure;
- employment, workforce needs and economic sustainability;
- environment and natural resources;
- health, aged care, education and community wellbeing;
- population composition and demographic change;
- cultural continuity, language, identity and community cohesion; and
- community views about future population, immigration and residency arrangements, including whether locally determined controls form part of Norfolk Island's preferred future governance arrangements.

Participation is proposed to be available electronically and in hard copy so that as many members of the community as possible can contribute.

The process will combine community views and experiences with available demographic and other relevant information.

Importantly, the assessment does not begin with a predetermined population number or immigration policy. It is intended to establish what the evidence tells us: where population change is benefiting Norfolk Island, where pressures are being experienced, and what the community considers important for the Island's future.

What Happens with the Information?

The findings will be compiled into a Population, Immigration and Sustainable Capacity Report and returned to a future General Assembly.

The Report will provide measurable indicators and metrics alongside community experience and available evidence. This will give Norfolk Island a stronger basis for future decision-making, policy development and, where appropriate, external engagement and advocacy.

It will also enable population questions to be considered in the wider context of Norfolk Island's environmental, social, economic, cultural and governance sustainability under the Governance Charter.

No later course of action is predetermined. Once the evidence has been gathered and considered, the General Assembly can determine whether further action is warranted. This may include further research, policy development, engagement with the Australian Government, development of proposals for locally administered immigration and residency arrangements or, where appropriate, referral of a clearly defined question to Norfolk Island electors.

Resolution

That the General Assembly:

1. **supports** the Government of Norfolk Island undertaking an accessible community assessment of the impacts, benefits and pressures arising from current immigration, residency and population arrangements;
2. **supports** the assessment drawing together community views and experiences with available demographic, wellbeing, population and other relevant evidence;
3. **supports** the findings being compiled into a Population, Immigration and Sustainable Capacity Report, including measurable indicators and metrics, for presentation to a future General Assembly to inform future decision-making, policy development and, where appropriate, external engagement and advocacy; and
4. **notes** that the assessment does not predetermine future immigration, residency or population policy, and that any further action will follow consideration of the findings by the General Assembly.

Moved: Chief Magistrate, Peter Christian Bailey

Voting: Adjudicated by Returning Officer

Date: 10 October 2026