

**ITEM NO:** 8

**SUBJECT:** BLUE MOUNTAINS HATOBUILICO FRIENDSHIP COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2017-2018

**FILE NO:** F11178 - 18/181378

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**Delivery Program Link**

*Principal Activity:* Civic Leadership

*Service:* Governance and Risk

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**Recommendations:**

1. *That the Council notes the Blue Mountains Hatobuilico Friendship Committee annual report for 2017-2018;*
  2. *That the Council acknowledges and thanks the Blue Mountains Hatobuilico Friendship Committee for their contribution as an advisory committee to the Council and reaffirms the current committee membership of Clr Romola Hollywood (Chair), Clr Don McGregor (Vice Chair), John Telford, Jude Finch, Mary Waterford, Pamela Nash, Elaine Telford, Maggi Williams, Jim Angel, John Tweedie, David Ludenia, and Jenny Coles; and*
  3. *That the Council notes the attached report from Blue Mountains Together for Timor Inc and thanks the committee members, general members and supporters of Blue Mountains Together for Timor Inc for the administration of the scholarship program and for their ongoing efforts in furthering and strengthening the Council's friendship relationship between the communities of the Blue Mountains and Hatobuilico, Timor-Leste.*
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**Report by Acting Group Manager People & Systems:****Reason for report**

This report has been prepared by the Chair of the Blue Mountains Hatobuilico Friendship Committee (BMHFC) and provides Council with an overview of the Committee's activities throughout the 2017-2018 and its proposed plan for the future.

**Background**

Blue Mountains City Council is one of a number of local government areas across Australia that has a formal friendship relationship with a district or sub-district in East Timor. These friendship relationships were established to support community development following East Timor's independence as a sovereign nation in 2002. They build on the deep ties formed between Australians and the Timorese when the Timorese helped the Australian diggers during World War 2.

Blue Mountains City Council formed its friendship relationship with the sub-district of Hatobuilico in 2005 on the recommendation of the then Consul General Senor Abel Guterres. The purpose of the BMHFC is to act in an advisory capacity to the Council to strengthen its friendship relationship between the City of the Blue Mountains and its partner community Hatobuilico, East Timor.

This report provides a review of the activities undertaken during the 2017-2018 financial year, confirmation of the committee's planned activities for 2018-2019 and its proposed plan for 2019-2020.

### **Overview of Blue Mountains Hatobuilico Friendship Committee activities: 2017-2018**

1. Supporting access to education for young people in the Hatobuilico sub-district  
Through ongoing consultation with the local Hatobuilico community, access to education continues to be the most significant way to strengthen community capacity in an area where most people live as subsistence farmers.

Council's annual contribution to support scholarships for six young people from the Hatobuilico sub-district has continued to operate successfully in 2017-2018. The six students are studying three-year or four-year university courses. They were selected for the program by demonstrating academic promise at high school. Without access to the scholarship program, they would not be able to access tertiary education due to their family's circumstances. This program is administered by Blue Mountains Together for Timor Inc in the Blue Mountains and the Alola Foundation in Timor. At the end of 2017-2018, the committee also directed some funds to support the students' study and life skills. For an outline of the program, see attachment 1.

2. Information and resources through BMCC's website  
BMHFC committee member Maggi Williams led the review information on the friendship committee on BMCC's website. These webpages and resources provide information on the history and recent activities of the committee as well as links to Blue Mountains community groups that are also involved in supporting development in East Timor. This information can be accessed from the new BMCC website at:

<https://www.bmcc.nsw.gov.au/council/committees/blue-mountains-hatobuilico-friendship-committee>

3. Australia Timor-Leste Friendship Network Membership (AusTimorFN)  
BMHFC is a member of the Australia Timor-Leste Friendship Network. This network shares information on community development projects in Timor supported by friendship groups across Australia. It also has links with the Victorian Government which holds the delegation on behalf of the Australian Government to support training and development opportunities for the Timorese in Australia.

BMHFC committee member John Telford led the preparation of a section on the Blue Mountains Hatobuilico Friendship Committee for AusTimorFN's book on the friendship groups across Australia. It is expected this book will be published in 2018-2019.

The chair of the committee Romola Hollywood also attended the AusTimorFN AGM via skype on 2 May 2018. The NSW Facilitator of AusTimorFN Máire Sheehan is continuing to plan for a NSW Friendship Network gathering of local Councils in NSW that are involved in friendship relationships with East Timorese communities. At this stage no date has been set.

4. Strengthening connections between the Friendship Committee and other Blue Mountains-based community organisations
  - a. Members of the BMHFC attended the Blue Mountains East Timor Sisters Trivia Night which was held in partnership with Blue Mountains City Council's Katoomba Library in September 2017.
  - b. Members of the BMHFC attended the Springwood East Timor Support Group Annual Dinner in November 2017 where BMHFC committee members Jude Finch and Mary Waterford spoke about their recent volunteer work in East Timor.

- c. Councillor Romola Hollywood attended the AGM of Together for Timor Inc as an observer in November 2017.
- d. Members of the BMHFC attended the Memorial Concert for Gail Clifford held at the Lawson Mechanics Institute in April 2018 – Gail Clifford was a founding member of the BMHFC and was an active member of the Blue Mountains East Timor Sisters (BMETS). Gail worked on many community development and arts projects in East Timor. Her work included projects in Hatobuilico. The BMHFC also wrote to Gail Clifford's family to express their condolences at Gail's untimely passing and to acknowledge her significant contribution to the Blue Mountains' friendship relationship with Hatobuilico.
- e. Members of the BMHFC attended the Springwood East Timor Support Group Trivia Night Fundraiser in May 2018.
- f. BMHFC committee member and former Mayor Jim Angel has continued to liaise with Abel Guterres, Australian Ambassador for Timor-Leste about a visit to the Blue Mountains. Due to the recent elections in Timor-Leste, there is no confirmed date.

**Committee Membership 2018-2019**

Members of the Blue Mountains Hatobuilico Friendship Committee: Clr Romola Hollywood (Chair), Clr Don McGregor (Vice Chair), John Telford, Jude Finch, Mary Waterford, Pamela Nash, Elaine Telford, Maggi Williams, Jim Angel, John Tweedie, David Ludenia, Jenny Coles, and Lydia Kolar (Council Support Officer).

**2018-2019 Plan and Budget**

The Blue Mountains Hatobuilico Friendship Committee's plan for 2018-2019 will focus on the following activities:

- Supporting the scholarship program auspiced by Blue Mountains Together for Timor Inc;
- Welcoming the Hatobuilico Parish Priest and School Co-ordinator Padre Francesco Soares Fernando and Community Development worker Frater Acacio Soares who are visiting the Mountains in August 2018 as guests of Blue Mountains Together for Timor. Both are respected community leaders in Hatobuilico who have guided and assisted the development of local programs. Their visit deepens the understanding and relationships between our two communities and increases the connections that form part of the friendship relationship;
- Exploring possibilities of hosting a visit with the Australian Ambassador for Timor-Leste, Abel Guterres as well as visits from other Timorese representatives that may arise;
- Continuing to update and improve information on the work of the BMHFC on the Council's website;
- Continuing to document the in-kind contribution from members of the Friendship Committee including self-funded trips to Timor;
- Review of the Committee's Terms of Reference for adoption no later than 30 September 2019;
- Continuing to build relationships between local community groups in the Blue Mountains that support the development of East Timor; and
- Continuing to participate in the Australia Timor-Leste Friendship Network and any other NSW networking opportunities.

2018-2019 Proposed Budget Allocation

<i>Annual Activities / Events and Incidentals</i>	<i>Approximate Cost (AUD)</i>
6 Scholarships @ US\$1,000each	US\$6,000
Alola Foundation 10% for the administration costs	US\$600
Together for Timor Inc 10% for administration costs	US\$600
Total Cost = US\$7,600	\$10,775
Other incidental costs	\$825
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$11,600</b>

**Plan for 2019-2020**

The Blue Mountains Hatobuilico Friendship Committee’s plan for 2019-2020 will focus on:

- continuing support for the scholarship program auspiced by Together for Timor Inc;
- continuing networking with the local, state and national groups that support the continued development of East Timor, and in particular, the community of Hatobuilico; and
- responding to opportunities to strengthen our Friendship relationship with Hatobuilico, by representing the Blue Mountains at local events and activities and meeting with representatives from East Timor who visit the Blue Mountains.

**Sustainability Assessment**

<b>Effects</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>
Environmental	Nil	Nil
Social	Continue to build positive friendship relationship with the Hatobuilico community of East Timor.	Nil
Economic	Support and encourage the Hatobuilico economy and community to grow and prosper through a friendship agreement with the Blue Mountains City.	Nil
Governance	Nil	Nil

**Financial implications for the Council**

Council’s funding contributions to the Blue Mountains Hatobuilico Friendship Committee is forecast annually in Council’s budget with the 2018-2019 budget allocation being \$11,600.

**Legal and risk management issues for the Council**

Nil

**External consultation**

Nil

**Conclusion**

This report highlights to Council the achievements of the Blue Mountains Hatobuilico Friendship Committee throughout the 2017-2018 financial year. It provides Council with the annual report from Together for Timor Inc in relation to the annual scholarship program. It also recommends Council endorsement of the Committee’s 2018-2019 annual plan and informs Council of the Committee’s strategic planning into the future.

**ATTACHMENTS/ENCLOSURES**

<b>1</b>	Together for Timor Annual Report 2017 - 2018	18/186035	Attachment
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## Attachment 1 - Together for Timor Annual Report 2017 - 2018



**Blue Mountains Together for Timor Inc**  
**Post: PO Box 86, Katoomba 2780**

**Report on Hatobuilico Scholarship Programme to Blue Mountains City Council.**  
**August 21<sup>st</sup> 2018**

Blue Mountains Together for Timor (BM T4T) has great pleasure in submitting this information to accompany the Report of Blue Mountains Hatobuilico Friendship Committee of Blue Mountains City Council (BMCC) for 2017 2018.

BM T4T was set up by interested Blue Mountains community members to develop and build on this formal friendship relationship between Hatobuilico, Timor-Leste and BMCC to further the work initiated by this connection and to raise funds to enable development and international connection. BM T4T is uniquely placed to fulfil the role of overseeing the University scholarship programme funded by BMCC and to develop other programs that further the education outcomes for this remote mountainous community.

In the past year this work has involved many local residents to achieve great outcomes:

**Hatobuilico Scholarship program implementation:**

Facilitating 6 young people from the three sucos of Hatobuilico to attend University in Dili. BM T4T liaises with Alola Foundation in Dili to administer the program and monitor & support student progress. A MOU between Alola Foundation and BM T4T guides the role of Alola Foundation in administering the programme and the responsibilities of BM T4T. BM T4T invoice BMCC and transfers funds to Alola Foundation.

The scholarship students for each Suco are:

**Suco Nunomogue:**

- Ana Maria de Araujo - (second year student at UNPAZ) now in her 4<sup>th</sup> semester of a Financial Management course
- Manuel da Silva - (second year student at UNPAZ) now in his 4<sup>th</sup> semester of Law course.

**Suco Mulo:**

- Esmenia Magno de Araujo - (third year student at Institutio Ciencia da Saude (ICS) now in her 6<sup>th</sup> semester of midwifery course
- Candido Silva de Orleans (fourth year student at UNPAZ ) now in his 8<sup>th</sup> semester of Agriculture course.

**Suco Mauchiga:**

- Veronica Ximenes dos Santos (fourth year student at ICS) in her 8<sup>th</sup> semester doing Pharmacy course
- Octavio de Araujo Tilman - (third year student at Institute of Business (IOB) in his 6<sup>th</sup> semester of Information Technology course.

Supporting these students to undertake tertiary qualifications helps build the capacity of the local Hatobuilico community.

In the period, there were many self-funded visits by Blue Mountains residents to Timor-Leste: Jude Finch and Mary Waterford worked in Australian Volunteer International roles in Timor Leste 2016 / 2017 and were able to travel to Hatobuilico subdistrict on many occasions. John Tweedy, Louise Nash and Lesley Sammon travelled to Timor / Hatobuilico in July 2017. Jude Finch returned again in February 2018 with Keith Wolfson setting up an IT project in the school.

Many other initiatives stem from the scholarship program in Hatobuilico and support our ongoing friendship relationship. In addition to the scholarship program BMT4T has several complimentary programs in Hatobuilico:

#### **Senior Secondary School:**

BM T4T are integral to the establishment and on-going resourcing of the only Senior Secondary school in Hatobuilico including providing funds for teacher salaries, subsidies for poor families, funds for sports & music equipment and in 2018 supply second hand laptops to initiate a School IT Program. In 2018. We are sponsoring a visit of the Parish Priest and school Co-ordinator Padre Francesco Soares Fernando and Community Development worker Frater Acacio Soares to the Mountains in August 2018, which will bring immeasurable benefits to the relationship.

#### **Primary School**

BM T4T fundraised for the building of Taurema Primary School in a very remote area. We were deeply distressed to learn of the hugely adverse weather conditions in January 2018 which resulted in the destruction of the roof and we are currently negotiating building contracts to have this restored.

#### **Hatobuilico Women's Initiatives**

In partnership with Blue Mountains East Timor Sisters, BM T4T has facilitated the identification and funding of four Women's Leadership & Business Skills Project across the sub-district. This is an on-going program in early development.

#### **Other projects:**

- We have assisted in the development of preschool resources across the sub-district.
- BM T4T has also contributed to the building of Uma Ramelau – student accommodation for Hatobuilico based university students studying in Dili.
- Tourism development for Mt Ramelau – Hatobuilico villa sits at the base of this sacred place for Timorese and it is visited by tens of thousands of Timorese every year.

#### **Plans 2018 2019:**

- Continuation of the BMCC scholarship programme is strongly recommended, as is the continued support for the programme from both Together for Timor and the Blue Mountains City Council.
- Continuation of the support for the above programs including funding the refurbishment of the roof on Taurema Primary School with stronger construction methods
- A Partnership with Sydney University for teaching placement is being explored with plans well under way for 20 students to visit Hatobuilico in 2019

#### **BM TREK for Timor 2018**

Funds to support BM T4T work are also raised through the Blue Mountains Trek for Timor held every two years through the efforts of many local volunteers. The 2018 Trek is to be held next Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> August with special guests Acacio Soares de Deus & Francisco Soares Fernandes attending from Hatobuilico. BM T4T has a formal Partnership with Apheda Union Aid Abroad to transfer funds to Timor-Leste.

The TREK involves hundreds of walkers and over 50 volunteers and creates strong social capital in our community as well as raising much needed funds for projects. In 2016 it raised over \$60,000.

Timor-Leste is a fledgling democracy. It has had two peaceful elections in the 2017 2018 period and is in the process of appointing Ministers of Government. There has been a long period in which the national budget has not been approved. This has created complexities for government and civil society agencies and our 'community to community' support has continued to prove invaluable in creating education and development opportunities for people at the grass-roots in Hatobuilico.

We look forward to a continuing partnership with Blue Mountains Hatobuilico Friendship Committee of Blue Mountains City Council.