

APPENDICES

Table of Contents

Verbatim Report.....	3
Written Responses.....	18
Additional Information.....	39
Images taken during the Public Consultation and Site Visitation to Levuka Town Council	43

Verbatim Report

[VERBATIM REPORT]

STANDING COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS & DEFENCE

ANNUAL REPORT

Levuka Town Council 2018 Annual Report

ENTITY: Levuka Town Council

VENUE: Levuka Town Council Board Room, Levuka

DATE: Monday, 7th April, 2025

**VERBATIM REPORT OF THE PUBLIC HEARING OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON
FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND DEFENCE HELD AT LEVUKA TOWN COUNCIL BOARD ROOM,
LEVUKA, ON 7TH APRIL, 2025, AT 9.02 A.M.**

Submittee: Levuka Town Council

In Attendance:

- | | | |
|--------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| 1. Mr. Ben Naidu | - | Special Administrator/Chairman |
| 2. Ms. Salaseini Sauqaqa | - | Environment Officer |
| 3. Ms. Akeneta Naisola | - | Accountant |
- -----

DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON.- Honourable Members and representatives of Levuka Town Council, a very good morning to you all. It is a pleasure to welcome everyone, especially the general public who are here today to provide their submission to the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence.

For your information, pursuant to Standing Order 111 of the Standing Orders of Parliament, all Committee meetings are to be open to the public. Therefore, please, note that this public consultation is open to the public and the media. For any sensitive information concerning matters before us this morning that cannot be disclosed in public, that can be provided to the Committee either in private or in writing.

Please, be advised that pursuant to Standing Orders 111(2), there are only a few specific circumstances that allow for non-disclosure, and these include:

1. national security matters;
2. third-party confidential information;
3. personnel and human resource matters; and
4. Committee deliberation and development of Committee's recommendations and report.

I wish to remind honourable Members and our guests that all questions are to be asked and discussed through the Chairperson. This is a Parliamentary meeting and all information gathered is covered under the Parliamentary Powers and Privileges Act. Please, also bear in mind that we do not condone slander and/or libel of any sort, and any information brought before this Committee should be based on facts.

In terms of protocol of this Committee meeting, please, minimise the use of mobile phones and all mobile phones are to be on silent mode while the meeting is in progress.

Please, allow me to introduce the honourable Members of my Committee.

(Introduction of Committee Members)

Today, the Committee will be conducting a public consultation on the 2018 Annual Report for the Levuka Town Council. You may start with your presentation.

MR. B. NAIDU.- Thank you, Deputy Chairperson, for those words. On behalf of Levuka Town Council, first and foremost, I would like to warmly welcome you all to the shores of the first Capital. I am sure you must have rested well last night, ready for your meeting this morning. Levuka Town Council is the first Council established in this country, early in the 1800s, the first municipality of Fiji, and we are going over 100 years now.

Having said that, we are here to deliberate upon the 2018 financial accounts. Further, I would like to advise the honourable Members of Parliament that in 2018, I was not in the Council at all. However, I will do my utmost to try and clear all your questions as and when they arise.

We have a presentation and our staff will do the presentation for us and as and when required, I will fill in the gaps.

MS. A. NAISOLA.- *Bula Vinaka*. It is an honour to be part of this consultation today to present to you our current annual report that was presented in Parliament a few weeks ago - the annual accounts for 2018.

On the slide, we have our organisational structure for 2018. Basically, on the structure is our CEO, which is currently vacant. Next is our Secretary, Treasurer and Environmental Officer.

We have around 18 staff. Back in 2018, Josese Ratu Rakuita was our CEO. Our Accounts Clerk was Kalivereti; Treasurer was Ms. Emma Taukena; our Works Supervisor, Mr. Waisele; our Environment Officer; our Revenue Collector; and our Assistant Health Building Inspector, Mr. Luke Balenabuli.

On the next slide, it highlighted the number of meetings that was held. We had five ordinary Council meetings, seven Financial Admin Committee; seven Building Health Inspector Environment; Work Environment Committee meeting; one Staff; Field Workers; and five Public. Those were the highlights of activities that happened during the year.

On the next slide is our Environmental Health Planning and Management basic information that was presented. On the end of the slide lists the types of notices served.

We have our arrival, and our Environmental Health Planning and Management on food controls - all the analysis during that term, and our number of complaints.

The next slide is our beautification projects. Also, the capital works projects that were made during that year - our seawall project, construction of a new taxi stand at Wainaloka, the construction of the bus stop at Naele for our Moturiki market vendors, and Totogo Creek upgrade by the Ministry of Waterways.

In our internal audit report, there were 14 disclaimer opinions that were raised. Staff were not skilled, in my opinion, therefore, the following were raised. The irrelevant information and disclosure of financial information that was provided was not sufficient. That is why 14 disclaimer opinions were raised by the auditors, which we have put through the past years. I believe that has improved during the years and we have taken all those into consideration.

All the reports have already been presented. If there are any questions, we can respond to them during the meeting. To summarise from our annual report, everything was reported, and from our end, we would like to thank you very much.

DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you for the comprehensive presentation. Now, I would like to open the floor for any questions by honourable Members.

HON. V. LAL.- Deputy Chairperson, I am just inquisitive. This is 2025 and we are dealing with the 2018 Report. Why is there delay in the presentation of the reports?MR. B. NAIDU.- Deputy Chairperson, first and foremost, I would like to advise the honourable Members that we were lacking in funds at that time. We did not have sufficient manpower to make our reports in a timely manner. However, if I fast-forward this, we are much better in terms of presenting our reports as till now, compared to other councils who have all the resources, but are behind us.

I must also say that being a municipality on the island, we are somewhat marginalised with the services of the mainland, and as such, that too was another contributing factor. One was the availability of finance, and the other one was the availability of proper manpower. We did not have proper people at that time to present or do accounts in a timely manner.

HON. V. LAL.- I know the other councils are also lagging behind. We will deal with them later on. In your case, you are saying that you have lack of manpower. Is that alright now? Do you have all the staff to do the reports now?

MR. B. NAIDU.- To answer that, no. We have not yet got sufficient people. As I speak right now, Levuka Town Council does not even have a CEO. My subordinates and myself,

fill in the shoes of the CEO. We are Special Administrators and act as CEO on our own accord, from our own perspective. We do not expect any remuneration for that. We are just doing it for the love of our town. If we do not do it, then there is no one else here to help out.

HON. V. LAL.- Thank you so much for that genuine answer. What are you doing about it? Did you speak to the Ministry of Local Government and are they willing to help you, or what is the situation now? I know it is not easy to go on without staff, not able to do the reports, and you get the blame for it. What is the result from the Ministry of Local Government?

MR. B. NAIDU.- The Ministry of Local Government is very helpful, I must say. First and foremost, we put in an advertisement for the CEO position. We had a few candidates who applied, we went through the interview process a couple of weeks back, but they did not match or fit into the criteria that we really needed. Levuka is an isolated area and it is very difficult for a person who lives in the city to come and live in a rural area like this.

We will not really do headhunting but similar to that, we will try and get someone who can adapt to this place and will remain here. If we bring in someone who has applied, who partly fits into the criteria of this job bracket, say 50 percent to 75 percent, then we do not want them to resign after three months and go back. Hence, the Ministry is assisting us to try and get the right person for the CEO position, as well as an accountant.

HON. V. LAL.- Can you identify someone who is around Levuka and will not have to bring people from outside Levuka? Do you have the capabilities here who can join the Council and take it forward?

MR. B. NAIDU.- At this point in time, I do not think we have anyone around here, but having said that, our Acting Accountant, Akeneta, who is sitting behind me, was headhunted and brought into the Council. If it was not for her services, then we would have been really stuck. However, if concerted effort could be made into some semi-rural areas, or semi-cities, somewhat like Labasa or maybe Sigatoka, I am sure people of that calibre might be able to fit into this rural maritime setting.

HON. A.N. TUICOLO.- Through you, Deputy Chairperson, what steps is the Levuka Town Council taking to promote local businesses and create job opportunities for residents, particularly in the tourism and agriculture sectors? Are there any initiatives to support youth employment and skill development in the town?

MR. B. NAIDU.- That is a very good question. One of the most frustrating things we have in Levuka right now is the heritage. The Heritage Bill and the heritage legislation that has been passed is so tough that a lot of our good Levuka residents have left our shores

and taken off elsewhere where they can work and do business freely. We are very restrictive in what we can do here. As such, it is very hard to develop a business in Levuka. It is only those who have Levuka at heart who will come back here, otherwise, no one wants to come back. We have got marginalised services.

We were a Division at one time and later on, round about 1993 and 1994, the Office of the Commissioner Eastern and the District Administration was taken away from here. We have gone down to a subdivision. I will take you around today to visit our hospital and various other facilities that were a part of the Division at that time, where we had the Divisional Education Officer and Divisional Medical Officer here, as well as the Office of the Commissioner Eastern.

The urban drift that you see right now was not there at that time. I am talking about mid-1990s. It was not as big as it is today - today it is a grave situation that a lot of our children are leaving our shores to go to Suva. They end up between the corridors of Nasinu and Nausori and in all those areas. The problem is to try and bring them back right now but it will be quite hard to bring them back and fit them into the society here because they have the limelight of Suva in their hearts now, and to bring them back here, is quite difficult.

One of the solutions here is, firstly, to address the heritage laws and rules, and if that can be softened up a little bit, to try and make it business-friendly. Secondly, if the District Administration Office can be moved back into Levuka so that a lot of the hurdles that the Government is facing right now in Suva will be solved, as far as the Eastern Division is concerned.

There is not enough interest in people trying to do planting or earn their own living through selling their goods or produce, because they are not interested. No one is here to give them any sort of incentive. "Come on, people, let us plant and you will get this much. You will look for your market and make your living, make a family out of this place, make your community in Levuka as it was."

I am saying this because I was born and bred here. I left Levuka when I was about 20 years old and came back after 43 years of being in various other parts of the country. I have come back and started picking up bits and pieces, and here we are.

We have actually stopped Levuka from spiralling, but it has not taken off. The head-on obstacle that we have now is that the services of Government is not here. We have to go to Suva and we have to knock on the door. If we write a letter, the letter says, "We will get back to you in due course", actually, I replied to someone and said, "In my interpretation of 'getting back to you in due course,' is that 'I will never get back to you'", or in Fijian, they say, "*Sa kau cake na pepa*". "*Sa kau caka evei? Ena siro tale mai ena gauna cava? Eratou sega sara ni siro sobu mai na pepa.*" It is a head-on collision for us.

To answer your question, Sir, no, it is very hard to do business here and it is very hard to move this town. Unless those two obstacles are sorted, then we will be able to move.

HON. I. TUIWAILEVU.- Through you, Deputy Chairperson, regarding the budget utilisation, what percentage of the budgetary allocation for 2018 was utilised by the Council? How was it distributed across various operational activities?

MS. A. NAISOLA.- Deputy Chairperson, on our budget utilisation, most of the Council's operation is being funded by ratepayers' income. During this period, only projects that were done, for example, capital projects, that was government grant but the operation of the Council, we do not receive any assistance from Government. When we request for projects, that is the only thing the Government assist us with. The operation of the Council and salaries of our staff are all paid by the Council, except for our CEO salary, which is paid by the Government.

HON. V. LAL.- Through you, Deputy Chairperson, going back to honourable Tuicolo's supplementary question with regard to the ageing infrastructure, what plans does the Levuka Town Council has to address the ageing infrastructure such as roads, bridges and drainage systems?

MR. B. NAIDU.- As far as infrastructure is concerned, the main road is the responsibility of the Fiji Roads Authority and the main drains are the responsibility of the Ministry of Waterways. Our jurisdiction is the smaller drains on the side of the streets, et cetera, to get them cleaned and whatever small money we have, we repair them. As far as making a concerted effort and getting the aged infrastructure fixed, there is no plan at all for the Levuka Town Council, simply because there is not enough money with the Council. We make a \$30,000 loss every year. Our gross turnover is about \$410,000 or \$430,000 per annum. As such, it is generally like a hand-to-mouth Town Council.

HON. V. LAL.- What is the current debt recovery process of the Council? How are you going about collecting the owed debts to the Council?

MR. B. NAIDU.- Deputy Chairperson and honourable Members, the hard core owed debts are of those who have left the country and gone altogether. That is one part. The other big debt that we have on the books is from those who have gone forever – those who have died. That is the other big debt there.

To recover those, we are making arrangements through various legal avenues to see how best the Council can legally pursue into recovering those debts. The process is on its way, so we are going through the legal system.

Having said that, it is not an easy job for those who are advising us for this collection because it will mean the sale of that asset or the real estate, and then we will be able to recover money out of that, so it is a long process.

HON. V. LAL.- Recently, there has been some reported cases of dengue fever in Levuka. What measures are being taken to address the five confirmed cases here in Levuka? Additionally, what steps are being implemented to prevent further such incidents?

MS. S. SAUQAQA.- Deputy Chairperson and honourable Members, at the moment, Levuka Town Council is working with the Ministry of Health in conducting the clean-up to hotspot areas. We have recently done a two week quarterly clean-up last month and another one will be done next week. We will conduct another clean-up with the Ministry of Health in terms of combating dengue fever which is on the rise for Levuka.

HON. V. LAL.- How is Levuka Town Council addressing the waste management challenges, particularly in relation to waste disposal, recycling programmes and public cleanliness?

MS. S. SAUQAQA.- For waste management, Levuka Town Council not only looks after within the town boundary, we also look after the Lomaiviti and the Lau group of islands in terms of waste management or solid waste management. We have so far conducted awareness programmes, not only within the schools but also to villages. Because of the geographical location of the outer islands, we have just conducted awareness to them, so in a village setup, they already have a plan on how they can decompose and compose waste. The Council is working with those villages in helping them draw up their plans within the village so they can take care of their own waste.

At the moment, we are currently serving about nine villages. Household waste from those villages is collected and taken to our dump site. For the villages that we cannot serve or collect their household waste, we conduct awareness to them or build communal dump pits for them.

HON. A.N. TUICOLO.- Deputy Chairperson, I have a question on the open spaces. How many open spaces or sports facilities does Levuka currently have, and who looks after the general maintenance of those facilities?

MS. S. SAUQAQA.- The only open space we have at the moment is the Nasau Park. There is a saying that it is a park for all games. Currently, that is the only open space we have for sporting. We want to have a children's park but the challenge we have is that Levuka has limited space. Levuka Town Council does the general maintenance.

HON. I. TUIWAILEVU.- Through you, Deputy Chairperson, regarding collaboration and partnership, was there any agreement or collaboration with Levuka Heritage in terms of enhanced operational efficiency?

MR. B. NAIDU.- I really will not be able to answer that in full because I believe I was not here in Levuka when that agreement went through. I have been told recently that the Heritage Bill was passed by Parliament earlier on this year and that Bill was made into a law.

As far as I am concerned, we were not consulted enough prior to having this on, it was like a noose put on our neck, so to speak. I know heritage is a very good vehicle to make money to enhance our rich heritage town. However, in my opinion, the methodology in which the whole scenario or the setting was put in was not done in the right manner. I do not think enough consultation was done.

I would like to take you some 50 years back when I was at school, the first talks about Levuka being enlisted in the World Heritage Listing was done. In those days, the old people were enticed that there would be continual loads of money, so to speak, coming down. They were very excited about it. But little did those poor people know that what was coming to them was something like the demise of their future generation, and that is where it is right now. It is not a joke, but they have put this noose on our neck without any money. Even if they put money in, it is so marginal that it is of no sense. No work is done in a complete manner from A to Z that we can showcase to the world. No, nothing! We are generally left on our own.

DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON.- We need to understand that these questions are to deepen our understanding on the matter. It is an old report of 2018, we are in 2025. The whole job of the Committee is to put it forward to Parliament for debate and get these gaps filled and issues solved. The first question is, when you get off the boat, why are there no railings on the side of the port? Children are running around. Is it not an OHS matter? Do you have an OHS department that looks into that? When will the railing be up, or it does not need one?

MR. B. NAIDU.- The wharf comes under the jurisdiction of the Fiji Ports Corporation Limited (FPCL), and they will be the best people to answer that question.

DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON.- Definitely, we will be going to them as well. Is that the only port of entry?

MR. B. NAIDU.- Yes. That is the only official port of entry in Levuka. There are three official ports of entries in Fiji - Suva, Levuka and Lautoka, and I think Malau has been added

to that. As far as FPCL is concerned, Levuka Wharf is the port of entry for Levuka Town and Ovalau.

DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON.- We label Levuka as a heritage tourism, yet we do not even have safety standards at the port of entry. I am coming from this year's report. There are 152 ratepayers, as stated in this report. Has the numbers increased or decreased?

MR. B. NAIDU.- Sir, the numbers have decreased.

DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON.- To my understanding, Special Administrators work free of cost?

MR. B. NAIDU.- No, we get our annual allowance. We get it every three months.

DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON.- When it comes to filling in vacancies, you first look for people and whether the skills available in Levuka, or is it advertised on the mainland? How does it work?

MR. B. NAIDU.- Through the Government transparency system, it is mandatory that it has to be advertised.

DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON.- If someone comes from the mainland, do they get a house here, or how is the job like?

MR. B. NAIDU.- At this point in time, Sir , we do not offer any house. We will offer them a package. I cannot divulge that figure right now because the Ministry has yet to come back to us with a figure, but they are indicating that they will be giving quite a good figure this year. I am sure we will be able to entice someone very good to come here. I must say that our Ministry is working very hard towards that.

DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON.- In 2012, the Cabinet had approved Levuka to be given a special treatment and was allocated half a million dollars. However, that has dropped significantly. Where are we with that funding?

MR. B. NAIDU.- Can you repeat your question, Sir?

DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON.- On Page 6, it says, "The Government through a Ministry Cabinet Paper in 2012, had approved that Levuka will be given a special treatment and it was allocated \$500,000, but it has dropped significantly". Are you still getting that funding?

MR. B. NAIDU.- No, Sir, we are not getting the funding.

DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON.- So, the main source is the ratepayers. If I look at this report somewhere, it says that in the 2021-2022 National Budget said the Government will pay the market fees, base fees for taxis, mini buses, carriers and bus operators. Was that a bigger blow to the Levuka Town Council in terms of revenue collection?

MR. B. NAIDU.- I think we were subsidised.

MS. S. SAUQAQA.- Yes, over the years, that was during COVID-19 time. The business licence, taxi and the market fees were subsidised by Government. In the last financial year, there was no subsidy, but we have started again. Only the market fees and taxi base fees are being paid by the vendors and the taxi owners but for the business licence, no. The business operators are not paying any business licence or operating licence, and there was no subsidy from the Government as well.

DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON.- Are you saying there was no subsidy from 2018 till now, or just currently?

MS. S. SAUQAQA.- Just currently, Sir.

DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON.- Yes, because I am trying my best to stick to this year's report.

Another key issue here, coming back to this report, is the Auditor's report, which is very interesting. The Council is unable to –

- obtain sufficient and appropriate audit evidence;
- provide the receivable subsidiary;
- provide subsidiary listings;
- provide detailed fixed assets;
- provide creditor subsidiary;
- provide relevant supporting documents to substantiate the disclosure of deferred income;
- salary reconciliation;
- did not account for Value Added Tax;
- provide for vouchers, supplier invoices, receipts;
- internal control functions of the Council was generally found to be weak;
- did not disclose details of capital commitment; and
- verify occurrence and accuracy of transactions.

At one point, we are asking for funding, and this report shows the lack of accountability or misuse of funds or financial mismanagement, the way you want to label it. Is there anyone currently in the Council from this year's report, or all have left or migrated? My argument is, if this report is way back and we are in 2025, how do we

scrutinise this at our best? How do we hold people accountable, who were here serving these roles? Has all of the things that I have highlighted, has changed? Please, can we have your views on this?

MR. B. NAIDU.- Thank you, Sir, for that very disturbing findings that you have just read out. That was one of the reasons why we came in, subsequent to that. It was in a mess, I must say, and it even took me and my other colleague at that time quite a while to get ourselves acquainted with the accounts. The whole system was not working in the right place, even the salary for the casual workers were not paid on time. We came in and set the accounts correct and started moving on from there.

Why are we here? It is important, if we call Leba, she might be able to answer, but it is just unfortunate that she has gone on leave today. She would be one of the best persons to answer your questions because she was there at that time. My apologies, I would not be able to answer that myself. As I have said, we came in to start correcting it from there onwards.

DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON.- Any mismanagement of taxpayers' money should be subject to investigation by FICAC. That is my personal opinion. We have ongoing issues with infrastructure.

In 2013, when Levuka was declared a heritage town by UNESCO and joined the organisation in the World Heritage in Towns and Cities, was there any financial support to the infrastructure, security, aid? When we talk about heritage, preserving it, then we talk about tourism, but we cannot even get the rails at the port and then we are welcoming tourists, so safety is a big issue. Was there any financial support to that?

MR. B. NAIDU.- Sir, if I can really answer that question, it is way back. I know that there is a heritage account, that there is a special chairperson and a committee to handle that and that person was quickly trying to hand those sets of accounts to us - the Council, but I put my foot down and said, "No, you go and get that audited. Once it is audited, then you pass it on to the Levuka Town Council. Otherwise, we will not assume charge of that account." That was one of the accounts that I know of.

Right from the very outset, there were misappropriation of funds, et cetera, done at that time. The Council was running in a haphazard manner. I am not shy to say that, but then trying to bring in the ratepayers and some of the rest of the group, they have become very disgruntled towards us. Even for us, we have the ratepayers meeting and it can be quite a confrontational meeting. It is not very amicable, even till today.

DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON.- Would you agree that you have an issue with ageing infrastructure when it comes to water supply and sewage treatment? That is key to know

of what is being disseminated outside. I had a conversation yesterday with someone when we visited Tui Levuka. If the villages do not want their waste collected, or if they want, what is the amount they are paying as a village? Is it compulsory? What is the cost?

MS. S. SAUQAQA.- As I have already mentioned, at the moment, we are on a user-pay service to nine villages that are near to the town boundary. The fees that we charge the villages is about \$3 per month per household.

MR. B. NAIDU.- I will talk about water. The water supply system in Levuka is not that good. Although the water may be flowing in the taps, but then generally more than 60 percent to 70 percent of the time the chlorine would be added to the water, like water that has mud in it. When we have water filled in a glass, it is like milky, chocolatey type of water.

As I had said earlier on, I grew up here during the colonial days and I am trying to benchmark myself to the time before I left, went away and then came back again went to Viti Levu. The water situation here is not good and that is why we all are drinking bottled water. Generally, we never ever drink bottled water in Levuka. It would have been an insult if our grandfathers saw that we are drinking bottled water. They would say, "What are you doing?" That needs to be addressed quickly. Then again, it comes up to the ageing system which has not been addressed.

HON. V. LAL.- Just going back to the financials, there is an operational deficit in the report. Has that changed? What is the Council doing now for the day-to-day running of the Council?

MR. B. NAIDU.- To address that, no, it has not really changed. If it has, it would have deteriorated a little bit more because we cannot bring in new businesses in town. We are trying to be even more conservative in terms of cash flow, so whatever cash we receive and cash out, it is really scrutinised. We squeeze every penny before we pay anyone. In other words, for example, if one of the workers comes here and says they want a new boot, then we will have to put our microscope through it and say, why do you need it? They have to really justify their case before we allow it. It is not an open cheque book method, that as soon as they come in with a voucher, we sign the cheque and away it goes, no. No more of that. It is all checked singularly, so in that way we are able to maintain our account well so far.

HON. A.N. TUICOLO.- Do you have any or some sort of partnership with Tourism Fiji to attract visitors, both local and foreign, to Levuka?

MR. B. NAIDU.- Sir, to answer that question, I am not really sure. I cannot answer that correctly but as far as I am concerned, I would not want to bring in tourists to Levuka at this point in time. It is a shame for me to bring in tourists with a pothole-ridden road, as

Deputy Chairperson has said, a wharf without a railing as you enter the wharf area, so the whole town is in a mess. A lot more needs to be done to this town before we bring in tourists.

We need to benchmark ourselves to Nadi. What a pretty sight, a beautiful sight! As soon as you get off the airport, you come out, with lovely roads and all the infrastructure is up to date. Here, we could have had the same thing, if only Government would have allocated a certain amount, and then put in a number of people to police this, to make sure that the funds they are putting in is utilised in the best way possible to entice new tourism into the island. It will work that way.

To answer the question, I do not think it will work. Just a handful of tourism will be all right, which the local hotels and tour operators will be able to handle, but to bring in a mass amount of tourism into Levuka, we cannot handle that right now. We need to show the tourist community what we have to showcase, but we really have nothing here to showcase. Through experiences, droves of tourists come here but they are just walking blindly into town, coming to this town hall and having a look at the pictures.

There is a lot, I must say, that tourism can offer. For example, when Indian indentured labourers were brought to Levuka, there is a governor's house where the meeting was held. Sir Arthur Gordon called his subordinates and met to make a decision to bring in the Indian indentured labourers from India to serve in Fiji. It was done in that house, et cetera. There is a shop here that was owned by an American farmer and his cemetery is in Draiba. You can connect on to that, and a lot of many other things that we can share. However, we cannot do it right now because we have no support.

DEPUTY CHAIRPERSON.- Thank you so much for those words. Truly, we can understand what needs to be really done. Due to time constraints, I wish to sincerely thank you all for availing yourselves to this meeting. Thank you for your time and hope that you will avail yourself if the Committee has further queries on this matter. We have heard and understood you and we really needed this beyond the report that is before us and we appreciate that.

On that note, I declare this meeting closed.

The Committee adjourned 9.57 a.m.

Written Responses



LEVUKA TOWN COUNCIL

STANDING COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND DEFENCE

7TH APRIL, 2025 AT TOWN HALL FROM 9AM-10AM





P.O. BOX 233, GOVERNMENT BUILDING, NEWA
 PUNE 400 022 IND. FAX: 020 221
 PARLAMENT C/AMPLE,
 CHANDIGARH, INDIA



01 April 2025

Mr Nernani Maraiwai
Special Administrator
Levuka Town Council
Levuka.

RE: REQUEST FOR SUBMISSION TO THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND DEFENCE – LEYUKA TOWN COUNCIL 2018 ANNUAL REPORT

1. The Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence (Committee), was referred the Levuka Town Council 2018 Annual Report on 14 March 2025. The referral of the Annual Report was done following Standing Order 38(2), whereby the Committee was assigned to investigate the contents of the report and provide a report to Parliament at a future Sitting. This report is outside the usual mandate of the Committee, but the referral was made to help ease the workload of the other Standing Committees.
2. Given the above, the Committee extends an invitation to the Special Administrator and your team for an oral submission on the above-tabulated report on Monday 07 April 2025 from 9.00am to 10.00 am at the Levuka Town Hall. Part of the day's agenda is provided below:
 - a. 9.00am – 10.00am: Public Submission from the Levuka Town Council on its 2018 Annual Report
 - b. 10.00am – 10.45am: Site Visit on the Levuka Town Council 2018 Annual Report; and
 - c. 11.00-1.00pm: Public Consultation on the Biodiversity on Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Agreement.
3. As per the Annual Report for 2018, the Committee intends to conduct site visits on a number of capital projects that were undertaken during the year under review. Given the time elapsed since the reporting period, it would be helpful if the Town Council could identify specific sites intended for this visit.
4. Additionally, the Committee request for a brief PowerPoint Presentation encapsulating a summary of the annual report, trends analysis on achievements, staff gender segregation (statistics on women in leadership), relevance to the Sustainable Development Goals, challenges and future outlook. Should there be any prepared questions by the Committee, this will be emailed for your response.

5. At the outset, the Committee would also be conducting public consultations on the Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Agreement and appreciates if invitations to relevant stakeholders or individuals within your contacts in Levuka be invited to attend to provide their views on whether Fiji should ratify the Agreement (attached Treaty documents). The consultation will be held at the Levuka Vaka Viti.
6. As per Parliamentary requirements, the secretariat will record the discussions, and the verbatim report will be made available once the Committee's Report is tabled in Parliament.
7. For confirmation of attendance or should you have further queries, the secretariat can be contacted by email on susana.korovou@legislature.gov.fj or phone on 8938386.
8. The Committee looks forward to your confirmation and contribution.



Chairperson
Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence



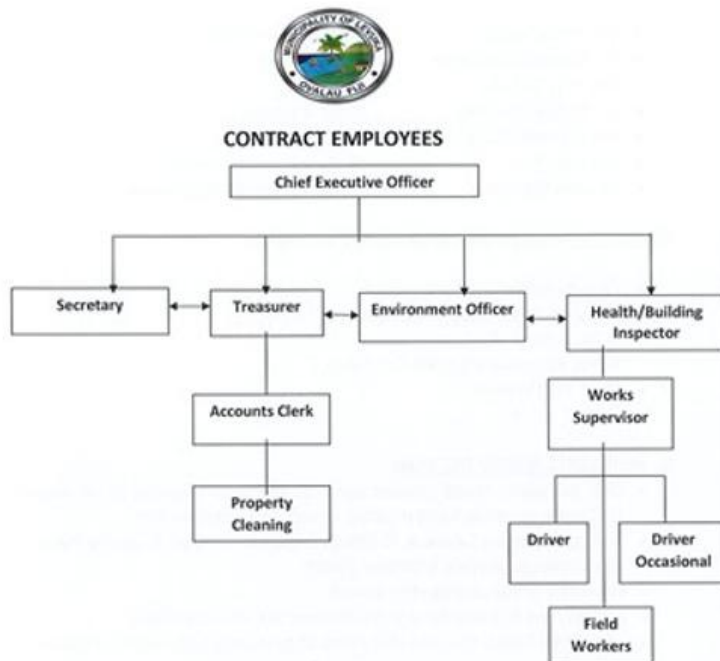
PARLIAMENT OF FIJI

PARLIAMENTARY PAPER 173/24

TABLE OF CONTENT

VISION.....	4
MISSION.....	4
VALUES.....	4
REFERRAL LETTER.....	5
FOREWARD.....	6
ORGANISATION STRUCTURE.....	7
COUNCIL STAFF	8
NUMBER OF MEETINGS	8
HIGHLIGHTS	8
HEALTH DEPARTMENT.....	9-14
ENVIRONMENT & WORKS DEPARTMENT.....	15-17

ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE 2018



- Mr. Josese Rakuita - Chief Executive Officer
- Mr. Kalivereti Vuakatagane - Accounts Clerk
- Mrs. Ema Taukena - Treasurer
- Mr. Waisale Tavatuiagi - Works Supervisor
- Mrs. Salaseini Sauqaqa - Environment Officer
- Mrs. Leba Alofi - Revenue Collector/Secretary
- Mr. Luke Baleinabuli - Assistant Health/Building Inspector

2. NUMBER OF MEETINGS HELD DURING THE YEAR

- Ordinary Council: 5
- Finance & Administration Committee: 7
- Building, Health, Environment,
Works, Environment & Traffic Committee: 7
- Staff & Field Workers: 1
- Public: 5

3. HIGHLIGHTS DURING THE YEAR

- CEO and Market Master attended numerous workshops organized by UN Markets for Change on various topics regarding Council and market vendors.
- Visit by Mr. Kaliova Tunabuna, IT Officer, Department of Town & Country Planning, Suva install geographical information system.
- New office vehicle purchased for Council.
- Courtesy visit by Senior Manager Microfinance and Women's Market.
- UN Women Project Associate staff visited office to check equipment they donated to Council.
- Amalgamation of Local Government and Rural Local Authority.
- Public consultation by Ministry of Labor.
- Fiji Day celebration and opening of the Vodafone Back to Levuka Carnival was held on the same day.
- Visit by Local Government Committee (Kalivati Ratucivi, Azmat Khan, Peni Gavidli)
- Celebration of Rural Women's Day.
- National Climate Change Day celebration.
- Director Local Government Visits Council.
- Department of Housing officials site inspection on the Citywide Project.
- Visit from the CIU team for site inspection at the market.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

1.0 ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

1.1 BUILDING APPLICATIONS AND SITE INSPECTED:

Type of Development	New Application	Extension	Alterations & Repair	Total Fees For This Year	
	No.	No.	No.	No.	Value (\$)
Residential	2				
Commercial	2				
Civic	4				
Others	5				
Total	13			13	\$4,852.66

1.2 BUILDING APPLICATIONS APPROVED/REFUSED/RENEWAL

Type of Development	Approved		Refused		Renewal	
	No.	Value (\$)	No.	Value (\$)	No.	Value (\$)
Residential						
Commercial						
Industrial						
Hotels/Resorts						
Schools						
Civic						
Miscellaneous						
Total						

1.3 BUILDING WORKS COMPLETED AND COMPLETION CERTIFICATE ISSUED

Type of Development	New Building(s)	Extension	Alterations & repair	Total for the year	
	No.	No.	No.	No.	Value (\$)
Residential					
Commercial					
Industrial		ALL CONSTRUCTION HAS BEEN COMPLETED.			
Hotels/Resorts					
Schools					
Civic					
Miscellaneous					

TYPES OF DUMPING FACILITIES	NUISANCE CONTROL ACTIVITIES			
	No. Odour Control	No. Air Emission control	No. Leachate Control	No. Flies & Insect Control
Public Landfill				
Public Open Dump Sites	2 spraying		-	10 AMS spraying and Disinfection spraying throughout the year.
Community Dumpsites	-			
Individual Pits	-			
Incinerators				Controlled by the Health Department
Others				
TOTAL				

Types of Inspection	Total for the Year
Site (New Building/Subdivision)	13
Building (Progressive)	13
Subdivision (Compliance of conditions)	3
Public Complaint	23
Food (Premise and Licensing) Permits	6
Water Surveillance (Source & Supply System)	-
Sanitation (Facilities, drainage & living condition)	12
Total	70

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

Type of Notice Served

TYPE OF NOTICE SERVED		
	No Served	No complied
Anti-litter	2	2
Mosquito Control	1	1
Illegal Development	1	1
Intimation		
Statutory		
Abatement of Nuisances	3	3
Prohibition Orders		
Closing Orders		
Summons		

3.0 LARVAL AND DISEASES

3.1 Diseases

Locality	Disease type	No. of reported Cases	No. Suspected	No. Confirm	No. Investigated
Baba Area	Dengue	2		2	2
Nasova Area	Dengue	1		1	1
Marist Convent School	Dengue	1		1	1
Levuka Public Primary	Dengue	1		1	1
Delana High School	Dengue	1	1		1
TOTAL		6			6

3.2 Larval

Locality/Community	No. Of Premises Inspected	No. Of Larval Sample Taken
Baba Area- (June)	100	6
Delana/Mission Hill/Church Street/Nadugu settlement/Batiniwai/Levuka School Compound (July)	100	4
Main CBS/Vunibua Lane/Bentleys Lane/ Police Barracks	100	0
Baba Area- (September)	100	2
October, Nov, December	No Inspections	-
TOTAL	400	12

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

6.0 FOOD CONTROL

All food related matters is dealt with through joint inspections from Levuka Town Council and Lomaiviti Health Office of Ministry of Health. Inspections of all food outlets are on-going and monitored frequently.

Food Premises		1	1			
Illegal Developments/Building			2			
TYPE OF FOOD OUTLETS	No. of outlet in Town	No. of inspections	No. of compliances	No. of non-compliance	No. of Complaints	others
Restaurant and Eateries	6	15	5	5		
Retails	16	10	-	-		
Supermarkets	3	10	4	4		
Processing Plant	1	3	1	1		
Hotels	5	3	-	-		
Hawkers	23	5	-	-		
Butcher	1	6	-	-		
Total	55	52	10	10		

Nature of Complaints:

NATURE OF COMPLAINTS	No. of Complaints Received	No. of Complaints Investigated	No. of s Resolved on Voluntary Compliance	No. of Complaints Filed for Legal Proceedings	No. of Complaints Resolved Thru Court Proceedings	No. of Complaints Pending Investigation
Food & Food Premises	1	1	1			
Illegal Developments/Building	2	2	2			
Water Supply						
Waste Water & Sewerage	1	1	1			
Vector Control						
Occupational Health						
Environment Pollution						
Solid Waste Management & Litter Prevention	3	3	3			
Nuisances	6	6	6			
Commercial Operations						
Industrial Operations						
Other Public Health Complaints	10	10	10			
Complaint Re-inspection						
Total	23	23	23			

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

3. BEAUTIFICATION PROJECT

Continuous of utilizing the New Zealand Grant from 2017. Landscaper from Suva was assisting our Beautification Team in Levuka in techniques in nurture plants and set up nursery. Council use the Masonic Lodge for the nursery set up. Continuous of maintaining, cleaning and construct additional flower beds around town area.

4. WORKS

- a. Street sweeping, drain cleaning, grass cutting, clearing road verges are all in house and followed as per the program.
- b. Garbage Collection Schedule:

Collection	Schedule
Kitchen Refuse	Twice in a week (Monday & Thursday)
PAFCO Waste	Twice in a week (Friday & Saturday)
Green waste	Once every month (15 th of every month)

5. ENVIRONMENT & WORKS DEPARTMENT

The Department consists of:

- 1 Environment Officer/ Litter Officer
- 1 Work Supervisor/ Litter Officer/Traffic Officer
- 1 Driver & Mechanic
- 1 Assistant Driver
- 1 Cleaner
- 7 Field workers

5.1 SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT

1. Clean School Program

Levuka Primary School joined the program and declared to be a No Burning School. Started the recycling program for Waste Papers and PET Bottles. Waste papers transported to Pacific Recyclers and PET Bottles to Coca Cola Ltd.

2. Home Composting Program

Council received another 100-compost bin which to be sold at a subsidy price of \$30.00.

a. Litter Enforcement

Two officers were appointed. Total of seven offenders were penalized but all managed to pay their fines before due dates.

b. Dump Site

The Ucuinaeava Dumpsite is lease from the Mataqali Botikadi, Natokalau Village, Ovalau. Dump management cost is \$9,000.00.

ALLOCATION	AMOUNT
RENT/LEASE \$583.30/month	\$7,000.00
SALARY FOR CARETAKER	\$2,000.00
TOTAL	\$9,000








Dump Pushing is carried out once in a month.

c. Clean up Campaign

It is conducted once in every quarter. NGO's, School, Youths voluntarily take part in this event. Ratepayers do utilize clean up very well since it is a free collection of white goods and green waste.

PROJECTS

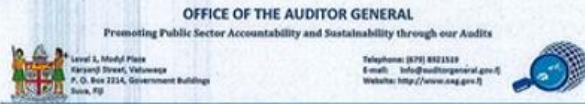
5. PROJECTS

Capital Works	Donor	Images	
1. Seawall Projects	Challenge Fund	BEFORE 	AFTER 
		BEFORE 	AFTER 
		BEFORE 	AFTER 
		BEFORE 	AFTER 
		BEFORE 	AFTER 
		BEFORE 	AFTER 
2. Construction of a new taxi stand	Levuka Town Council		

3. Beautification Project	New Zealand Embassy	BEFORE 	AFTER 
		BEFORE 	AFTER 
		BEFORE 	AFTER 
		BEFORE 	AFTER 
4. Ongoing Construction of new climate change heritage Park	Levuka Town Council	BEFORE 	AFTER 
		BEFORE 	AFTER 
5. Upgrading of Footpath & New Access strip to Baba Informal Settlements	Dept of Housing	BEFORE 	AFTER 
		BEFORE 	AFTER 
		BEFORE 	AFTER 
		BEFORE 	AFTER 

6. Construction of a new Bus Stop at Nagele, Ovala u	Levuka Town Council	BEFORE 	AFTER 
7. Totogo Creek Upgrade (DE-SILTING)	Ministry of Waterways	BEFORE 	AFTER 

AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS & INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT



File: 769

04 July 2024

Mr. Venu Gopal Naidu
The Chairman
Special Administrators
Levuka Town Council
P.O. Box 70
LEVUKA

Dear Mr. Naidu

**LEVUKA TOWN COUNCIL
AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2018**

The audited financial statements for Levuka Town Council for the year ended 31 December 2018 together with my audit report on them are enclosed.

Particulars of the errors and omission arising from the audit have been forwarded to the Management of the Council for necessary action.

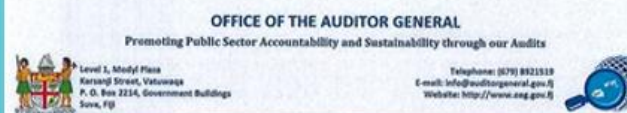
Yours sincerely

F. Sen
Finau Senu Nagera
AUDITOR-GENERAL

cc. Ms. Nunia Labeli – Acting Chief Executive Officer, Levuka Town Council

Encl.

F. Sen
12/07/24.



INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

Levuka Town Council

Report on the Audit of the Financial Statements

Opinion

I have audited the financial statements of Levuka Town Council ("the Council"), which comprise the Statement of Financial Position as at 31 December 2018, the Statement of Profit and Loss and Other Comprehensive Income, Statement of Changes in Accumulated Funds, and Statement of Cash Flows for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.

In my opinion, because of the significance of the matters described in the Basis for Disclaimer of Opinion paragraphs, I have not been able to obtain sufficient appropriate audit evidence to provide a basis for an audit opinion. Accordingly, I do not express an opinion on the financial statements.

Basis for Disclaimer of Opinion

1. A disclaimer of opinion was issued on the 2017 financial statements. I was unable to obtain sufficient and appropriate audit evidence to ascertain the accuracy of the opening balances. Therefore, I am unable to satisfy myself concerning the opening balances disclosed in the Statement of Financial Position of the Council and the impact it may have on the determination of the closing balances of the 2018 financial statements.
2. The Council recorded Receivable totalling \$169,407 (Note 5) in the financial statements. The Council was unable to provide the Receivables subsidiary listings and reconciliations to substantiate the balance totalling \$169,407. As a result, I was unable to ascertain whether the total Receivables balance of \$169,407 is fairly stated in the financial statements as at 31 December 2018.
3. The Council was unable to provide the subsidiary listings and relevant supporting documents to support the Other Current Assets balance of \$11,065 recorded in the Statement of Financial Position. Consequently, I was unable to ascertain the accuracy of the Other Current Assets balance of \$11,065 recorded in the financial statements as at 31 December 2018.
4. The Council was unable to provide the detailed Fixed Assets schedule to substantiate the written down value of Property, Plant and Equipment of \$4,341,760 disclosed in the Statement of Financial Position as at 31 December 2018. In addition, an unreconciled variance of \$293,113 exists between the total cost of Property Plant and Equipment recorded in Note 6 to the Financial Statements and the total costs recorded in the Assets Register provided by the Council. As a result, I was unable to ascertain whether the Property, Plant and Equipment balance of \$4,341,760 is fairly stated in the financial statements.

Basis for Disclaimer of Opinion (con't)

5. The Council was unable to provide the Creditors subsidiary listings to support the creditors balance of \$9,425 disclosed in the Statement of Financial Position. Consequently, I was unable to ascertain the accuracy of the Creditors balance of \$9,425 recorded in the financial statements as at 31 December 2018.
6. The Council disclosed Loan Balance of \$4,975 in the Statement of Financial Position as at 31 December 2018. The Council was unable to provide the details and reconciliation of the Loan Balance, which was necessary to confirm the existence and completeness of the balance. As a result, I was not able to ascertain the accuracy of the Loan balance of \$4,975 recorded in the financial statements as at 31 December 2018.
7. The Council was unable to provide relevant supporting documents to substantiate the disclosure of Deferred Income balance of \$548,984 as disclosed in Note 4(A) to the Financial Statements. Consequently, I was not able to ascertain the accuracy of the Deferred Income balance of \$548,984 recorded in the financial statements as at 31 December 2018.
8. The Council recorded Revenue of \$850,049 in the Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income. Internal controls function of revenue management was found to be weak as Revenue was recorded on cash basis accounting. In addition, an unreconciled variance of \$159,345 exists between the Business License Income recorded in the financial statements and the total calculated from the Business License register of the Council. The Council was unable to provide relevant details and satisfactory explanations to substantiate the variance. Furthermore, due to the nature of transactions of the market fees, it is not practicable for my examination to include audit procedures to extend beyond the amounts recorded in the official receipts of the Council. As a result, I am unable to ascertain whether the Total Revenue amount of \$850,049 is fairly stated in the Financial Statements as at 31 December 2018.
9. The Council was unable to provide the Salary reconciliation to substantiate the Salaries and Wages amount of \$135,612 disclosed in the Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income. In addition, there was an unreconciled variance of \$17,840 between the Salaries and Wages amount reported in the financial statements and the Wages summary provided by the Council. The Council was unable to provide relevant details and satisfactory explanations to substantiate the variance. As a result, I was unable to ascertain whether the Salaries and Wages amount of \$135,612 is fairly stated in the Financial Statements as at 31 December 2018.
10. The Council did not account for Value Added Tax (VAT) separately and did not record VAT Receivable/Payable in the financial statements. The Statement of VAT Account provided by Fij Revenue and Customs Service had a VAT Payable balance of \$154,223 as at 31 December 2018. As a result, I was unable to verify the completeness and accuracy of the balances and also unable to determine whether any adjustments might have been necessary in respect of the VAT at the end of the financial year and any corresponding adjustments to the elements making up the Statement of Profit and Loss and Other Comprehensive Income and Statement of Financial Position as at 31 December 2018.
11. The Council was unable to provide payment vouchers and or supplier invoices / receipts, or audit trail, to support Government Grant expenses of \$150,767, Challenge Fund Expenses of \$132,704 and Utilities of \$13,254 from the Total Operating Expense of \$607,798 as disclosed in the Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income. In addition, the Council was unable to provide the Fixed Assets schedule to substantiate the Depreciation expenses of \$90,363 as disclosed in the Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income.

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

Basis for Disclaimer of Opinion (con't)

As a result, I was unable to verify the occurrence and accuracy of the transactions and also unable to determine whether any adjustments might have been necessary in respect of the various expenses account at the end of the financial year and any corresponding adjustments to the elements making up the Statement of Comprehensive Income and Statement of Financial Position as at 31 December 2018.

12. The Council recorded Cash at Bank balance of \$116,065 in the Statement of Financial Position. Internal controls function of cash management was found to be weak as there was an unreconciled variance of \$10,820 between the bank reconciliation and the financial statement. In addition, the Council did not record in its financial statements the Levuka Town Council Extended Local Authority Account with bank balance of \$495 as at 31 December 2018. As a result, I am unable to ascertain whether the Cash at Bank balance of \$116,065 is fairly stated in the financial statements as at 31 December 2018.

13. The Council did not disclose nor provide details of Capital Commitments as at balance date. In addition, the Council did not provide details of the Commitment Liabilities of \$9,425 disclosed in Note 7 to the financial statements. As a result, I was unable to determine whether any disclosures to the financial statements in respect of the Commitments were necessary.

14. Internal control functions of the Council were generally found to be weak. This is in respect of lack of audit trail and books of accounts and financial statements not properly and completely prepared. In addition, there was poor cash management, poor revenue management, lack of segregation of duties/supervisory review, poor payroll management, reconciliations not prepared, payment and procurement processes were not properly followed, and journal voucher system was not maintained. For property, plant and equipment, detail fixed assets schedule was not maintained, board of survey was not conducted, and assets were not tagged.

I have conducted my audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (ISA). My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements section of my report. I am independent of the Council in accordance with the International Ethics Standards Board for Accountants' Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants (IESBA Code) together with the ethical requirements that are relevant to my audit of the financial statements in Fiji and I have fulfilled my other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements and the IESBA Code.

Emphasis of Matter

I draw attention to Note 14(b) to the financial statements which notes the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) global pandemic subsequent to 31 December 2018 and how this has been considered by the Council in the preparation of the financial statements. As set out in Note 14, no adjustments have been made to the financial statements as at 31 December 2018. However, the Council notes that the impact of COVID-19 global pandemic will have a significant impact on all the major revenue streams of the Council in the financial year 2020 and beyond.

My opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

Other information

The Special Administrators and Management are responsible for the other information. The other information comprises the Executive Members Report but does not include the financial statements and the auditor's report thereon.

Other information (con't)

My opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and I do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

In connection with my audit of the financial statements, my responsibility is to read the other information identified above and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements, or my knowledge obtained during the audit, or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If, based upon the work I have performed, I conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, I am required to report the fact. Accordingly, I am unable to conclude whether or not the other information is materially misstated with respect to matters described in the Basis for Disclaimer of Opinion.

Responsibilities of Management and those Charged with Governance for the Financial Statements

The Management and Special Administrators are responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of these financial statements in accordance with IFRS for SMEs, and for such internal control as the management and Special Administrators determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

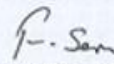
In preparing the financial statements, Management and Special Administrators are responsible for assessing the Council's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the management and Special Administrators either intend to liquidate the Council or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Council's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Statements

My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes my opinion. However, because of the matters described in the Basis for Disclaimer of Opinion section of my report, I was unable to provide a basis for an audit opinion of these financial statements.

I communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that I identify during my audit.


Finau Seru Nagera
AUDITOR-GENERAL



Suva, Fiji
04 July 2024

STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME AS AT 31ST DECEMBER, 2018

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 31ST DECEMBER, 2018

LEVUKA TOWN COUNCIL STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2018

	Notes	2018 \$	2017 \$
Revenue	3	850,049	528,659
Wages and salaries	11	(135,612)	(201,881)
Depreciation	12	(60,363)	(106,888)
Other operating expenses		(607,798)	(348,277)
Surplus/(deficit) from operations		46,276	(128,387)
Finance costs		-	(376)
Surplus/(deficit) for the year		46,276	(128,743)
Other comprehensive income		-	-
Total comprehensive income/(loss)		46,276	(128,743)

The statement of profit and loss and other comprehensive income is to be read in conjunction with the notes to the financial statements.

LEVUKA TOWN COUNCIL STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2018

	Notes	2018 \$	2017 \$
Current Assets			
Cash at bank		116,065	122,305
Other current assets		11,095	-
Receivables	5	109,407	106,426
		<u>236,537</u>	<u>228,821</u>
Non-Current Assets			
Property, plant and equipment	6	4,341,760	4,339,837
		<u>4,341,760</u>	<u>4,339,837</u>
TOTAL ASSETS		<u>4,638,297</u>	<u>4,568,658</u>
Current Liabilities			
Deferred income	4	548,984	537,516
Creditors	10	9,425	-
Employee benefits	9	2,470	-
		<u>560,879</u>	<u>537,516</u>
Non-Current Liabilities			
Loan	13	4,975	4,975
		<u>4,975</u>	<u>4,975</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES		<u>565,854</u>	<u>542,491</u>
NET ASSETS		<u>4,072,443</u>	<u>4,026,167</u>
Accumulated funds		<u>4,072,443</u>	<u>4,026,167</u>

The statement of financial position is to be read in conjunction with the notes to the financial statements.

In our opinion the financial statements have been properly drawn up so as to show a true and fair view of the Levuka Town Council's operations for the year ended 31 December 2018 and the state of affairs as at that date.


Nunia Libati
Acting Chief Executive Officer
Date: 12/16/24


Venu Gopal Naidu
Chair of Special Administrator
Date: 13/16/24

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER, 2018

LEVUKA TOWN COUNCIL STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2018

	2018 \$	2017 \$
Cash flows from operating activities		
Receipts from customers	282,548	469,119
Payments to suppliers and employees	(772,243)	(550,514)
Net cash flows used in operating activities	(489,695)	(81,395)
Cash flows from investing activities		
Payments for plant and equipment	(62,286)	(65,046)
Net cash used in investing activities	(62,286)	(65,046)
Cash flows from financing activities		
Receipts from government grant	545,651	150,300
Net cash provided by financing activities	545,651	150,300
Net (decrease)/increase in cash and cash equivalents	(6,330)	3,859
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the financial year	122,395	118,536
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the financial year	116,065	122,395

LEVUKA TOWN COUNCIL STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN ACCUMULATED FUNDS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2018

	Accumulated Funds \$
Balance as at 31 December 2016	4,154,910
Deficit for the year	(128,743)
Balance as at 31 December 2017	4,026,167
Surplus for the year	46,276
Balance as at 31 December 2018	4,072,443

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER, 2018

LEVUKA TOWN COUNCIL NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2018

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

Levuka Town Council is governed under the Local Government Act 1972. Municipal councils are essential territorial in nature and thus are concerned with activities and provision of services within defined areas.

These financial statements were authorised for issue by management on _____

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The principal accounting policies applied in the preparation of these financial statements are set out below. These policies have been consistently applied to all the years presented, unless otherwise stated.

2.1 Basis of accounting

The financial statements of Levuka Town Council have been prepared in accordance with the International Financial Reporting Standard for Small and Medium-sized Entities (IFRS for SMEs). They have been prepared under the historical cost convention, unless otherwise stated.

2.2 Fixed assets

Fixed assets are stated at historical cost less accumulated depreciation and any accumulated impairment losses. Historical cost includes expenditure that is directly attributable to bringing the asset to the location and condition necessary for it to be capable of operating in the manner intended by management.

The council adds to the carrying amount of an item the costs of replacing parts of such an item when the cost is incurred if the replacement part is expected to provide incremental future benefits to the council. The carrying amount of the replaced part is derecognised.

All other repairs and maintenance are charged to statement of profit or loss and other comprehensive income during the period in which they are incurred. Depreciation on assets is charged so as to allocate the cost of assets less their residual value over their estimated useful lives, using the straight-line method. The estimated useful lives range as follows:

Building	4.0%
Equipment	12.5%
Motor vehicle	25.0%

2.3 Receivables

Receivables comprises of rates for the year.

2.4 Payables

Payables are obligations to pay for goods or services that have been acquired in the ordinary course of operations from suppliers. Trade payables are classified as current liabilities if payment is due within one year or less. If not, they are presented as non-current liabilities.

2.5 Deferred Income

Grant received, relating to the Levuka Town Council's programmes is deferred and amortized over the periods to which the income relates or the periods during which the Levuka Town Council receives contracted benefits.

Assets acquired through capital grants are capitalised to property, plant and equipment and the corresponding credit is taken as deferred income. Property, plant and equipment are depreciated over their estimated useful lives. The benefit arising from the capital grants being the recoupment through depreciation is credited to income over the period of the useful lives of those assets.

LEVUKA TOWN COUNCIL NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONT'D) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2018

2. SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES (continued)

2.6 Revenue Recognition

The Council recognises revenue when the amount of revenue can be reliably measured, it is probable that future economic benefits will flow to the entity, and specific criteria have been met.

2.7 Comparative figures

Where necessary, comparative figures have been adjusted to conform to changes in presentation in the current year.

2.8 Rounding

The financial statements are presented in Fiji dollar which is the functional currency of the Council, rounded off to the nearest dollar.

2.9 CASH AND CASH EQUIVALENTS

This comprises of cash at bank balances held with operating and cheque accounts.

	2018	2017
	\$	\$
3. REVENUE		
The breakdown of revenue is as follows:		
Fees and licenses	53,003	77,559
Rates	548,595	225,895
Other income	102,799	79,602
Grant income	545,651	145,003
	<u>650,048</u>	<u>528,059</u>
4. DEFERRED INCOME		
A		
Opening balance	417,561	367,541
Government grants received during the year	545,651	150,300
Less: Expenses made	(431,481)	(100,380)
	<u>531,731</u>	<u>417,561</u>
Deferred income related to donated assets	62,476	165,178
Less: Amortisation	(45,223)	(45,223)
	<u>17,253</u>	<u>119,955</u>
Total deferred income	<u>548,984</u>	<u>537,516</u>
B		
Grant Account:		
Opening Balances		
Government grant	60,166	
Challenge fund	8	
City wide Network	2,171	
New Zealand	586	
Japanese account	7,207	
Total	<u>70,138</u>	
Income received Government Grant 2018:		
Government grant	138,187	
Challenge fund account	299,970	
City Wide Network	10,749	
Total	<u>448,906</u>	

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS(CONT...)

LEVUKA TOWN COUNCIL NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONT'D) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2018

4. DEFERRED INCOME (continued)	2018	
	\$	
Government grant expenditure		
Government grant:		
Salaries and wages	101,333	
Purchases	45,314	
FNPF	4,109	
Bank fees	11	
Total	150,767	
Challenge Fund:		
Travel and allowances	8,259	
Wages	82,334	
Tools and materials	60,479	
Fuel and oil	6,573	
PPE	160	
Repair and maintenance	35,928	
Consultancy fee	2,000	
Technical support	6,000	
FNPF	2,552	
Total	204,293	
City Wide Network:		
Machine hire	25,835	
Wages	35,715	
Equipment and tools	4,189	
Fuel and oil	3,600	
EFL services	8,866	
Travel and allowances	3,274	
Materials	24,951	
Repair and maintenance	522	
Consultancy fee	300	
FNPF	4,269	
Bank fees	4	
Total	111,618	
New Zealand Grant:		
Beautification	204	
Bank fees	63	
Total	267	
Japanese Grant:		
Materials	1,440	
Wages	2,975	
FNPF	400	
Total	4,815	
5. RECEIVABLES		
Rates receivable	91,093	106,426
Garbage receivable	32,067	-
Taxi receivable	32,780	-
Salary advance	1,520	-
Business license	23,012	-
Unidentified receivable	(11,069)	-
	169,407	106,426

LEVUKA TOWN COUNCIL NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONT'D) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2018

6. PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT						
	Land	Building	Motor Vehicle	Equipment	Work in Progress	Total
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Year ended 31 December 2017						
Opening net book amount	3,505,000	660,229	71,296	145,154	-	4,381,679
Additions	-	65,046	-	-	-	65,046
Depreciation charge	-	(32,458)	(44,408)	(30,024)	-	(106,889)
Closing net book amount	3,505,000	692,817	26,890	115,130	-	4,339,837
As at 31 December 2017						
Cost	3,505,000	858,973	179,624	240,198	-	4,783,795
Accumulated depreciation	-	(166,156)	(152,734)	(125,068)	-	(443,958)
	3,505,000	692,817	26,890	115,130	-	4,339,837
Year ended 31 December 2018						
Opening net book amount	3,505,000	692,817	26,890	115,130	-	4,339,837
Additions	-	-	30,000	32,286	-	62,286
Depreciation charge	-	(27,713)	(14,223)	(18,427)	-	(60,363)
Closing net book amount	3,505,000	665,104	42,667	128,989	-	4,341,760
As at 31 December 2018						
Cost	3,505,000	858,973	209,624	272,482	-	4,846,079
Accumulated depreciation	-	(193,869)	(166,957)	(143,493)	-	(504,319)
	3,505,000	665,104	42,667	128,989	-	4,341,760
7. COMMITMENTS AND CONTINGENT LIABILITIES						
(a) There were no contingent liabilities as at 31 December 2018 (2017:\$Nil).						
(b) Commitment liabilities as at 31/12/2018 - \$9,425.						
8. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS						
(a) Special Administrators						
The Special Administrators who held office during the financial year and up to the date of this report are as follows:						
Mr. Bhan Pratap Singh	Chairman (appointed on 28/09/19 till 2021)					
Mr. Venu Gopal Naidu	Special Administrator (appointed 28/09/19 till 2021)					
	Chairman (appointed on 17/02/2022 till 22/12/2023)					
	Chairman (reappointed on 27/12/2023)					
Ms. Joanne Rymell	Special Administrator (appointed on 16/02/2022)					
Ms. Chrystelle Joy Navoka	Special Administrator (appointed on 27/12/2023)					
Mr. Nemani Buluvu	Special Administrator (appointed on 27/12/2023)					
The Special Administrator's remunerations are paid for by the Ministry of Local Government.						
(b) Key management personnel						
Key management includes the Chief Executive Officer. The compensation paid or payable to key management for employee services is shown below:						
		2018		2017		
		\$		\$		
Salaries		40,000		30,000		

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS(CONT...)

LEVUKA TOWN COUNCIL NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONT'D) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2018

8. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS (continued)

(c) Transactions with Related Parties

During the period, the Council entered into various transactions with related parties. The aggregate value of major transactions with related parties during the year is as follows:

	2018	2017
	\$	\$
Government of Fiji		
Government grant	545,661	150,300

9. EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Total employees annual leave due as at 31 December 2018 - \$2,470.

10. CREDITORS

Total for trade payables as at 31 December 2018 - \$9,425.

11. WAGES AND SALARIES

Administration	38,641
Health & engineering	94,501
Accrued employee	2,470
Total	135,612

12. DEPRECIATION

The method used for accounting for depreciation is Straight Line method. Fixed assets are recorded at original cost (historical measurement base). Refer Note 6 for detailed breakdown of motor vehicles and equipment.

13. LOAN

Conservation Fund is a separate fund managed independently by the Conservation Fund Committee. From previous years, this item has been appearing in the Balance Sheet of the Council as a loan account. Council cannot clear this account due to unavailability of documents from the Committee to confirm the loan details. Council in its efforts to regularise this loan has advised the Conservation Fund Committee to have their accounts audited. Expression of interest for the audit has been advertised by the Conservation Fund Committee for audit and preparation of their financial accounts for the last 30 years. Council therefore awaits completion of this audit in order to identify and regularise this loan account.

14. EVENTS SUBSEQUENT TO BALANCE DATE

(a) Business Licenses

As announced in the 2020/2021 National budget, effective from 01 August 2020 Fiji's Business License regime have abolished. As a result, the business license fees from the business owners will no longer be collected by Council.

(b) COVID-19 Outbreak

Subsequent to year end, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the Coronavirus (COVID 19) a "Public Health Emergency of International Concern". Whilst measures and policies have been taken by the National Government and nearby trading countries to prevent the spread of the virus, the impact of the virus on amounts and estimates reported or used in the preparation of 2018 financial statements is not expected to be material.

However, in financial year 2020 and beyond, it is expected that the effect of the pandemic will be substantial on our major revenue streams such as general rates, market fees and rental income. This will eventually affect the Council's operations and cash flow.

LEVUKA TOWN COUNCIL NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS (CONT'D) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2018

14. EVENTS SUBSEQUENT TO BALANCE DATE (continued)

(c) Amendments to the Local Government Act 1972

A recent amendment made to the Local Government Act 1972 through Local Government (Budget Amendment) Act 2020 will require all Municipal Councils to update the audit of annual financial statements up to 31 July 2020 and have them published in an English language newspaper in Fiji by 31 March 2021. As a result of the amendment, all Councils will need to prepare and submit for audit, accounts for the seven-month period from 1 January to 31 July 2020.

(d) Base Fees and Market Fees

As announced in the 2021/2022 National budget, effective from 01 August 2021 to 31 July 2022, Government will pay the market fees and base fees for taxis, minibuses, carriers, and bus operators.

(e) Other than the above mentioned events

No charge on the assets of the council has arisen since the end of the financial year to the date of this report to secure the liabilities of any other person.

No contingent liability has arisen since the end of the financial year to the date of this report.

No contingent or other liability has become enforceable or is likely to become enforceable within a period of twelve months after the end of the financial year which, in the opinion of the management, will or may affect the ability of the council to meet its obligations as and when they fall due.

DETAILED STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER, 2018

LEVUKA TOWN COUNCIL DETAILED STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2018			
	Note	2018 \$	2017 \$
Revenue			
Business and trading license		31,064	27,330
Fees		21,939	50,229
Hire charges		11,120	13,019
Rates		148,596	225,895
Release of deferred income		545,651	145,603
Rent		21,153	4,375
Other income		70,526	62,208
Total revenue		850,049	528,659
Expenditure			
Administration		3,557	-
Advertisement		1,985	1,122
Audit and legal fees		-	2,807
Challenge fund expenses		204,294	-
Depreciation		60,363	108,888
Donation		-	1,595
Finance costs		-	376
FNPF contributions		18,924	17,416
FNU levy		1,258	2,329
Garbage		-	11,719
Insurance		1,270	1,055
Printing and stationery		4,643	4,885
Property maintenance		3,365	104,066
Roads and drains		2,011	4,813
Staff related expenses		13,290	13,643
Tropical cyclone Winston		-	-
Utilities		13,254	12,832
Valuation		-	4,802
Salaries and wages		135,612	201,861
Website development		-	1,091
City wide expenses		111,515	-
New Zealand expenses		287	-
Japanese expenses		4,815	-
Government grant expenses		150,787	-
Other expenses		72,553	164,302
Total expenditure		803,773	657,402
Surplus/(deficit) for the year		46,276	(128,743)

The detailed statement of income and expenditure is to be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.



SITES VISIT

SCHEDULE TIME FOR SITES VISIT: 10AM-10.45AM

**SITE 1: PEACE GARDEN AT THE POLYNESIA
LODGE**

**SITE 2: NEW LEVUKA MUNICIPALITY
MARKET**

**SITE 3: UNIVERSITY OF FIJI HOUSE,
NASOVA**

Additional Information

On Thurs, 15 May 2025 at 15:25, Susana Korovou <susana.korovou@legislature.gov.fj> wrote:

Bula Vinaka Mr. Tuiteci,

We would appreciate it if we could have a copy of the Levuka Management Plan, please.

Kind regards,

Susana

From: Setoki Tuiteci <ethosedgefiji@gmail.com>

Sent: Sunday, May 11, 2025 10:12 PM

To: Susana Korovou <susana.korovou@legislature.gov.fj>

Cc: Isqereqeretabua@gmail.com <Isqereqeretabua@gmail.com>; Elesi Waiwalu <elesi.waiwalu@legislature.gov.fj>; s.korovou@parliament.gov.fj <s.korovou@parliament.gov.fj>

Subject: Re: SCFAD Request for Information - Levuka Town Council 2018 Annual Report

Bula Vinaka Madam,

Thank you for your email.

Yes, this is an area that has come up every now and then.

The requirements are in the Levuka Management Plan.

There are a few Billboards and signs in Levuka that will need to be reviewed according to Section 5.5 on Development Guidelines for Existing and new Buildings. Sub section 5.56 covers Signs and Advertising.

Please let me know if you need a copy of the Levuka Management.

Vinaka.

With kind regards,
Setoki Tuiteci

ARCHITECT
ETHOS EDGE

Member FAA
Registered Architect, Fiji.
BArch, University of South Australia.
Diploma Architectural Technology, FIT.
Ordinary Dip in Construction Studies, FIT.

Mobile: [\(679\) 8033580](tel:6798033580) » skype: sketchfj
viber: Stokes » WhatsApp: Setoki Tuiteci
PO Box 1019 » Nabua » Suva » Fiji.



“As an architect you design for the present, with an awareness of the past, for a future which is essentially unknown.” — Norman Foster

On Fri, 9 May 2025 at 14:17, Susana Korovou <susana.korovou@legislature.gov.fj> wrote:

Bula Vinaka Mr. Tuiteci,

I hope this email finds you well.

I write on behalf of the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence to seek clarification on the operations of the Levuka Town Council. The Committee was tasked with reviewing the Council's 2018 Annual Report, referred during the March 2025 Parliament Sitting. As part of this review, the Committee visited Levuka on Monday, 7 April 2025, received a public submission, and conducted site visits to the Peace Garden, Levuka New Market, and the University of Fiji Office at Sir Arthur Gordon's Cottage.

During the visit, members expressed concern about the placement of billboards in certain areas of the town, given its status as a pristine heritage site. The Committee

seeks clarification on UNESCO's interpretation or guidelines regarding the erection of billboards in World Heritage-designated areas.

We look forward to hearing back from you, please.

Vinaka saka,



“A Resilient Parliament
responsive to the needs of
the people and driven by
the ideal of a better quality
of life for all Fijians”

Susana J. Korovou (Mrs)

Senior Committee Clerk - Standing
Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence

Legislative Services Division

Parliament of the Republic of Fiji

P.O Box 2352, Government Building

Suva, Fiji.

Phone : (679) 8925216/8938386

Website: <http://www.parliament.gov.fj/>



Please consider the environment before printing
this email

NOTE: This email (including any attachments) is only for the use of the intended addressee. It may contain information that is confidential and/or legally privileged. If you are not the intended addressee, you must NOT read, print, use, disseminate, disclose, distribute, copy or save the contents of this email and any attachments. Confidentiality and legal or parliamentary privilege attached to this email (including any attachments) are not waived or lost by reason of its mistaken delivery to you. If you have received this email in error, please notify me immediately and permanently delete the email. The contents of this email, unless expressly stated, do not comprise the views of, or any representation by the PARLIAMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI, OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL or the GOVERNMENT OF FIJI. Anti-virus measures have been installed on this electronic mail system, but I cannot accept any liability for virus damage suffered by any recipient as a result of this or any other transmission

Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence Public Consultation and Site Visitation to Levuka Town Council

—

7 April 2025

Images Taken During the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence Public Consultation and Site Visitation to Levuka Town Council on Monday 07 April 2025.

As part of the review of the Levuka Town Council 2018 Annual Report, the Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defence conducted public consultations and site visitations to the Levuka Town Council on Monday 07 April 2025. The consultation concluded with a site visit to the Peace Garden at the Polynesia Lodge, the new Levuka Municipal Market, and the University of Fiji House, Nasova.



