



Speech By  
**Cynthia Lui**


**MEMBER FOR COOK**

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## ADJOURNMENT

### Weipa Town Authority; Coronavirus, Vaccinations

 **Ms LUI** (Cook—ALP) (7.20 pm): I had the absolute pleasure of visiting Weipa recently, and while in community I took the opportunity to meet with stakeholders, community groups and businesses and visit some of the state funded projects being delivered in community. I met with Weipa Town Authority chair Michael Rowland and members of the authority to discuss our government investment in the community, COVID and of course the vaccination rollout.

To give a quick overview of Weipa, Weipa is known to be a mining town and does not sit under the local government structure. The town is run by the Weipa Town Authority, which sits under the administration of Rio Tinto and delivers essential services similar to those supplied by local councils which include road maintenance, water supply, town planning, garbage collection, parks, ovals, libraries and public swimming pools. While health and social services do not fall into their service provision, the Weipa Town Authority spoke passionately about keeping people and community safe.

I want to talk about the vaccination rollout, as it was clear from my meeting with the Weipa Town Authority that community safety was at the top of their priority list. The impact of COVID on Weipa—and we have seen in the restrictions placed on Cape York under the federal government Biosecurity Act—placed huge pressure on the health and wellbeing of individuals and families exacerbated by the already huge challenges of remoteness.

I acknowledge the impact on people's mental health because through my travels and in every conversation I have had I hear stories of people's experience to cope with the stresses and uncertainty of COVID and how it has affected people's ability to work productively and function fully in community. Take, for instance, Gemma and Mal of Western Cape Eco Tours. They took over the business just before COVID hit in March 2020. What was meant to be the most exciting time for this young couple soon changed as the decline of visitor numbers to the region carried huge financial loss to the business.

There is a way out of this pandemic, and that is through getting our community vaccinated. Our borders will reopen and COVID cases will rise, but getting vaccinated will put us in a much stronger position in the fight ahead against COVID-19.

I want to acknowledge and thank the Torres and Cape Hospital and Health Service and our roving vaccination team—a team of everyday people who sacrifice their time and take time away from their family to travel to communities in Cook, including Weipa, demonstrating strong commitment to the safety of people in community. They are out there working hard every day to make the vaccine accessible to people living in the most northern remote parts of Queensland. They do all this with one goal in mind—to keep individuals, families and community safe. We can all do our bit to keep ourselves, our family and community safe—that is, to get vaccinated and do not wait. We can do this, Cook. We are all in this together.