

Conversation Café: Pannawonica

On 15 November 2018, Pannawonica was invited to come together to explore the CSIRO Local Voices data. This is a brief summary of the rich conversation that followed...

What is CSIRO Local Voices?

Rio Tinto has engaged CSIRO to conduct an ongoing analysis of community attitudes to the company’s iron ore operations in the Pilbara. This gives communities neighbouring the operations a direct voice inside the company, and helping to inform the company’s decision making. Join now at <https://research.csiro.au/localvoices/>

What did we talk about?

James Jarvis from Pilbara for Purpose facilitated the workshop, introducing Dr Kieren Moffat from CSIRO who provided some background about Local Voices and then introduced each discussion topic with a short selection of data collected through the Local Voices project from the 2017 Anchor Survey to October 2018 – each topic had three key questions to explore. Gerard Miller and Marianne Hoareau from Rio Tinto also provided some context about what Local Voices means to the company and how the data is being used.

Topic 1: What makes our town work?

Key question #1: *What other services should we be measuring?*

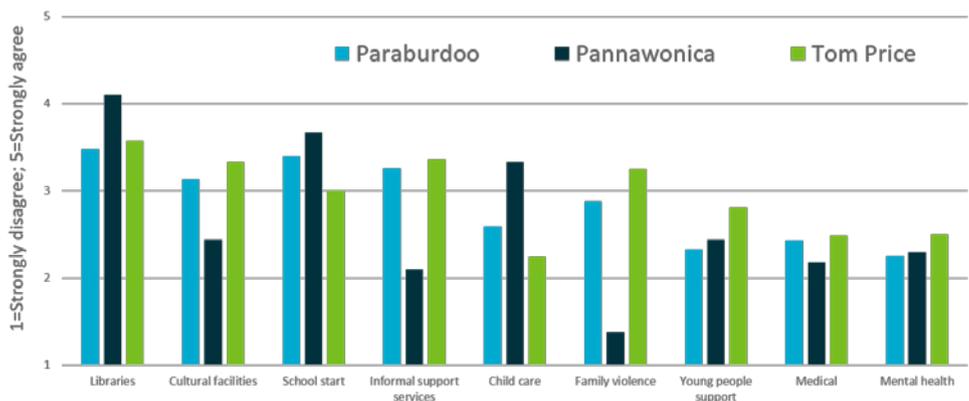
Most discussion was around developing a community hub to support cohesion and integration in town: co-located services, actively engaging different groups, support for new people, connection between Indigenous and non-Indigenous residents. There was a strong feeling this should be operated by an independent community group.

Key question #2:

What makes Pannawonica strong?
As with most Pilbara communities, participants in the workshop felt that it is people that make the town strong. However, the library in particular was seen to be a community hub – engaging all town residents, catering for all ages, and promoting inclusion. The school was also a strength – offering a strong STEM programme, a positive culture and dedicated staff. The pre-kindy and school readiness programmes were seen as a pillar of community life. This provides an opportunity for young families to socialise and prepare their children for school.

Key question #3:

What does ‘better’ look like?
Starting with local employment, we heard community say that it is difficult for the partners of Rio Tinto employees to find flexible work (e.g. part time) and that this represents a real opportunity for businesses to change the way they think about local part time employees. Rio Tinto could also consider reviewing supplier performance against Indigenous and local employment targets. Supporting skills development like resume writing and business networking for women would also support this vision for a vibrant town that fully utilises its people as a key resource. There was also discussion about the challenge of retail and food shopping in town (expensive, limited), but acknowledgement that it is a challenge.



SATISFACTION WITH SERVICES IN PANNWONICA – July 2018

Putting in water fountains around town was also suggested.

Topic 2: Building community resilience

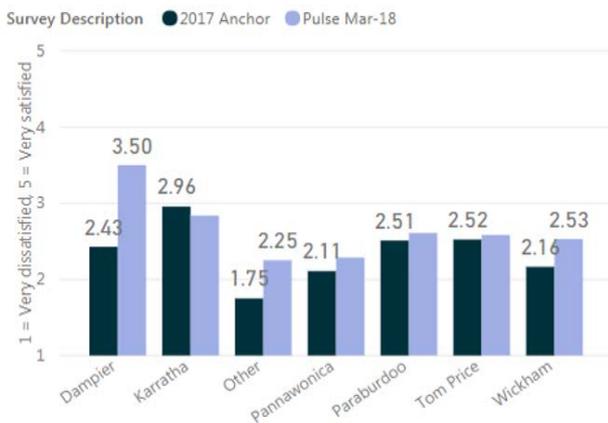
Key question #1: *What does 'leadership' mean here?*

A 'leader' in Pannawonica was seen to be someone that:

- Listens, 'steps-up' and respects ideas of others
- Sees a (community) gap and fills it (e.g. playgroup)
- Coordinates effort within community, sometimes supporting formal leaders in their roles
- Empowers others, genuine and models leadership behaviours for emerging leaders

Key question #2: *Why have leadership ratings improved?*

Residential roles have been a focus for Rio Tinto and site swap implemented as an option provided by the company. Investment by the business through Community Engagement practitioner time, and the increased frequency of service delivery (e.g. NGALA, EPIC, CSIRO) to support local gaps . There was also a belief that Rio Tinto was managing its local supplier relationships more closely. Together, this speaks to the need to focus on the context for leadership not just leaders themselves – it is easier to step up when the community feel supported and valued. New people in town may also be a factor – bringing new energy and refreshing any previously held cynicism.



SATISFACTION WITH LOCAL LEADERSHIP – All Towns

Key question #3: *How do we manage change together?*

We manage change by: getting a baseline understanding of what is happening, demonstrate respect and integrity toward each other, recognise what change is required, get

involved as a community, and make sure information is distributed about the change that is coming. Avoiding politics, getting feedback and feeling heard were also important strategies for managing change successfully.

Topic 3: Feeling heard is a powerful thing

Key question #1: *What is it like when community communicated effectively together?*

The NGALA organisation provided a great example of community based engagement to solve local problems. Their work with community developing parenting support programs in response to an identified need typified what is possible when community come together in a supported way. Speaking hard truths to each other with respect was a key part of this success.



FEELING HEARD LEADS TO TRUST AND ACCEPTANCE

Key question #2: *What does trust with Rio Tinto mean to you? How do you build trust?*

Trust comes from open and honest communication. Acting in line with values of the organisation, feeling heard by key stakeholders, and consistency in how we interact were all key pathways to deeper trust.

Key question #3: *How can we feel more heard?*

Greater interaction with key stakeholders like Rio Tinto and the Shire of Ashburton and others face to face. But also, replicating the Café idea online, and then (critically) seeing what comes from the data collected through Local Voices, for example, or meetings held. Need to 'close the loop'.

What next? A call to action

- CSIRO to provide notes back to attendees/community
- Community members to join Local Voices and drive awareness through community networks
- Capitalise on enthusiasm to take the LV data and use it locally to discuss the issues that matter (CSIRO to support in 2019 with key questions/discussion topics/feedback mechanism)

Search: Rio Tinto Local Voices

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