



Figure 1 Pipeline 'bigger than JT' to deliver water to Townsville

Council defends display of pipe to be used for Haughton project

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TOWNSVILLE City Council has defended the display of composite glass reinforced polyester pipe for the Haughton water project amid claims it is a misuse of funds and “propaganda”.

The council is displaying a section of the pipe at Cowboys home games and local shopping centres, enlisting Cowboys star Johnathan Thurston to help with promotion with the line that the 1.8m diameter pipe is “bigger than JT”.

In a statement, a Townsville City Council spokesman said a section of pipe would be on display at a number of public locations and that its display at last week’s Cowboys game had not cost the council “a cent”.

“This has not cost council a cent as the display pipe was provided by Iplex and council staff transported it to the stadium,” the spokesman said.

“The display pipe will then move to other locations such as The Strand and Riverway in the future.”

Some of the 2016 Jayne Arlett Team council candidates have reacted to the council’s Facebook page where a video of Mayor Jenny Hill and Thurston with a section of the pipe has been posted.

Former council candidate Michael Charge accused the council of “spin and propaganda” and said he would have been lobbying both State and Federal governments for support from the pipeline project “a lot earlier”.

The Labor State Government committed \$225 million over four years for water security for Townsville in 2017 but the council has had to take on short-term borrowing to deliver the project two years earlier by December 2019. Cr Hill has said the council will spend \$158.9 million in 2018-19 “with the rest being spent in the next financial year”.

The council is yet to reveal the estimated project cost or the contract price for the supply and delivery pipe and associated fittings from Iplex.

Iplex was announced as the successful tenderer for the 36.5km-long pipe in April.

Iplex will supply the composite glass, reinforced, polyester pipe, manufactured by its partner RPC Pipe Systems at its Lonsdale plant in Adelaide.

RPC has said GRP fittings for the project will be made in Townsville by cutting the pipe into segments to make bends, T-joints and other segments, while Iplex is also reopening its polyethylene plant at the Bohle.