



# News from your Local Councillor

## Division 2

Cleveland/  
North Stradbroke Island

## Cr Craig Ogilvie

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## Dear residents of Division 2,

### Allconnex return will be good for rates

You are probably aware of the ongoing water saga and how it applies to Redland City Council. In March of this year the State Government made some dramatic announcements. The first was that water prices would be capped for two years at CPI. This had a dramatic impact on Council's finances and led to significant cost cutting and voluntary redundancies. The second was that councils could withdraw from the Allconnex water business but only if any that did so was prepared to pay for the disestablishment and re-establishment costs. Gold Coast City Council was prepared to pay those costs estimated at greater than \$60 million by the Gold Coast City Council and so we were able to exit that business without incurring any costs.

This should be good news for your rates bills. The water business when under Redland City Council's control was a lean mean organisation and we were able to keep prices low and still provide a good dividend to Council to pay for roads, rubbish etc. I believe that any good returns from the newly formed business should go back into minimising rates increases.

Over the last few years Council's revenue streams have been hammered. Water business income went from \$29 million in 2009/10 to \$16 million in 2010/11. And there was a major slowdown in development, caused by the global financial crisis, which caused a major drop in revenue from headwork charges etc. All these things, and the high Local Government CPI caused by the floods, has meant that Council has been hard pressed to keep rate increases low and still run a financially sustainable organisation. The return of the water business to Council should assist greatly in keeping your rates increases down.



### Affordable Housing Strategy

You may have read about this important strategy in the local newspaper. In March next year you will be asked to go to the polling booths to elect the next Council. That Council will have the duty of putting in place the next Planning Scheme. The Planning Scheme is reviewed every seven years and sets out what development can go where. It is the document that allows Council's to rezone farms into houses or five storeys into eight or whatever. It is a highly important document that sets out how our area is going to evolve and impacts greatly on the environment, our lifestyle and even the amount of rates we pay.

The Affordable Housing Strategy is an important part of this planning. The Strategy is premised on the controversial 2006 Planning Scheme which allows for 50,000 more people settling in this area by the year 2031. This growth can't be stopped. Once properties are rezoned there is no going back. This strategy sets out how we will accommodate these people and focuses on housing diversity and design.

## Storm Season Clean Up

If you took advantage of the recent waiver of gate fees on green waste in order to get your property ready for the storm season then well done. You might be interested to know that the 'free' gate fees were provided at a cost of \$50,000 from the general rate base. It is a good reminder of how much extra you would have to pay in rates to keep the dump fees 'free' all year round.



## Graffiti management on private property

Council has amended its guidelines to include graffiti removal from publically visible and publically accessible graffiti located on private properties along arterial, sub-arterial and trunk collector roads or adjacent to district/regional parks. Graffiti costs us time and money, is unsightly, and is an insult to the people who take pride in the city. You can play your part and report graffiti vandalism via council's online graffiti reporting system located on Council's website – [www.redland.qld.gov.au](http://www.redland.qld.gov.au) or alternatively you can contact me if you see any that you think needs removing.

## Cleveland Point

Work is underway on beautifying the Point in accordance with the Masterplan drawn up in partnership with the community. Work on the inside of the ring road should be completed by the end of the financial year.

## Cleveland Aquatic Centre

Council has completed a Land Management Plan for the area which will pave the way for the centre to flourish in the years ahead. Already, the parking area has been resurfaced and the concourse has been repaved. The future of this popular facility is in good hands.

## Raby Bay

The work at the Masthead Drive playground has been completed and work will soon begin on upgrading the footpath from the CBD to Wharf Street.

## Parking fees

It is worth stating once and for all that Council has no plans to introduce parking fees anywhere in the city other than at the staffed, secure or off-site allocated carparks at Weinam Creek. It is also worth noting that a recent investigation found that Mainland ratepayers cross subsidise SMBI ratepayers by over \$10 million a year.



## Appeals lowest on record

Council has spent a lot of time and money on improving the development application processes. I know from my own recent experience that there is room for improvement. A recent application of my own at Point Lookout had to go through a full Council sign off because I am a Councillor but it was a good first hand experience of the frustrations. There have been a number of changes and these are starting to bear fruit. Applications being processed within timelines are the highest on record and the court appeals are the lowest on record! Currently 40% of all applications are being lodged via Smart eDA.

*I hope you have found some of that information useful and that you enjoy the Christmas period. Thanks to everyone who has been the 'eyes and ears' of Council and assisted by reporting things that need attention. Until next time,*

Yours sincerely,

## Craig Ogilvie

**Councillor for Division 2**  
Redland City Council

