

NEWS from your • Local Councillor

Redland Shire Council



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Dear Residents

Well it has been cold but Council has been running hot. Amalgamations, institutional water arrangements, local growth management strategy and budgets! There is an old Chinese saying, 'May you live in interesting times'. Well of late, it has been interesting.

Budget

This year's budget is a mixture of good and bad news. Council has culled a range of water and wastewater capital works projects in response to the State Government's takeover. Council's view is that it would be inadvisable to embark on projects like the Point Lookout wastewater treatment plant (\$11M) when it is not clear whether or not we will receive fair compensation. This enables Council to retire about \$4M in debt, this makes a change as Council has been increasing debt over the last four years. Council's 'ability to repay debt' ratio is now at 16.4%, which is inside our self-imposed upper limit of 17%. Our forward projections show this debt repayment capacity improving to 14.5% in 2008/9, 11.8% in 2009/10 and 9.3% in 2010/11 on the back of reducing capital works spending, following the spike of the last few years. Council has planned to reduce capital works spending by about \$10M next year, otherwise it will have to increase rates or borrowings. This will depend on the debt position at the time, which will be effected by whether or not State Government agrees to pay fair compensation.

Raby Bay residents and the budget

Typically the increase in rates for Raby Bay property owners is below the Shire-wide average. However, their rates remain higher than the average figure for the Shire because of the high valuations. The canal levy has increased to \$1,350 for house owners and \$675 for home units. The simple explanation for how this levy is calculated is that the cost of future works in the canals is divided by the amount of properties. Council pays about 10% of the cost of these works in recognition that some of the land is in public ownership. I have put the forecast costs for the canals as well as previous expenditure on my website (www.craigogilvie.com) so that residents can check for themselves that this money is not being allocated to other areas of Council.

I am also holding a public meeting for interested Raby Bay residents at the Volunteer Marine Rescue at 7.00pm on 7 August.





News from your Local Councillor

Pensioners and the budget

Rebates for those on a full pension will increase by \$30 to \$280 a year. In the past five years there has been a 55.5% increase – a good thing!

Raby Bay Foreshore Park

The good news for residents is that the petition to bring forward expenditure on the Masthead Drive Park area has met with some success. \$140,000 has been allocated to fixing the 'basics'. Work will soon start on getting a better turf cover and borders around the gardens.

Community Garden and U3A

I want to let you know about an exciting initiative of the University of the Third Age (U3A). Some of the members are looking to establish a community garden in Cleveland with the help of the Department of Primary Industries. If you are interested in being involved in this please call the U3A office on 3821 3888.

Incidentally, if you are retired and looking to keep the brain active then the University of the Third Age Redlands has a choice of more than 80 subjects ranging from aqua-aerobics to foreign languages to computer lessons. Ring the office for a course list on 3821 3888.

Shopping trolleys

Like you, I too get frustrated at seeing shopping trolleys littering our neighbourhood. One weekend in June, I counted at least 60 shopping trolleys around Cleveland. This is clearly unacceptable and I can assure you that I am firmly in favour of stronger measures so that we do not have to suffer this visual blight. Council officers will soon bring a report to Council which will outline a range of options. I sincerely hope that other Councillors will agree that we need a solution to this problem.

Running out of room in this newsletter so:

Local Growth Management Strategy – opposed it because we will be taking on more people than necessary.

Amalgamations – like 80% of Redlanders I oppose any amalgamation. So many reasons why, but ultimately I believe that it's important to keep local government LOCAL.

Institutional water arrangements – financially unclear for the Redlands and an opportunity lost to set the state up properly with smart micro-economic reform of bulk water supply arrangements.

Thank you to all the residents who have contacted me over the past few months about local issues in the area. Your ideas and suggestions are much appreciated and help greatly in keeping this a great place to live. Take care until next time.

Yours sincerely



Craig Ogilvie
Councillor for Division 2
Redland Shire Council