

NEWS from your Local Councillor



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Hello everybody. Hope you are all well. Thought it was time to update you on a few Council issues. There will be another newsletter coming your way soon to discuss budget issues.

Point Lookout Community Hall

We now have the go ahead for a \$900,000 upgrade to the Point Lookout hall following the announcement of \$285,000 in state government funding through the Rural Living Infrastructure Program. (Thanks to former state MP, Phil Weightman, for his strong representation on this one). This is an extremely good result. The hall was only ever listed for a minor refurbishment, but with careful planning and vigorous community interest, those plans have developed into something much bigger. For those who missed it, the planning for the upgrade was done by recognised architect, Brian Donovan, after consulting widely with the local community. The works are expected to be completed within approximately 18 months.

Mining

In August last year, Council unanimously decided to refuse CRL's application to export construction sand from Stradbroke Island. This extension was not supported by Council because the economic benefits did not warrant the impacts on the community. This decision does not effect existing mining operations. CRL has appealed the decision and it is not known yet just how long it may take for a final resolution to this application.

Tourism

A significant shift in the strategic direction of tourism planning and promotion is under way. The last Council took the view that these roles were best done by Council. This Council convened a panel of industry experts who have recommended that an external body that had significant industry input should perform some of these roles. It was felt that industry had a very valuable role to play in getting it right. Council is now investigating this option further. Should this option proceed, I hope that tourism industry people will embrace this strategic shift and involve themselves heartily in the new direction. Incidentally, following the Moreton Island oil spill, Council partnered with Brisbane Marketing in the 'Donate a Day to the Bay' campaign. It was estimated that we were able to leverage \$35,000 into \$2 million worth of additional media exposure.

Straddie Holiday Parks

Most people would now know of Council's intention to sub-lease the island's holiday parks to external operators. There is a view within Council that holiday parks are not core business and that this move will lead to better managed parks. I voted against the measure. The tender process should be complete by September. In other news, Council recently drastically reduced its winter prices for holiday parks. This was done to a) encourage locals to holiday at home, and b), provide some small stimulus to the local tourism economy.

NSI Museum

The museum has won a National Regional Museum Award and we should all be very proud. I have often felt that the museum is interesting because the island community and place is interesting. This award is recognition of hours and hours of passionate volunteer work over many years and those volunteers deserve our congratulations.

Indigenous Community Policy

I am very proud to be part of a Council that now acknowledges traditional ownership of country at important Council functions. And I am very proud to be part of a Council that flies the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags from the Council Chambers daily. The flags are raised outside Council Chambers each day. This action was a suggestion of the Quandamooka Forum. A suggestion that was made to Council when it met with the forum for the first time in Dunwich last year. Council has adopted a new Indigenous community policy and now recognises this forum as a peak organisation for the island's indigenous groups and we look forward to working with it in the future.

Redlands Citizen of the Year

Straddie scooped the pool at this years Redland's Australia Day Awards with five of the eight awards. First up was Tony Brown who got the top gong for 'Citizen of the Year', a justifiable recognition of countless hours of contribution to sport on the island. In other categories, too, we did well. Lincoln Taylor got the 'Sports Award', Wayne Cole the 'Local Hero' Award, SIMO got the 'Environmental' Award, and the 'Community Organisation' Award went to the NSI Rugby League and Allsports Club. Other local nominees were unlucky to miss out.

That's it for this newsletter but expect another one soon with budget information. Thanks to all those people who have been the 'eyes and ears' of Council and have been good enough to contact Council with concerns. On the island your first phone call should be to the depot for operational issues. Thanks too to all those people who have contributed their thoughts to the Redlands 2030 community planning process. This plan is there to guide our future planning and decision making and deserves our serious consideration.



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