



News from your Local Councillor

Division 2
**Cleveland/
North Stradbroke Island**

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Dear island residents of Division 2,

April 2010

Hello to you all,

As I write this it s raining outside and it feels like it has been raining for the last few weeks. Of course, this has been great for gardens and grass but from a Council point of view it has lead to a few problems, not the least of which is keeping up with the mowing.

Rain means increased grass length and downtime for the mowers so it s a double whammy. I haven t had too many people ring me complaining, which shows there is a great level of understanding of the predicament, and I thank you for that. Thanks too to the Council staff who responded so magnificently to the tsunami warning. Although it was bit of a non-event I think it showed that we were prepared for an emergency and it is always good to be safe than sorry anyway.

Straddie working group

With so much happening on the island there is a real need to form an island-wide group that can have input into policy and management of the island s affairs. It is hoped the establishment of this group will help with communications and give a voice to the whole community.

Camp grounds

The Community Management Model has been accepted by Council subject to lease negotiations. I think this is an exciting development in North Stradbroke Island s history. The management of the camp grounds will now shift to a company that will be controlled by the Quandamooka Land Council, the NSI Housing Co-op and Indigenous Business Australia. All staff will be offered a job with the new entity on the same conditions and the day to day operations will be managed by one of the most experienced Tourism companies in Australia, Tony Charters and Associates. The company has exciting plans to develop the parks into first class environmental and cultural attractions that will be an asset to the island.

Native title

At long last there is some resolution to the long standing native title claim that has occupied so many people s minds for so long. Native title has been the elephant in the room when it comes to island planning for a long time. Regardless of what you feel about the merits of the outcome I think we should all be relieved that it is approaching some resolution.

Local area plans

There are a number of big things happening at the moment. Not the least of these is the local area plans that will be developed for Dunwich and Amity. These plans will have a huge bearing on a range of town planning considerations. I can only urge people in the strongest possible terms to get involved. If you care about the future of Straddie keep your eye out for information on how and when to get involved.

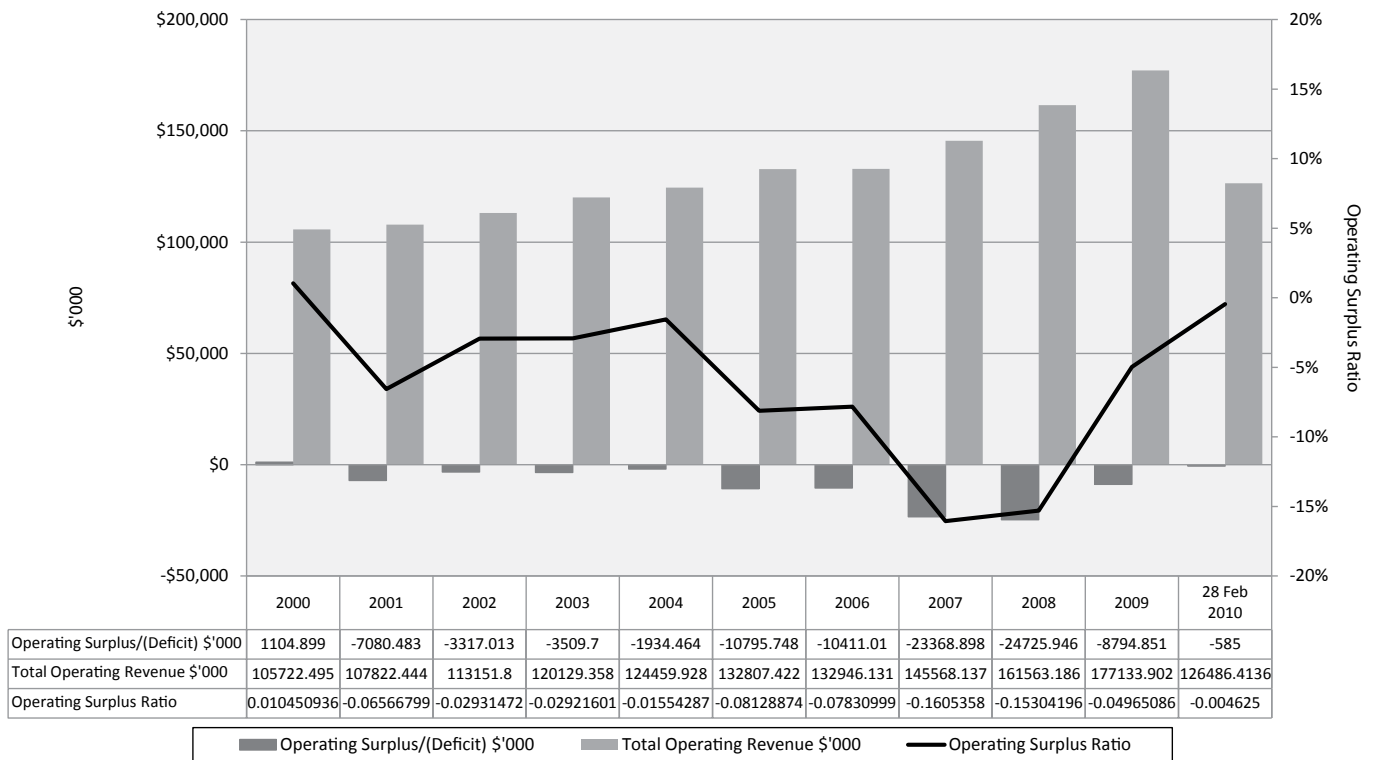


Budget

While I can't reveal any details yet, I can say that it will be a tough one. Council in tandem with our new CEO and management team has been developing a new financial strategy. The impact of the global financial crisis and a new understanding of our financial situation will need to be faced square on. Not to do so would be irresponsible. Many will remember the warning I put out during the 2008 election about the unsustainability of our financial strategy at the time.

It was a claim that was flatly rejected by the then Mayor in a letter on the eve of the election. The point I was making at the time was simple: you can't keep spending more than you are earning. It is best understood by looking at the graph below. The graph shows the revenue (\$'000) that council has collected over the past 10 years (2010 is to 31 Jan), and the associated operating loss (%) after depreciation and interest. Chickens have come home to roost.

Operating Surplus/Deficit after Depreciation and Interest on Loans



Councillor remuneration

I was pleased to move a motion rejecting a pay increase that had been recommended by the state government Remuneration Tribunal. This increase would have amounted to about \$3,000 for each Councillor, but I was unanimously supported by the rest of the Councillors. Councillors have a thorough knowledge of the budget to come and felt that it was important that if we were going to ask the community to tighten its belts, then we should show some leadership.

Thanks to you all for contacting me when something comes up. We continue to do our best to serve your needs. Until next time

Yours sincerely,

Craig Ogilvie
Councillor for Division 2
Redland City Council