

Agenda - "Think tank" meeting to gather ideas and suggestions for the new Council over the next four years.

St Bernards Hotel, 16th April, 2016, 10 am.

Suggested items for discussion

A review of planning procedures:

- Community needs time to closely examine and review the draft Planning Scheme which has been sent to State Government.
- Consultants - preference for those that have advantage of local knowledge
- Planning officers acknowledge and respond to all submitters concerns and not be dismissive of issues such as impacts on amenity
- Planning officers give both sides of arguments on planning decisions and give options of conditions for approval and refusal
- Planning recommendations be released earlier.
- Planning officers visit sites when an application is inconsistent – e.g. a request for relaxation of a standard condition such as height of a building.
- Divisional councillors be made aware of/participate in pre-lodgement discussions for any controversial proposed developments.
- Councillors be required to attend court hearings in relation to Development Application appeals (if for no other purpose than to get a feel for results of their decisions & where the legal costs go).
- A complete review of "Delegated Authority" (including approval for any subdivisions must come before Council)
- A complete review of "Certifier Approved" provisions where the intent of the Planning Scheme may be circumvented.
- As a last resort Planning functions should be sub-contracted to another Council that has professional officers as the community has little (mostly no) confidence in the current Planning Department.

A review of expenditure and revenue.

- A review of rating mechanisms (e.g. Poultry Farms/Intensive Animal Husbandry or other activities which have a high impact on infrastructure.
- A review of how rates are to be paid... e.g, pensioners not to be charged interest until arrears are beyond the next notice. Rates able to be paid off on an instalment plan between rate notices.
- Interest rates be reasonable.

- Rate increases to be reasonable.
- Expenditure to be equitable across divisions.
- A discretionary divisional allowance.
- Should there be a surcharge on rented residential properties? If so why?
- Capital Works program to be made more transparent
- Right to Information process be more in line with open & transparent governance re Council records.....e.g. costs.
- Visibility of expenditure down to specific items/expenses.

A review of environmental protection and enhancement mechanisms.

- Funding mechanisms for purchase and maintenance of special areas.
- Do we need an environmental levy? (Shire has large World Heritage listed rainforest area)
- Can tourists contribute to maintaining the values they seek and appreciate?
- A significant tree register?
- A significant view/landscape register?
- The use of local provenance street trees
- Parks to take the pressure off national parks.
- More staff with environmental & botanical expertise. (Saves some consultants' costs)

General

- Timely and meaningful replies to correspondence
- Traffic Engineers in Infrastructure Services should actively consult with community re significant projects (totally unsatisfactory = parking at North Tamborine Medical Centre, removal of parking space at Taste Buddies & more recently their changes at intersection Coomera Gorge Drive/Jenyns Rd.);
- Attention should be given to the poor quality of our much trafficked roads particularly the main route, Guanaba Road to North Tamborine. .
- Establish an off lead dog park in Guanaba Park (near Golf Course). South end lacks such a facility. .