

3. MAYORAL MINUTES

3.1. MAYORAL MINUTE - MOTIONS FOR THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION OF QUEENSLAND ANNUAL CONFERENCE

MAYORAL MINUTE

That the following motions be endorsed by Council so they can be presented at the Local Government Association of Queensland Annual conference.

BACKGROUND

Each year the Local Government Association of Queensland (LGAQ) holds their Annual Conference and AGM. As a member council, the Douglas Shire Council is entitled to present motions for consideration at the LGAQ conference to see if other councils agree by the show of a vote. If the motion presented is successfully seconded and voted by a majority, it becomes the position of the LGAQ when advocating to the State Government for legislation and policy changes.

Motion 1 - Community education on the roles and function of Local Government Councillors

The LGAQ calls on the State to administer a statewide education campaign explaining the functions of local councils and the roles that the Mayor and Councillors have in it.

The desired outcome will be to have a more informed community, giving them confidence in their local council with a clearer view to how council operates and who would be the appropriate contact when communication with council is required.

Since the Belcarra reforms there has been an even greater distance created in the knowledge of what role the Mayor and other Councillors play within their Councils organisation. This confusion heavily effects the expectations of what the community believe that their Councillors can be involved with, and the outcomes that can be accomplished by them with the powers they may have or have not.

The structure and roles of a Local Government have been defined to those within the organisations themselves but many in the local communities are still unaware of the various implications that exist and are unaware of who to contact regarding council matters that occur. Many of the issues presented to Councillors are operational which has the potential to put Councillors in positions that vary from awkward to misconduct especially in smaller communities when personal connections may be more prevalent.

Motion 2 - User pay funding for local government infrastructure

The LGAQ calls on the State Government to allow councils to set levies on rateable properties based on use as well as category.

The desired outcome would enable councils to better fund required infrastructure needed by capturing commercial businesses that operate in residential zones who adversely add pressure to councils' infrastructure with no other means of charging them.

This will allow a user pay rather than all residents having increased rates to pay for excess usage created by commercial operations operating in residential rating categories.

This will allow councils to:-

- Charge ratepayers a fairer system where user pays.
- Create more appropriate funding streams to replace and construct required infrastructure.

Background:

With the change in the way people conduct business since the onslaught of Covid-19 many councils are seeing more commercial businesses operating out of residential properties. These operations often increase the stress on councils' infrastructure whether this be by more cars on residential roads, extra strain on water and sewerage facilities or increased usage of people using public infrastructure like pathways, parks or beach areas.

Commercial businesses such as AirBnB properties operating as commercial businesses would have to be one of the largest examples of residential properties that have an added strain on councils' infrastructure with council unable to recoup these costs and being forced to pass them on to all rate payers or these within the same rateable category.

With councils being able to add a levy to a rateable property for use as well as category properties such as short term accommodation can have an appropriate levy placed on them. Businesses such as home hairdressers or beauticians that add extra strain on the water and wastewater could have a Levy added to them to counteract this extra infrastructure usage. The similar could be done for commercial businesses that create large amounts of nonrecyclable waste that would add further discarding costs for council.

We are very much becoming a user pay society and allowing council to create required revenue streams through usage levies will assist in making a fairer playing field, whilst assisting some of the many councils that are finding the reality of sustainability getting further away.

ATTACHMENTS

Nil