

Medowie Progress Association November 2011.

Councillor Geoff Dingle's Monthly Report.

The investigation report by the Department of Local Government under the guise of "Promoting better practice review" was carried out in February 2011 and the final report will come before Council on the 13th December, it will then be available on the Councils web site for public viewing. Councillors received a draft copy of this report back in early July and it has taken the DLG 5 months to finalise. The DLGs report contains 34 recommendations 25 listed as high priority and the rest medium and none are low.

Criticisms included as followed:

- Issues with Councils tendering processes
- Regular unwarranted use of extraordinary meetings
- DA's called before Council without adequate reasons or documentation.
- Use of Mayoral minutes to deal with development applications.
- Regular and unnecessary use of extraordinary meetings

I believe the DLG failed to deal with issues including:

- Code of Conduct used as a weapon.
- Financial miss-management of PSC.
- Failures to run communication and planning workshops.
- Mismanagement of the property portfolio and commercial section of Council.
- Staffing problems including vilification of some Staff members.
- Failure to address occupational health and safety performance of the Council leading to a blow out in Workers Compensation costs.

The DLG have failed our Council in addressing the real issues and instead fiddled around the edges focusing on administrative issues such as the use of 355B instead of 355C for our volunteer committees and changes to the Councillor and Staff pecuniary interest forms.

The Medowie Flood Drainage committee met on the 17th November, with only two days' notice in my case to discuss the next phase of the project: The development of consultancy specification for phase two the investigation, development of flood management and mitigation options. While a number of options were placed on the table at the meeting it was evident that despite the considerable amount of discussion which has taken place with expert presenters over the past two years including the WMA consultant there is still a lack of understanding re. the transfer levels between Moffatts and Campvale swamp systems.

The Council continues to seek agreement from some landowners adjoining the Campvale drainage system for easements and in the case of the much discussed pinch area Staff are potentially seeking compulsory acquisition of this land. The issue of the protected vegetation species Maundia grass is currently being investigated and the consultant is close to tabling a report with options available. While there is general agreement that clearing the drain to encourage stormwater water flow to the

Campvale pumps is required to reduce localised flooding, we know that the Water Authorities are not keen to pump turbid water into the dam. The issue of who pays for the works is a serious problem with PSC finances not in position to budget for the estimated \$1 million required to clear the drain and widen the pinch.

I'm very pleased to be able to announce that Dr Peter Rawlins has purchased a residential property on the corner of Abundance and Ferodale rds. to create a medical centre. This site is listed in the Medowie strategy for Commercial activities and can potentially be rezoned from its current rural residential classification. I was pleased to be able to support Dr Rawlings, in meetings with planning staff after his initial enquiries and referral through Kate Washington. Dr Rawlins has tabled his development application for the construction of a medical centre on the site with the aim of creating a multiple GP and support medical facility over a series of stages, he hopes to be up and running in the New Year DA approval pending. This is welcome news for Medowie which is currently short of medical services; our two full time GP's books are full and closed.

The super clinic funding and Hunter New England Health funding will be combined to provide some \$15 million for the Health One facility in Jacaranda St Raymond Terrace. This is of great significance to the medial wellbeing of members of the Medowie community and I have been working with the West Health committee for the past 6 years working towards developing a framework location and funding from State and now Federal governments. The facility will a house broad range of community health services including dental services, and Raymond Terrace GP's will use it as their base for consulting rooms.

I wish to thank the executive members of the Medowie Progress Association who have supported the long traditional operation of this important community forum in Medowie. I would like to wish members of the MPA a very happy Christmas and safe and prosperous New Year from my family to yours.

Councillor Geoff Dingle