



Recognising and upholding excellence in local government

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Mayor Mark Jamieson
Sunshine Coast Regional Council
Email: mail@sunshinecoast.qld.gov.au

Dear Mayor Jamieson

Subject: 6 July 2017 forum relating to cane lands north of the Maroochy River

At its August General Meeting OSCAR determined to seek clarification from you in relation to the Strategic Discussion Forum held on 6 July 2017 and which we only became aware of following wide reporting in the local media.

We understand that you and a number of other Councillors were not present at the forum in question, in your case as you were on Council business elsewhere we believe. However, we understand that you were aware of the meeting occurring and we assume therefore, the topics under discussion.

OSCAR is concerned that this forum and the actions that followed, demonstrate examples that are of ongoing concern to the community, as outlined below:

- 1 The 6 July forum item relating to the cane lands was clearly the antithesis of good governance. The fact that some councillors, despite others leaving because of the lack of due process, continued to seek actions from the State in relation to flood-prone land north of the Maroochy River is a serious breach of trust from the community's perspective.
- 2 The actions of these councillors and the CEO do nothing to engender confidence in the transparency and openness of the Council.
- 3 The attempt by a few councillors to promote changes that are out of step with the philosophy and intent of the current planning scheme demonstrates yet again that some councillors are not prepared to "play by the rules". The current planning scheme excludes development of the cane land and clearly delineates the boundaries of the urban footprint.
- 4 Should councillors wish to see greater urbanisation of land north of the Maroochy River then the appropriate planning mechanisms should apply, rather than some councillors attempting to use a "backdoor" approach as actioned at the July 6 meeting?

We presume that you advised councillors and the CEO of the appropriate way to deal with such an issue and that due processes are legislated for any suggested changes to the current Planning Scheme and for major issues, such as development of the cane lands where there has been no community consultation, that the next review of the Planning Scheme is the correct mechanism.

OSCAR would appreciate your response to the issues raised and seek your commitment to the following:

- that if not already undertaken, that you as Mayor will counsel the CEO and councillors about good governance and due process for dealing with such issues;

- the integrity of and commitment to the current Sunshine Coast Planning Scheme 2014 and all of its components; and
- that officers will be asked to outline to all Councillors and the CEO the processes for amending the existing Planning Scheme and the processes for a major review of the Planning Scheme in due course.

In conclusion, OSCAR reminds Councillors that there is great concern among many in the community across the Sunshine Coast Regional Council LGA that a number of Councillors appear to have little respect for the Planning Scheme 2014.

OSCAR and its member organisations will continue to hold the Council to account in relation to any changes to the Planning Scheme 2014 that are not the result of extensive and genuine consultation with the community and should only occur where there is a clear indication of community support for such changes.

Yours sincerely

Melva Hobson, PSM
Secretary