

Anti-social Behaviour Mayoral Column Daily Examiner May 2008.

Given the ongoing Clarence Valley community concerns regarding anti-social behaviour, alcohol, violence and crime prevention and Councils involvement and commitment thereon, I represented Council on 11th April 2008 at the second Local Government Leaders Forum for 2008 in North Sydney.

These Leaders Forums are conducted by the Local Government and Shires Association of NSW and provide opportunity to gain information and to network with other Council Mayors, councillors and senior staff on the major issues of the day.

The latest Forum discussed the reforms to three State Liquor related Acts of Parliament, which occurred in late 2007 and which come into effect this July. The responsible Minister, Hon Graeme West as well as the Commissioner for New South Wales Office of Liquor, Gaming and Racing addressed the Forum and answered questions. The reforms have been called the most comprehensive reform of State liquor laws in 25 years.

The new Liquor Act is designed to provide a modern and practical system of regulation. Licensees will enjoy more flexibility in their business operations and there will be greater variety of hospitality, dining and entertainment choices for patrons.

The legislation paves the way for the smaller restaurant wine bar (known as dine or drink restaurants) and which has been somewhat controversial because of justifiable perceptions that the number of liquor dispensing locations will substantially increase.

I was informed that the Act is also aimed at providing greater protection to communities and individuals from alcohol –related crime and harm. A new Casino, Liquor and Gaming Control Authority will replace the Licensing Court and the Liquor Administration Board,

The Local Government Association released in January 2008 an 'Alcohol and other Drugs Reference Guide'. This Guide was discussed in some detail and I believe will be of value in regard to addressing local crime prevention measures.

Whilst responding to alcohol and drug related problems is not necessarily a primary responsibility of Council, I view the Guide as a practical

resource for Council which will provide ideas and information, highlight resources available and also strategies which should assist council to tackle local social and public health issues. Council remains committed to doing all it can to support our Police and community in addressing crime prevention and anti social behaviour in the Valley.

Ian Tiley

Mayor

29th April 2008