

Clarence Valley Council concludes first term Mayoral Column 2ND August 2008.

This is my final mayoral column as the completion end of the term of the first Clarence Valley Council approaches.

Council moves into 'caretaker' mode after the closure of the Electoral Rolls on 4th August. Observing this convention means that council should not take decisions that would have substantial impacts for the next council or the community.

The final meeting of Council will be held on 26th August with Committees on 19th August.

The Mayor continues in his role until the next Mayor is elected, which is tentatively scheduled for 30th September, but subject of course to the declaration of the poll by the State Electoral Commission.

Therefore from 26th August I will be 'on duty' and available should constituents have concerns or issues that they would wish me to address or to attend civic functions.

I encourage anyone thinking of running for Council to 'give it a go'. I will be very willing to talk to any intending candidate about what is involved. Serving your community as a local government councillor is undoubtedly challenging but also can be very rewarding.

Council needs good calibre representatives. Clarence Valley Council is the largest single employer in the Clarence Valley. Oversight of the substantial council management plan and budget is a primary function of elected councillors.

The first Clarence Valley Council has taken many decisions to ensure that the Council is well placed to serve the Clarence community in the future.

However there are many challenges facing Council over the next four years and beyond. The most pressing challenge is to address the long term financial sustainability of council after 30 years of rate pegging and shrinking grants from State and Federal governments in real terms.

How council balances the need to renew existing infrastructure, provide new infrastructure to accommodate rapidly occurring Clarence Valley growth and continue to meet ever increasing community service

expectations are very substantial challenges indeed. Continuing the post-amalgamation process of advancing the 'single organisation' with same goals and values is another ongoing challenge.

Mitigating against Climate Change, ensuring environmental sustainability, addressing the rationalising of office buildings and works depots, achieving identified economic and social goals, are further challenges for the future elected representatives.

There is no doubt in my mind that Clarence Valley is very much on the move and prospects for the valley's future and for our citizens are indeed bright.

Ian Tiley
Mayor
28th July 2008.