

Parliamentary Enquiry into the Crime and Corruption Committee.
Re Logan City Council, and the investigation of the former Logan City Councillors and
their dismissal.

17 July 2021

The Chair PCCC.

Jon Krause MP.

Dear Sir,

I wish to add my voice to the enquiry relating to the handling of the CCC's investigations into Logan City Council and the Councillors who were dismissed because of a complaint from a disgruntled employee who was on probation for a period of six months.

My understanding is there was a disunity among the councillors due to the poor management of the CEO Ms Sharon Kelsey who was on probation for a period of six months.

As Ms Kelsey should report any misdemeanours and corruption to the CCC, and if she didn't, there would have been derelict of her duty.

From my understanding and belief Ms Kelsey appeared to have been part of the disunity by working along with some Councillors and not the others. Example when complaints were put into the CCC five Councillors Darren Power, now Mayor, Lisa Bradley, Jon Raven, Laurie Koranski and Stacey Macintosh had taped or were part of taping confidential meetings and relaying them back to Ms Kelsey in relation to her performance and potential dismissal.

I believe conversations were conveyed through a phone App called WhatsApp among these five Councillors and when questioned, mobile phones went missing, lost, or broken. I believe Councillor Koranski even demanded her phone to be destroyed.

The fact these Councillors got a slap on the wrist for their behaviour beggars' belief. I am upset as one of the reasons given for the CCC investigations which led to the dismissal of Councillors, Russell Lutton, Steve Swenson, Laurie Smith, Cherie Dalley, Phil Pidgeon, Trevina Schwartz, Jenny Breen and Mayor Luke Smith was the so-called secret conversations on the WhatsApp.

Two sets of rules. I am very upset for those Councillors as I know them personally and worked with some of them as an elected Representative for Division Seven before my retirement several years ago. I also happen to know a couple of the others personally.

I was approached by one of these Councillors (Schwartz) at the time of this upheaval for advice as she felt she was being pressured to vote against her conscience. I had received a phone call from Councillor Power asking me to talk to Councillor Schwartz and advise her not to vote for the dismissal of the CEO. His words to me were "I can't tell you what it is, but I am asking you to tell Trevina not to vote yes. She could possibly go to jail if she does. This is very serious."

I had already spoken to Councillor Schwartz, and she did tell me, how frustrated she was with the CEO as she felt she was fighting her all the way, especially when it came to preparing financial and budget reports for the committee." I don't know who I can go to for advice as the CEO is the person, I should be able to go to, but off course I couldn't." She said.

I don't need to go into what we, as the public were reading about these Councillors and the CEO, but I do know there was a lot of upset people when the Councillors were sacked from their positions.

There was also the fact many people thought they were criminals and corrupted because of the nature of the charges against them. Fraud? – unfortunately, some still do.

This CEO with Councillors attended a meeting at the Logan Ratepayers Association discussing the whole affair and drumming up support, while the seven Councillors that had been dismissed couldn't even defend themselves. One Former Mayor John Freeman even offered and started a GoFundMe page to assist this former CEO.

SO WRONG.

I saw more than one of these dismissed councillors go through some extremely hard times. I witnessed marriage breakdown, very severe depressions, loss of face, embarrassment, name calling, and their integrity destroyed. I know with Ex Councillor [REDACTED] had hit a low and didn't want to go out into the community even to buy the family food.

Ex Councillor [REDACTED] also hit a low and was fighting to keep [REDACTED] marriage together as well as look for employment. [REDACTED] too felt [REDACTED] couldn't hold [REDACTED] head up and I believe the others were the same.

What made it worse the other five were not only allowed to get away with what they did, they were given positions with the Administrator and were on the news so proud. My opinion sir, they should be charged too, the mobile phones episodes for a start, and I hope they do.

Why demand a phone to be destroyed and scream at the officers to do it, as Councillor Koranski did? What was on that phone? This needs to be investigated, and if the officer did destroy it, on whose authority and why? when it was public property.

To be dismissed from public office without being proven innocent or guilty is a travesty, and the CCC have a lot to answer for. Why are they themselves above the law? Why did Minister Hinchcliff meet with the five Councillors who appeared to have sided with the CEO?

I attended the Mayor's Ball that was held after the Ms Kelsey's termination, and I noticed her sitting at a table with these five Councillors. I believe Councillor Koranski had invited her. I also noted there was no talking to the other Councillors which I found odd.

As a retired Councillor, I ask the question of the inquiry, If the majority of Councillors feel the need to go into confidential meeting or in Camera, how are they deemed to colluding? as we all know sometimes discussions must be confidential. It's a sad day when you can't trust your colleagues to accept the decision of the majority, and you have to resort to this!

To justify the reasons why the other five Councillors Darren Power, Lisa Bradley, Jon Raven, Laurie Koranski and Stacey Macintosh could leak confidential information and not be charged, was extremely poor coming from the Chair of the CCC Mr Alan MacSporran, who had just publicly condemned the other Councillors for the very same thing.

What I am appalled at now Mr Chair is this, These Councillors had charges dismissed in the Industrial Relations Court and had them dropped by the DPP and for that they get nothing.

- NO public apology
- No Compensation
- No offer of support whether it be financial or other.

- Loss of Reputation.
- Cr Power "confirmed the council received a letter from the Crime and Corruption Commission (CCC) warning against any move to terminate Ms Kelsey's position if it was on the basis of her cooperation with the CCC".

Because of the CCC's actions, they were fingerprinted, had photos taken, because that's how you treat criminals right?

Why did they Minister Hinchcliff dismiss this council without waiting for an outcome from the courts?

"Immediate action must be taken to ensure the ratepayers of Logan and the residents of Logan have a council that can function," he said.

It appears to me and others the city was performing well. These Councillors were performing their duty as they were elected to do, but it appeared to, there were a few Councillors who didn't like the decisions being taken, "I speak of the pending dismissal of the CEO and the five Councillors who seem to collude together to try and prevent this from happening.

That I believe the minister should have looked at this and reminded those five Councillors, that in a democracy the majority rules.

Councillor Raven was quoted as saying" he had tried to convince the seven councillors who voted in favour of Ms Kelsey's dismissal to rethink their decision".

Councillor Koranski described her term in office as a "baptism of fire" and "welcomed the opportunity for reform". Why didn't she listen to the most senior and experienced Councillors? What was she talking about when she made that statement? Why was she appointed with other inexperienced Councillors onto the Advisory Committee? A paid position when the sacked Councillors received absolutely nothing but disgrace.

I feel that not one of the seven councillors accused of wrongdoing have been given natural justice.

Mr Hinchliffe said, "the suspended, now sacked, councillors, were innocent until proven guilty." BUT HE TREATED THEM AS GUILTY BY SACKING THEM BEFORE A COURT RULING, and the public believed him. I believe he has a lot to answer for, because these ex-Councillors have had their reputations destroyed.

After seeing the photo with Minister Hinchcliff and the five Councillors, namely, Darren Power, Lisa Bradley, Jon Raven, Laurie Koranski and Stacey Macintosh I was led to believe he was working in conjunction with the CCC and the five Councillors I have already mentioned.

Why were the seven Councillors denied the right to run for Council again? When the other five got re-elected under the guise of "*they are criminals,*" and we are not. I heard the blurb.

Will the fingerprints and mugshots of the seven Councillors be destroyed? Or will they be there forever? These councillors couldn't even go overseas on a holiday, no one would give them a job. And still not one cent of compensation from the Government. I think it's appalling.

Sir, I have deliberately not mentioned the former Mayor Luke Smith as I believe he is still facing separate charges.



After seeing this photo with the then Local Government Minister Stirling Hinchcliff MP and the five Councillors, namely, Darren Power, Lisa Bradley, Jon Raven, Laurie Koranski and Stacey Macintosh I believe the Minister was working in conjunction with the CCC and these five Councillors. This needs investigation.

I show this photo because at the time Councillor Macintosh was still employed as a Councillor. She was dismissed later because of separate charges of fraud. This makes me believe that the minister had been meeting with these Councillors prior to the dismissal.

Thank you for reading my submission, I await your outcome and response.

Yours Sincerely

Lynette Clarke J.P.Q.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lynette Clarke', is written over a solid black rectangular redaction box.

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