

TAMBORINE MOUNTAIN PROGRESS ASSOCIATION INC.

"Protecting the quality of living on Tamborine Mountain"

The Tamborine Mountain Progress Association is a 106 year old registered Community Purpose association. Its core function has been to channel the concerns and aspirations of the broad mountain community.

To this day this is a not too difficult task as an estimated approximately 90% of the population has arrived for a particular lifestyle. Isolated high on a plateau, this is country living adjacent to two very large cities, albeit minus reticulated water supply, no sewerage and only basic infrastructure. .

Herein lies the problem for our Tamborine Mountain councillors. In trying to do their best for this unique community they have constantly faced a lack of understanding, even hostility, from Council officers and the rest of the councillors who balk at addressing our extra issues and do not understand the different values held by mountain residents. .

This association is gravely concerned about the large number of complaints that have been continuously lumped on Tamborine Mountain's Division One Councillors since amalgamations in 2008. This has escalated since the formation of the OIA.

This complaint system, now adjudicated by the OIA, is easily translated subjectively and consequently is seen by many residents as a platform to attack anyone rocking the boat of an otherwise comfortably ensconced individual or group of individuals who may not be producing the best possible results for the electorate.

Due to perceived petty complaints to the OIA against our Councillors and the length of time they need to respond to these serious threats, the mountain community is deprived of a fully functioning representative for too much of his time. We need a full time representative and certainly not one to quietly sail along and not speak up for his community.

Our current councillor, Derek Swanborough has lived in the community for decades, is well known for his dedicated and ethical approach to representing his electorate and has a well known reputation for having spent about 40 years working in various councils in highly responsible positions..

Councillor Swanborough firmly believes his mandate is to produce the best possible result for his electorate as well as for residents across the shire. This is at odds with the philosophy of the current Scenic Rim Regional Council engaged primarily in elevating its shire wide profile. This has been clashing with the expectations of the many varied communities in the shire, and especially for the one off, unique world famous Tamborine Mountain.

Like his predecessor, Cr. Swanborough has made efforts to achieve greater transparency as well as better performance by Council and has been rewarded with petty nit picking and the divisive preoccupation by elements in Council hell bent on shooting the messenger.

This complaints system is now overseen and supported by the over zealous OIA eager to pursue the now avalanche of complaints. A door has been opened for excessive focus on perceived breaches of the code, most of which are eventually deemed petty.

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Steering Council/Councillors to concentrate on draconian conduct codes evokes a number of different responses. One needs to watch one's back lest one becomes a target, personal beefs can be activated or even (heaven forbid) they can be used to eliminate an adversary (human nature being what it is).

The quality of service a Council provides inevitably drops. Public perception of Council performance drops significantly and this is shown in the results of a recent review conducted by consultants engaged by Scenic Rim Regional Council to evaluate its standing in the community.

Of course there should be a narrow avenue for serious miss-deeds to be investigated. This should be a revamped and more carefully worked out complaints system not based on much useless and time wasting council officer policing which poisons the working culture of a council. The media has revealed just a few of these bizarre exercises.

This association submits that the mostly useless petty complaints system and the over zealous functioning of the OIA is seen to be doing more damage to the operation of Councils than achieving any significant benefits. To discourage the excessive number of complaints, OIA's activities should be strongly curtailed.

Jeanette Lockey,
Hon. President,
Tamborine Mountain Progress Association Inc.

14th December, 2021


www.tamborinemountainprogressassociation.com