
From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 15 December 2021 2:40 PM
To: State Development and Regional Industries Committee; Julie Wilkinson
Subject: Submission to Committee inquiry OIA

To the State Development and Regional Industries Committee

Inquiry into the functions of the Independent Assessor and the performance of those Functions.

I wish to respond to the performance of the Office of the Independent assessor.

I originally complained about mine and the community's concern of the involvement of the Scenic Rim Regional Council's Mayor, Greg Christensen, on 30 May 2021. OIA Reference C/21/00346.

The Mayor was involved in a meeting that voted to change the name of a local iconic place (Tamborine Mt Botanic Gardens) that was built over decades by community volunteers. This was done without the required public notice or knowledge of the volunteers and the wider community.

The Mayor attended this meeting and spoke in favour of the name change, to include Scenic Rim Region. He did not advise the organisation of the correct meeting procedure to alter a place name.

There were also multiple Government and Council grants approved and/or supported by the Mayor for this particular group even to the point of recommending that the Group apply for additional grants that had been sought by other groups, who had received nothing.

The Mayor then, after his actions were found to be against council protocol, ran a Council survey seeking public submission to the name change. The wording of this council survey contained false information. The Mayor claimed that the volunteers were unanimously in favour of this name change. They were never rightly informed nor given a vote but were bullied into saying nothing.

The number of signatories on the petition opposing the name change was reduced significantly. Apart from my objection to these inaccuracies, they remained on the Council survey.

I received a response on 7 June from OIA stating that my complaint had been dismissed, as, "the conduct did not raise a reasonable suspicion of inappropriate conduct." I responded with more evidence under separate mail on 7 June 2021.

Prior to the public survey being completed, new brochures were printed and distributed containing the Mayor's preferred name change. These were paid for by money allocated to the Association by Council funding.

I informed the OIA of this and that the President of the Association stated that he had Council approval to do this. Copies of these brochures, newly printed, with the new Scenic Rim name were provided to the OIA. I appealed and offered more information including newspaper reports of the situation.

On 24 June 2021 my complaints were again dismissed by the OIA, stating no reasonable suspicion of inappropriate conduct,

My issue with the OIA was that the community members involved felt that there was a definite conflict of interest and that the Mayor's behaviour was inappropriate.

The standards of behaviour that are acceptable to the OIA are not acceptable to the general public. These complaints should be given more thorough investigation. An outline of improper conduct should be made available to the public so we are not left aiming at clouds of smoke.

Julie Wilkinson

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15/12/2021