




Speech By
Joan Pease

MEMBER FOR LYTTON

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ADJOURNMENT

Slater Clifton-Walker; Wynnum, Local Newspaper

 **Ms PEASE** (Lytton—ALP) (7.03 pm): May I, too, pass on my condolences to Slater's family.

In April last year my bayside community lost the *Wynnum Herald*, our community newspaper since 1946—a financial decision by the Murdoch owned Quest newspapers. It suspended the print edition of the newspaper and transitioned to an online version accessible only behind a paywall. Suddenly, my local community was left without our local paper and its absence was strongly felt. Many of my constituents contacted my office to express their dismay and concern over the downfall of our community news outlet. Local news businesses over the world have been devastated by COVID-19, ironically during a time when people want and need a local news product more than ever.

Community newspapers are a significant asset to society. They provide a voice to and for local communities and keep them connected and informed. They are the resource we trust to keep us up to date with the latest news on local issues and events that are important to us. They are particularly necessary during a public health crisis when local information becomes imperative as part of our health response. Local news is an important form of civic engagement. It breeds the kind of citizen action that makes local journalism a useful way of keeping governments accountable. A local newspaper reflects the intricate character of its local community. It shares in the wins and the woes of the people; it creates collective feelings of hope and anger when anger is due. A local newspaper tells the ongoing story of where we are and who we are.

Luckily for my bayside community, we had a replacement local newspaper not two months after the *Wynnum Herald* hit the pavements for the last time. A passionate local, Damien Lugg decided that no local news is bad news and together with his partner, Kirsten Molnar, he set about creating the *Community Leader*, and I welcome them to the chamber today. The *Community Leader* was first distributed in June 2020. In its print version alone, it reaches 25,000 homes and businesses across my electorate free of charge. In a little over a year it has become a replacement voice in our local area and I want to share with members an extract from the first page of the very first edition of the *Community Leader* describing what it is like to live in the bayside. I think it sums up perfectly the role a local newspaper plays in uniting and shaping the voice of local communities and I thank Damien and Kirsten for their vision and commitment to the bayside—

Go for a stroll and you'll hear about this morning's sighting of dugongs, or perhaps a dolphin pod. It's the kind of place people still say 'good morning' with a smile, and the fiercest of conversations bubble about who makes the best coffee.

Thank you, Damien and Kirsten.