

EUROBODALLA SHIRE COUNCIL

PUBLIC FORUM

All members of the community who have registered have been advised that they have a **maximum of five minutes** to put their case.

Ordinary Meeting of Council on 25 October 2016

Name	Subject/Comments
Agenda Items – 10.00am	
Owen Cartledge	FBD16/059 Draft Financial Statements for the Year Ended 30 June 2016 – Referral to Audit
Peter Bernard	FBD16/059 Draft Financial Statements for the Year Ended 30 June 2016 – Referral to Audit

My name is Owen Cartledge and I am a ratepayer from Malua Bay.

This morning I wish to speak to Agenda Item 12 which refers to Councils financial obligations. I present some ideas for change together with 5 positive recommendations. The ultimate expression of individual Councillors philosophy, policies and priorities is realised in your proactive involvement in Councils budget.

The role of local government is more than the 3 R's. A comprehensive description of functions is outlined in a 2008 Ph.D thesis submitted ~~by~~ to Victoria University by our GM Dr Dale. The introductory 160 pages clearly document 6 roles for Councils.

1. Democratic
2. Governance
3. Service provision
4. Community building
5. Advocacy
6. Community planning.

(R₁) → I recommend this publication to you.

Locally, a byproduct of these 6 roles is our Council employing about 450 people and consultants. This employment together with trickle down economics is wonderful in an area of

limited employment opportunities. However, it must never be forgotten that employment is not the primary role of council. 2

Contemporary approaches to improvements in local government efficiency are well documented in the literature, notably Percy Allan from Sydney. Allan outlines scope for outsourcing, competitive practices, and economies of scale with contiguous Councils.

(R₂) → The GM provide Councillors with Allan's published work.

At the last meeting of the previous Council, Councillor Harding suggested this new Council watch very carefully developing cooperation with Bega Valley Council. I strongly support Councillor Harding. I suggest both economies of scale and competitive practices between Councils must be considered when any carve up of functions is allocated to each Council. (R₃)

I, and I believe most past and present Councillors do not understand the budget. We are confused by grant and non-grant funds,

flexible and changing depreciation arrangements,³
special accounts, general accounts, accrual and
non accrual accounting, unexpected superannuation
liabilities, SRV funds, loan funds, etc, etc.
It is difficult to assess whether the budget is
improving or deteriorating.

(R₄) → An education program presented by
non Council staff should be a top priority. This
should be designed to assist budget understanding.

Recently the ADF was courageous and
purchased Defence uniforms from China for \$9
million instead of sourcing the product locally
for \$50 million. This is the type of courage
needed by your 9 elected Councillors. Ratepayers
do not need a continuation of past protective
practices. The interests of ratepayers must be
put ahead of any staff demands.

It is your responsibility to be efficient
with ratepayers funds (NSW Councillor Handbook
p 19, 2.2.1.)

At the last meeting, Councillor
Constable suggested (with useful statistics) that

4

This Council show caution in giving the previous Council a pat on the back for their financial achievements. Perhaps Fit for Future could have been achieved by other ways, perhaps by more efficient operations. My Own

~~Small~~ inefficiency I note is: For the 3 financial years 2012/13 to 2014/15, 60% of Batemans Bay parking meter collections were available for Council works, the other 40% was spent collecting the money. I ask, what percentage of my residential rates goes to good works? What other inefficiencies exist?

(R5) → The whole question of efficiency and the ongoing SRV be revisited.

**Draft financial statement for the year Ended
30 June 2016 – Referral to Audit . Item FD16/059
25 Oct 2016**

There is no doubt that the recent election and change of leadership of the mayor , deputy mayor, decision of four first term councillors not to restand and election of six new councillors was mainly due to the lack of transparency with respect to many council bureaucratic functions ,overall transparency and relationship with resident ratepayers . If all non resident ratepayers had voted the impact may have been , due to dissatisfaction ,may have been greater. .

It believe that this should change as all new recently elected councillors have campaigned for hierarchy attitudinal change and greater transparency. If this does not occur the people of the Eurobodalla government may loose the closest form of democratic government to the people -l ocal Government . We may very well loose what we know as the Eurobodalla shire council -and the confidence of over four hundred wonderful dedicated staff who work for us .

This report appears to ignore prior input from the the community.

1.0 Why couldn't the “Draft Trial balances“ be made available for public comment at the same time as they were made to the auditors .

2.0 Who were these auditors ? . The report does not specify who are the auditors at this stage.

3.0 Were there any changes and what were these changes ?

4.0 Is there an instruction under the Local Government Act to compulsively prevent the public from viewing these changes ?

5.0 It is stated that the dead line for “draft referal report “ to council was 13 th October

6.0 What is the “draft referal report “ and is it publicly available?

7.0 Is it the same as the “ Draft Financial Report to Final Audit “

8.0. Have there been any changes recommended by the “External Auditor” .Who is the External Auditor?

.9.0 It is noted that the Financial reports must be lodged with the Office of Local Government by the 31 October 2016

10.0 Is there any reason why the financial reports cannot be put on public display

1. directly after despatch to the OIG and close on the 29 November as suggested ?

This could be the first step of the new council improving communications with this council

It will allow any interested persons to make representations to councillors . the responsible accounting officer , members of the council audit committee , the General Manager and local papers if considered necessary and above all the main Auditor Mr Carl Middington of Picher and Partners

11 Through you Madam General Manager to the RAO , who I assume is the Council Acromy for Regimental ArmyOfficer .

Sar or Madam

It is mentioned on page 36 of the report that there is a recoupment of “investment funds “through our ongoing legal action of 2.3 million dollars Page (37) . Does this icludes any legal cost recovered so far from proceeding taken and against the late Mrs Gerondal and her crippled busband ? If not would the General Manager submit a full detailed report of all details from day one of this case including the of all personal details of council involvement. This should be made available to all the

public and new recently elected councilors. It is probably the 'blackest mark on this council "since its inception in which the new faces on council have played no part ..

2 Madam General Manager It is also mentioned in the report that there was receipt and recognition in council books of significant assets dedicated to council from subdividers and other deductions, including Plant (\$4.6 m) 9 page 32 .
would you briefly describe here to day and later in writing what the means in particular regarding plant. When I Discussed this with the "Block Of Knowledge ' at the local pub the consensus of opinion was does this mean that there has been a bit of "horse trading " going on ? .

They did ask why there appeared to be no further explanation on the pages referred to these last to items referred to in this report ? As Pauline would say " please Explain