



DSRA INSIGHTS

LAUNCH OF THE DOUGLAS SHIRE RATEPAYERS ASSOCIATION (DSRA)

Ratepayers of the Douglas Shire stand and unite to have your voice heard by Council.

A group of local Ratepayers across the Douglas Shire have established the Douglas Shire Ratepayers Association (DSRA) to ensure Council are accountable for the decisions they make, the actions they take and the services they deliver using our money.

"A ratepayers association is not new to the Douglas Shire, one was in place in the early 1900s" said Sylvia Healy a founding member and President of the Association.

"It's time to re-establish this important community association to ensure Ratepayers are heard". "I think it's fair to say that there are many in the community who are concerned about some of the decisions and actions of this Council and the lack of genuine engagement and transparency". said Ms Healy

"The Council nearly committed the Shire to an ill-conceived carbon credit scheme with an initial approx. \$600K uncapped commitment over 3 yrs and a promise of millions of dollars of advertising and publicity which was never going to come to fruition, showing at the very least incompetence, and at worst a disregard for appropriate community engagement, consultation and a lack of due diligence." said Ms Healy

The major goal of the DSRA is to provide a much stronger link between Ratepayers and Council than currently exists, and to ensure more consultation and transparency when decisions are being made.

The Douglas Shire Ratepayers Association (DSRA), will be a collective voice on key issues affecting the Shire and aims to ensure the Council acts in the best interests of **ALL** Ratepayers not vested sectional interests.

*"There are many Ratepayers who have no say in Council elections because they don't permanently live here. Coincidentally a large proportion of these Ratepayers own property in units which has the highest rate in the dollar General Rates (almost double Category 1). The DSRA will give **ALL** Ratepayers a voice"* said Ms Healy.

"We are concerned by the persistent rate increases, lack of effective water resource management, and unplanned discretionary spending."

"It's time Ratepayers have a more active say in how its money is being spent and the governance of the Shire."

"We have joined forces with the Queensland Local Government Reform Association (QLGRA) who have been very supportive and provide us with valuable

information on local government reform initiatives at a state and federal level" said Ms Healy .

However, the strength of the Ratepayers Association will be entirely dependent on its membership. *"We will only get the ear of Council if we have the numbers, so we urge every ratepayer to become a member and have a say",* said Ms Healy.

*"We have had our Inaugural General Meeting, elected a committee, and endorsed the Constitution. The website is now up and running where people can find more information **and join**".*

"We urge all Ratepayers to come on board to ensure your issues are heard." "With Council elections coming up in March, now is the time to send a strong message to Council that we will be watching and hold Council representatives accountable for the decisions they make". said Ms Healy.

There will be a joint THINK TANK / DSRA public meeting on Saturday March 7th 2pm to 4pm at the Mossman Bowls Club all are welcome.

For more information about the DSRA including how to become a member go to the website www.douglasRatepayers.org.au or FaceBook page.