

## **Chamber Deputation to Cairns Regional Council 15 May 2008**

The following is summary of the presentation to Cairns Regional by the Chamber. The Chamber was allocated 15 minutes to raise issues of concern.

The Chamber was formed in 2005 principally as a result of dissatisfaction with the deal Port Douglas received from DSC.

Our Motto is:

EMBRACE our Community  
ENHANCE our village atmosphere  
PRESERVE our spectacular environment

While essentially being business based we also look to the interests of community and investors.

We have been here before to talk to DSC and this resulted in good relations, productive and co operative outcomes. We wish to continue in the same way with Cairns Regional Council.

### **RATES**

We realize that merging the rating systems of DSC and CCC is a necessary and difficult process. Business and Investors have borne the brunt of rate increases in recent years and we expect in time this can be redressed. Significant areas of difference between the two rating systems are:

- Basic rates for residence and commercial
- Minimum rates for holiday units and Commercial
- Water usage charges
- Levies for upgrading sewerage plants

Any attempt to address all these issues for 2008/2009 would create significant gains for some parts of the community and significant hardship for others. We request council to leave the existing DSC rating system in place for 2008/2009 and consult with the community on the best way to go forward so that business and community have reasonable notice of the changes before they receive their rate notice.

We support the Tourism levy and continuation of the existing funding from Council for tourism promotion.

### **INFRASTRUCTURE**

The principal infrastructure issue for Port Douglas is the Waterfront Development and we support the current community consultation process. We have no firm view on how the

waterfront should be changed or not changed but we will participate in the enquiry by design process with the hope of achieving something good for business, tourism and residents.

There are two other specific areas of infrastructure we would like council to consider for 2008/2009

Continuation of the development of the Esplanade. The DSC budget provided for \$30k in 2007/2008 but nothing appears to have happened. Considerably more expenditure is required to complete the project which was started in 2006/2007 as a joint Chamber Council project

Lighting and road reconstruction in Warner Street which in its current state is hazardous to the many visitors and locals who use this street to access the town is also a priority. Funds should be provided in 2008/2009 to address this.

## **OTHER**

The Chamber sees events such as Carnivale, New Year fireworks etc as important to promote the town as a tourist destination. We have taken the initiative for Carnivale and Fireworks in partnership with council. It is most important that these and other events continue and this can only occur with the support of council. We have written to council outlining options for 2009 Carnivale

Water supply is a matter of concern to the Chamber. DSC has spent considerable funds to get to the current situation of high quality chemical free water and we want it to stay that way.

## **SUMMARY**

We look forward to a continuing successful partnership with our councilor Julia and CRC for the benefit of the business and community of Port Douglas.