

## **We The People**

Program 110

The Rate Payers Whistle Blower



A whistle blower is a person who exposes misconduct, alleged dishonest conduct or illegal activity occurring in an organisation. History shows regardless of protection laws the whistle blower is often vilified, shamed and discredited. That vilification regularly occurs within government, the armed forces, the police and big business. It's a kind of evil mafia club mentality where if you break the rules and blow the whistle on wrong doing then just as with a wayward motor cycle gang you pay a price for breaching the code. It doesn't matter at all that the person is courageous and doing the right thing for no gain because what's right doesn't count in the eyes of the system who do not want to be accountable or challenged. To vilify an authentic whistle blower is the very worst type of corruption and morally repugnant.

Famous whistle blowers include nuclear powers Karen Silkwood, Nurse Tony Hoffman, WMD's Andrew Wilkie, Surgeon John Wright, liberties Major Bernard Gaynor and Simon Illingworth the Aussie policeman who fought corruption at great loss of personal safety and more recently Edward Snowden and surveillance. These are just a few of the whistle blowers in a very long line who deserve our admiration and thanks and all were vilified and brought into disrepute by corrupt mafia like bureaucracies and organisations.

Now Gold Coast Council has an issue where it appears well over \$100 million dollars of rate payer's money has been wasted and they won't talk about it. I have been reporting on the matter for some time now yet the whistle blower Philip Smith of Robina is just plain ignored and now the vilification has started. I have been personally advised to distance myself from him and the issue as it could hurt my reputation and limit the people who I speak to regularly about corruption and the less than perfect Council we have on the Gold Coast. I will not be withdrawing from the Council issue and the waste and I will not withdraw my support for Phillip Smith and his highly skilled and technical work on the Councils failed computer IT project. His unrewarded and unpaid work is of immeasurable importance to the public. What has occurred is unconscionable and the Council must be brought to account one way or the other. For the waste of so much money someone in Council has to be responsible for the bungle and surely the CEO must be concerned with transparency and meeting governance obligations.

The local government act of Queensland section 12 dictates Councilors must be ensure corporate plans are achieved and be accountable to the community for Councils performance. Section 13 requires Council staff to provide effective, efficient management of public resources. Section 104 clause 3 refers to the principles of contracting which must include value for money, open and effective competition, ethical behavior and fair dealing. In my opinion the matter of the \$100 million IT contract and the letting of the contract does not appear to comply with any of this. The Queensland State government web site states that local governments are accountable to the community for their decisions, actions and services and yet the Council will not speak to Philip Smith about the mountain of hard evidence he has which proves conclusively that the IT computer software project does not and will not deliver the outcome claimed by Council. The State goes on to say, processes must be effective, sustainable, and include democratic representation and social inclusion and meaningful community engagement. Well in the case of the IT project none of that appears to apply and yet if Council claim they are being transparent and open why won't they view the solid evidence Philip Smith has, which goes to the heart of the matter. It won't cost them anything and yet it will reveal a dramatically flawed process creating unparalleled waste where the initial budget of \$22 million has blown out to over \$100 million and now Council want another \$50 million dollars and give a promise that the system will work in 4 years. This is the same process that Queensland health used and surely that must ring alarm bells for the State Minister for local Government David Crisafulli. Last August live on air I asked the Mayor if he would speak with Philip Smith and view the evidence. He refused and nothing has changed since and another \$25 million has been wasted and no one seems accountable. In the meantime Phillip Smith will keep the pressure on Council to be transparent and meet its obligations under the Act and so will I.

**Until next time this is Kent Bayley**