

We The People

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Good day to you. The Council elections are getting pretty close now and when democracy has heard your voice the focus of these narratives will also switch to other things. However until the 19th of March I will keep informing you and sharing my view on this compromised Council and the restricted entourage of those with their snouts in the public trough. Let's take a moment and look at the legacy this Council, its administration and the mayor will leave. In my view it's a legacy of thought bubbles driving the public agenda and poor decisions not made in the public interest. It will be a legacy of massive waste and little accountability. It will be a legacy of spin with ramparts of deceit preventing the truth from reaching us. This has been a closed secretive Council, cynically placating the rate payer.

The independent Government News publication reported late last year that when the Queensland Office of the Information Commissioner asked the rate payers what they thought of GC Council the response was damning. The Council was labelled "secretive", "rude and insulting" and that it was "like dealing with the mafia". One rate payer said the council's communication with the public was "condescending, patronising and arrogant" and alleged that the council conducted many of its dealings behind closed doors. The legacy we inherit includes a divided community where environmental matters are ignored and green voices pilloried. The environment and the ocean and waterways do matter, while the native flora and fauna are a measure of the area's natural wealth and Council leaders who do not understand this are clearly not worthy of public office.

If Council and its culture were a living breathing entity then it would have DNA, that's the miracle code which makes up who we are and defines what we will become. So the Council's DNA can be altered by the people in it which includes both Councillors and the senior administration. Let's stick with Councillors for a moment as they at least are freely elected. Now while there are all kinds of rules to govern their participation, if they do not act in the public interest and do not subscribe to the principles of the Act, then they imbed some DNA which corrupts the way the Council thinks and operates. The end result is that these nasty political DNA strands start to change the very nature of Council and what grows from it is an aberrated deformed democracy, unworthy of the rate payers trust. In my view, for all the soothing words and all the pretty pictures this is what is occurring with the current Council. Some of the effects are almost imperceptible and that's the strategy, to change over time without notice until it's too late. A good example is the loss of four women councillors all of whom are retiring from office and will not recontest. The reasons are varied but there is a common thread which is not publicised and it's nasty. These four female councillors have apparently been subject to ongoing subtle, clever gender discrimination and their lives made more difficult in Council until they chuck it in. I understand just how debilitating this can be and can assure listeners in my view, it's very real. Another example lies in some of the candidates themselves where, if you look very carefully you will find what appears to be Tom Tate apparatchik candidates running for office who will slavishly support his problematic agenda and his methods. That's how the dark DNA works and it's a function we must drive out at this coming election.

Without wanting to sound too dramatic the core values of the Council are now so fractured and the paradigm so distorted the only way to fix it is to take some decisive voter action. There is a saying in management which relates to dealing with priorities and that is ... *"kill the snake closet to your foot"*. Like most metaphors its colourful and carries a message beautifully. To try and return Council to its proper charter and to do away with its faulty DNA rests squarely with 'we the rate payers'. We do this by voting out the vituperous vipers which in my view are or will be entrenched in this council. In the meantime think about the election surgery needed to correct dark DNA and to return the Council to 'we the people', and true accountable democracy. Vote very wisely my friends.

Until next time this is Kent Bayley