

We The People
Program 38
Gold Coast City Council Election Result



Well, the Council elections are over and it's time to do a bit of soul searching. I for one thought most of the existing councilors would be thrown out of office and they weren't which I found disappointing and odd. I thought we could expect a similar result as experienced with the State election where the existing grid locked, inept, wasteful government was swept from power as they should have been. My inside sources tell me that long standing councilors also thought it might be avalanche against them too. The expectation was driven by the very public view that Council was not functioning effectively and had devolved its power to the CEO and abdicated its responsibilities in general. Waste and poor decision making was and is rampant and measurably too. So why didn't the rout happen. Well I set my mind to try and explain this and came up with some interesting feedback from a wide variety of everyday Gold Coast people.

First up a significant percentage thought it was all about a new mayor and didn't realise they had to vote for a councilor as well. Next is the informal vote where for whatever reason the lazy voter just didn't bother to tick any boxes. Some say there was no specific charismatic leader to follow and so they didn't really understand who to vote for. Finally some just recognised the incumbents name and voted for them anyway. Notwithstanding, there were some very fine high quality candidates who had sufficient courage to address the changes needed had they been given the opportunity. The end conclusion suggests that many people weren't interested in the operation of Council and don't value their right to vote in a democracy. I find that very difficult to follow, however all that aside some further observations are in order.

We now have a new mayor who already seems confused about his stance on the light rail project and that does not bode well in these early days. Nonetheless the last mayor is gone thank goodness and while Tom Tate has a lot of promises on the table as far as I can see he has little idea about the environment or the preservation of our wildlife and native flora. Numerous local environmental groups are paralysed with fear about the lack of emphases on the environment and Mr Tate would be well advised to speak with them as soon as possible. I have invited him in for an interview on 4CRB but no response and one wonders what he is concerned about as he was so very available before the elections. I will run a watching brief on the mayor and his decision making and especially on the appalling waste of money regarding the Council's new computer system. I predict here and now that it will be scrapped and that we the rate payers will end up losing around \$70 million dollars in this fiasco. This issue is alive and well believe me and you can bank on that. If Tom Tate is really up to the job he will clip the wings of the CEO too and so we wait and see if he can stop the rot. The brand new Councilors are most welcome and we trust they will stand up and be counted with strength and purpose remembering they set the rules for the bureaucracy and not visa versa. My advice is to use common sense and not to vote for anything they don't fully understand.

In terms of re-elected councilors hopefully they will feel humbled as a number fell well short of 50% in their primary vote. This includes Jan Grew, Greg Betts and Daphne McDonald. We will watch them carefully to and see if they properly represent 'we the rate payers' by lifting their game.

To finally make sense of all this lets reflect on some quotes. *"For every action there is an equal and opposite government program"* or from Will Rogers *"I don't make jokes. I just watch the government and report the facts"*.

Until next time this is Kent Bayley