

## We The People

Program 55

Who Wants to be a Millionaire



Remember that famous song from the film High Society .... Who wants to be a millionaire.....I don't ..... who wants a lot of caviar..... I don't..... who wants a supersonic plane.....I don't, cause all I want is you. Now an aberated version may well become the theme song for the Gold Coast Council as they must feel like actors in an old Hollywood movie. In fact they are self appointed millionaires using our money in a way that's as frivolous as Frank Sinatra and Celeste Holme in the movie High Society as they drool over the silver plate in the dining room scene.

In our own Gold Coast Hollywood epic the mayor has announced a saving of \$21 million dollars on the doomed computer software project the CEO so desperately wants to see finished. You know the one they could have purchased for \$15 million and will now spent \$100 million on and absolutely no end in sight. The Brisbane Council has foolishly made the same mistake as so many others for exactly the same system and they have budgeted \$353 million. Remember when the Queensland Health system is finished its projected to cost 1.2 billion with the same software. The \$21 million saving claimed by our mayor last week is simply posturing to show council as superior money managers and they are demonstrably not. So let's have a look at this phantom \$21 million dollars plucked from thin air.

Originally the budget for the computer software was \$22 million. They have actually now spent \$87 million and stated this week it will breach \$100 million. But wait there's more as this is the figure for a **scaled back plan** as the Governance, Administration and Finance committee voted to **indefinitely defer** stage three of the project. How can you, "indefinitely defer" something because in my view that's an oxymoron. This ERP computer system is predicated on handling all of Councils systems and to create savings over 10 years. This whole of council approach is good in principle but in execution it's a disaster especially when you scale it back to save money. This is like ordering a car in three stages, first the body, then the engine and finally the wheels. If you indefinitely defer stage three you will have a car without wheels and this is precisely the case with Council's system. It simply cannot work as designed and unbelievably the bit that's missing covers rates and property which generates the income for Council. In other words when finished this outrageously expensive computer system will not even look after the Councils income from rate payers, business and developers.

Now brace yourself as I must break this news to listeners because in the back ground there are license fees each and every year of 22%. So we know that the system will cost at least 100 million dollars then we rate payers have to pay \$22 million each and every year for just owning this retched system and that doesn't include changes to the software. If you doubt what I am saying then ask your local Councilor and they will confirm it, given they even understand what's going on. If not then call the mayor.

So as you can see there are no savings at all from the budgeted amount as its already way over budget and cancelling stage three of the project means we will have a system which simply won't work as an ERP program to manage the whole of Council as planned. Put simply, you cannot save by spending more. The mayor's announcement about a 21 million dollar saving is dramatically misleading and the dreadful waste of public money should be investigated by the State government.

Who wants to be a millionaire well I do but it's never going to happen while Council racks up huge bills and waste and yet again picks the pocket of rate payers to pay for their folly. I'd like a fancy foreign car, to bath in champagne and caviar and to own a marble swimming pool too but really all I want is .....?

**Until next time this is Kent Bayley**