

A message from Cr. Jennifer Downs:

Hello again to one and all. Feel free to forward this newsletter to your networks, websites, committees and contacts - thank you.

This newsletter has attached the 'Did you Know' fact sheet which will be attached to Rates Notices due out shortly. The purpose of the fact sheet is to give ratepayers a better understanding of the Cassowary Coast Regional Council. It lists out the assets we have, and the challenges we face. Cassowary Coast Regional Council is the 20th biggest Council in Queensland, and both Councillors and staff are proudly making our way through the challenges amalgamation brought to us.

Some ratepayers will receive increases and some ratepayers will receive decreases in their rates - decisions that reflect establishing parity between the former council areas of our region. The decisions around rating are never easy, and Council did value the input of the Rating Reference Group to provide a community face to the sometimes tough decisions that must be made - to maintain our assets and to move our region forward; undertaking the myriad of services that are expected by the vibrant and diverse community that is the Cassowary Coast.

On the topic of financial challenges I think it is only fair that our residents have a right to know what their Councillors spend their time on!

So here's a quick rundown on a typical week for a regional Councillor:

Average number of meetings attended = 10. Some in 'working hours' and some in the evenings.

Average number of kilometres travelled per week = 760klm.

Average number of emails received per day = 30 Average time spent reading Agendas, Council reports, minutes of meetings, emails, submissions, making phone calls etc = ??? Hard to say - varies!!

I am particularly conscious that ratepayers expect to see value for the salary they are paying Councillors and as I pride myself on being honest and transparent I would like to provide to you a snapshot of a typical working day. My working day can begin as early as 7.00am when I answer emails and prepare for that days round of meetings and appointments. If time permits - a quick walk to energise my brain, then it is into the car and off to all points of our region, making and returning phone calls as I go. Last week I attended meetings in Cardwell twice, Tully four times, Innisfail once, as well as two meetings at Mission Beach. Having been recently been made an Honorary Member of Mission Beach Rotary, (something I am very proud of) I am also committed to providing some community service through that group where I can. I enjoyed serving steak sandwiches at the Banana Festival for the Mission Beach State School!

A large portion of my time has been devoted to the Bikeway/Walkway Strategy with the consultants engaged by Council holding Community meetings in Innisfail, Tully and Mission Beach. I attended all the meetings, including the Government Stakeholders meeting and am energetically lobbying for the completion of bikeways/walkways over time for the whole region.

It has been an intensive year and so I will be taking a 3 day break later this week to re-charge my batteries so I can get ready for the last quarter of the year - sure to be as busy as all the rest.

Warmest good wishes to all in the Cassowary Coast Region - Jennifer.

Jennifer Downs - Councillor
Cassowary Coast Regional Council.

A. P.O. Box 887, Innisfail, Qld. 5852.

E. jdowns@ccrc.qld.gov.au<<mailto:jdowns@ccrc.qld.gov.au>>

T. 0400 330 870