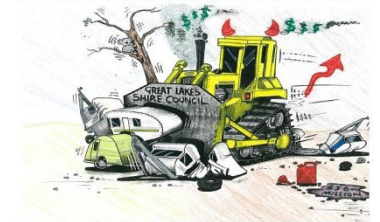


Friday, April 9, 2010

The off-season is about to get worse



Council's proposal to change the Jimmy's Beach Caravan Park could make the off-season for local business' even worse.

Council plans to kick-out more than 60% of semi-permanent caravan residents, the same people who spend time in the area long after the seasonal tourists have gone, these residents continue to buy the paper, get a coffee, play golf, pop into the hardware store and eat locally.

Many of these residents are proud to be part of local community clubs and organisations and spend a good part of the year here. More than 40 families are being kicked out to make more space for the high season of tourists... which we all know does not last.

We know during the off-season how hard it is for local business'; but clearly Council don't care enough to factor this into their plans.

They are like so many investors we have seen come and go who think they can rent out accommodation year 'round to transient holiday makers... but locals know how this scenario pans out. Don't let your Council make this same mistake with your business.

As ratepayers you are in for a double hit.

Council could be borrowing millions from the Department of Lands to make these changes to three local parks... are you prepared to repay their loan if their half-baked assumptions fail? Council claims they have a sound plan to upgrade parks which will be able to pay off the loan and rate payers won't be hit with another bill... do you trust them?

Even residents at the Jimmy's Beach Caravan Park, who want to see upgrades, don't believe their plan will work. They believe you could be stuck with the Council's bill and don't think this is fair on anyone.

As a business owner make Council justify:

- decreasing your off-season business;
- why they are spending money on this and not local infrastructure which is badly needed?
- why they can't afford to run the tourist information office, yet could find the money to market the new park?

You know this market, you know this could be headed for trouble, even if their consultants are painting a rosey picture.

Voice your concern and send Council back to the drawing board for a better plan, one which won't hurt your business.

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