



It's not hard to imagine a warm winters day on the Gold Coast after a cool night and then to appreciate the peace, tranquility and winters rays on the back of your neck. This is the best time of year to be here and there is no better place to retire or raise a family. At Palm Beach off Jefferson lane, beach side resident Eral Dettrick revels in the morning sun with a cup of tea and the news paper. Eral will be the first to tell you living on the beach is the best thing that's ever happened to him and it has taken a life time to realise the dream. As with so many Australians he and his wife have worked hard and earned their retirement and hope for many happy years to come. However his peaceful moment is broken with the sound of voices coming from below him on the beach. You see its channel 9's A Current Affair program interviewing some bloke in a collar and tie who looks out of place to say the least. So Eral wanders down to see what's going on only to find Councilor Paul Taylor being interview regarding the fences on the rear boundaries of the beach front properties. These low profile fences are council certified being an open wire mesh between treated pine posts.

It appears that Councilor Taylor has unilaterally decided that these modest fences are an eyesore and should not be on the beach as they will drive away tourists. Comments from people sun baking and swimming clearly indicate there is simply no problem. What makes Councilor Taylors quest a real nonsense is that the residents have placed the fence on the boundary of their own property. Residents will tell you there are an array of reasons for doing this from stabilization of the sand to safety issues and kids but in any case **it's their land**. This is the real issue.....they bought and paid for it just like the rest of us. Now why Councilor Taylor really has his swimmers in a knot is unknown to me but he persevered on camera until our bare foot Eral joins the interview in his favourite shorts and shirt which his wife has threatened to throw out many times. From here on the good Councilor doesn't fair too well and looks as though he hadn't done his homework with Eral simply stating the facts calmly and honestly. What's even more interesting is that it's not even the Councilors division and he doesn't represent the people of Palm Beach in terms of divisional representation. In fact he is a long way from his political home.

A current Affair calls this strip along Jefferson Lane, millionaire's row as does the Bulletin. It's a divisive title which in some childish way seeks a bigger headline or to create anger with the have not's and others. Now, I met with a group of Jefferson Lane residents and some appear well off and some are on the pension having lived there for many years. Most of the older folk have left however mainly due to having to pay Council rates of around \$10,000 a year for exactly the same services a modest cottage would pay at the back of Nerang. If we had a Council of Courage they would tackle the inequity of the rating system but even in the face of these unfair and horrendously expensive rates at least one Councilor thinks they shouldn't fence their own property. So why all the hoo-ha and if the council want the land then they can pay for it although that won't happen as the Council owes about \$800 million on our behalf and its rising. In other words they can't afford to purchase it and in any case the residents may not want to sell, as it's their land. If Council has any thoughts about fiddling with free hold land it would a constitutional outrage. I suspect Councilor Taylor is swimming outside the flags on this one.

While we're on the subject of financial accountability and priorities, many will be familiar with the appalling waste and mismanagement from Council regarding their self inflicted computer software debacle. This has recently re-emerged yet again where they want to throw more money at the problem rather than just admit they made a dreadful error and have wasted over \$100 million dollars of our money. In fact Councilor Taylor was briefed by insightful resident Philip Smith after he was elected to Council on the extent of the computer software mess. However in my view Councilor Taylor appears to have done nothing with the evidence and appears preoccupied with Palm Beach folk fencing their own property outside his division. Perhaps he would do well to address the needs of his constituents more often and when it comes to some whole of Councils issue then address them with vigor. In the mean time I hope all the good residents of Jefferson lane have a lovely day enjoying the fruits of their labour and as far as I'm concerned these are good people and good Australians who do not need to be bothered with a lone Councilor creating stressful political headlines.