



Good Day to You. This story is about the Queensland Government Office of the Independent Assessor and I don't blame you for glazing over at this point. Nonetheless it's an important topic and will form useful knowledge. Lets refer to them as the OIA for ease and their charter is new and specifically to investigate and assess complaints about councillor conduct which is long overdue. The OIA provides information about dealing with alleged or suspected inappropriate conduct, misconduct or corrupt conduct of councillors, local government employees and the public. They prosecute misconduct offences via the Councillor Conduct Tribunal. So if you live on the Gold Coast this is a new mechanism for dealing with Councillors who believe they are above the law or act improperly or unethically.

Now for my part and in the public interest, I am making a complaint about the conduct of the office of the mayor for some outrageous and insulting letters received from them after I requested information about the now infamous ERP or LGP software project which it appears has been over spent by hundreds of millions of **our dollars**. In a rare lucid glimpse of councillors general contempt for the public they wrote back and accused me of being a "*shock jock with a waning career*" and that I could go and "*yell at the clouds*" as much as I liked and referred to my concern as "*pushing my barrow of perpetual consternation*" and stated they weren't going to communicate any more.....nasty arrogant conduct indeed. This was in 2016 and I submitted a formal complaint about this conduct with the Council's CEO at that time. Of course nothing came of it because the fox is in charge of the hen house but now through the Independent Assessor I will endeavour to test their standards of conduct again.

Of more significance is a matter which has been raised by the good citizens trying to stop the mindless and environmentally reckless Chinese tourism development in the middle of the Tallebudgera flood plain. How these entirely unsuitable development applications are even considered is beyond me because they are not allowed under the city plan just like Komune or Carrara. In the case of Tallebudgera the proposed development is bang in the middle of the flood plain which experiences fast flowing water when flooding and blocking the flood path will have a catastrophic effect on people up and down stream. Consequently locals are doing what they can to stop it in the public interest and I applaud their resolution up against a large Chinese company and the might of the Gold Coast council, armed to the teeth with rate payers funds as a bottomless pit of money **to fight the locals. There is something very wrong with this system.** Now the Chairman of the local group is solicitor Jim Wilson who I know to be an honest and forthright person of integrity. He has written to the OIA and was told that they can't help as they do not deal with complaints about decisions of Councillors. They only deal with the **conduct** of Councillors. However Jim Wilson says that '**conduct**' is measured by peoples actions and decisions. So he has written back to the OIA and makes a strong case for the complaint that Councillors are not always conducting themselves in the public interest with decisions on these kinds of matters, because they approve so many developments that unequivocally breach the city plan. In other words, where Councillors make decisions in breach of the public interest or contrary to the city plan, they are conducting themselves either inappropriately or as misconduct and therefore must be held accountable by the OIA. It appears a potent argument based on the public interest and common sense and indeed any reasonable definition of **conduct**. This period of dictatorial careless local government must be brought to an end and I think we will see that early this year.

Until next time this is Kent Bayley