



TOURISM MINISTER NOT IN THE REAL WORLD

Member for Noosa Glen Elmes said he hoped the members of the Local Government Reform Commission were more in touch with the many different local government areas and their communities than the Minister for Tourism is with her portfolio.

Mr Elmes said it was rather alarming that the Minister for Tourism did not recognise the significant differences between Noosa and its southern neighbours and her comparison to the Gold Coast was completely off beam.

“Noosa is a significantly different identity to the Gold Coast and a different identity even to it’s neighbours Maroochy and Caloundra.”

“I understand that Mrs Keech has been talking up the benefits of amalgamation saying it would kick-start the region’s tourism industry by giving councils more financial clout to better market the Coast.”

“If Mrs Keech was across her portfolio she would know that tourism in Noosa Shire is worth more than \$900 million per annum.

“The Noosa brand is a separate and very successful marketing campaign; Noosa doesn’t need it’s tourism industry kick-started!”

“If Mrs Keech had bothered to concentrate on her portfolio she would know that there is a remarkable difference between each of the Sunshine Coast shires, their tourism industry and attractions and the money each shire generates in tourism”.

“But it’s not just about tourism,” Mr Elmes warned.

“Noosa residents know that a forced amalgamation would have a negative impact on every single aspect of community life from reduced service provision right down to employment and the viability of small business.”

“Noosa Council is the largest employer in the shire”.

“It has always been a progressive Council in terms of planning, development, infrastructure and most notably in regard to it’s environmental integrity and it is this that sets Noosa apart from other regions.”

“Financially it has been strong and stable and without undue interference I am confident it will continue to prosper and provide the type of lifestyle that Noosa residents came here for.”

Mr Elmes said that in 2005 then Minister for Local Government & Planning, Desley Boyle applauded Local Government when it voted to look at boundary changes, amalgamations, regional arrangements and cost sharing setting aside \$25 million to allow Councils to explore amalgamation, joint delivery of Local Government services or regional arrangements.

“The Size Shape and Sustainability study has been king-hit and the democratic process thwarted by a government drunk with power,” said Mr Elmes.

ENDS

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