

### **Statement by Mayor Karen Williams – 28 May 2015**

The recommendation to establish the Development Industry Reference Group was made under the previous Council, which often omitted me from deliberations. I had no involvement in the original recommendation but supported the reference group's establishment through the operational plan, as did other councillors. I have had no other involvement with the DIRG other than in receiving the same reports as other councillors.

The recommendation to set up the group was recorded at a development forum convened by the previous Melva Hobson-led Council. That forum was conducted under the authority of former senior officers Toni Averay and Bruce Macnee. The Industry Reference Group which resulted from that forum met for the first time in March 2013, under the Chairmanship of Mr Macnee. This technical group was later chaired by Council's Group Manager City Planning and Assessment David Jeanes.

This DIRG since its formation has been an operational group, recommended, established and driven by Council officers. Officers also invited expressions of interest and determined membership of the group. Councillors have not been involved in its operational activities or its work.

The fact the group was established and operational was known by councillors, and references to its work have been included in a number of reports to Council – and therefore councillors - since its establishment. There has been absolutely no secret about its existence.

With regards to your other questions, I had no input into the membership, terms of reference or functioning of this group aside from what all councillors received through public reports and our support for the operational plan . I have not attended a meeting of the DIRG. Only Cr Boglary has requested to attend meetings. She was invited, and attended as an observer on 14 May 2015. This is not a forum for councillor involvement.

I refer you to the email dated 22 May 2015 to you from General Manager Corporate Governance Nick Clarke in response to your previous questions about this group. The terms of reference have now been posted on Council's website, as have the names of members of the group. It is worth noting that there is no mention of councillors in the group's terms of reference, suggesting its purely operational focus.

All of Council approved the workings of this group through the operational plan. It is a technical working group and I trusted the officers to act professionally, and strictly to their code of conduct at all times, to achieve the best outcomes for the City.

The DIRG is neither a political nor lobby group. It is an operational technical working reference group to seek feedback on process and performance. Councillors were not encouraged or invited to participate or to contribute.

Any suggestion it is anything other than a legitimate operational group without involvement from councillors is to twist the facts. Any suggestion by any councillor that they did not know of its existence is demonstrably wrong and one might question their motives when it can easily be proved that councillors received regular reports regarding the group.

It is the role of elected representatives to set the policy direction of the Council. The day to day operational work is the responsibility of the CEO and Council officers.

I refer you to information currently available on Council's website: a statement made by CEO Bill Lyon and a link to information about the DIRG:

<https://news.redland.qld.gov.au/2015/04/get-the-facts-reference-group-claims-false/>

<http://www.redland.qld.gov.au/AboutCouncil/Committees-and-Working-Groups/Pages/default.aspx>