

Government assistance vital to grow major local events



City of Penrith RSL sub-Branch representatives (in blue) personally thanked local, state and federal politicians for their recent support of local events

DALE DRINKWATER @daledrinkwater

The City of Penrith RSL sub-Branch says government funding is crucial when it comes to hosting important local events.

On Monday, sub-Branch representatives personally thanked Penrith Mayor Ross Fowler, State Member for Penrith Stuart Ayres, NSW Minister for Veterans Affairs David Elliott and Federal Member for Lindsay Fiona Scott for their recent assistance in various events.

Sub-Branch President, Mick McConnell said government assistance is needed

to improve events such as the Sunday community marches, Dawn Service and supporting schools.

In saying thank you, politicians were presented with a picture book of Penrith events over the last year.

"We gave them a photo book of previous commemorations and functions this year and I think they really liked that as a bit of a memento for them," Mr McConnell said.

The Penrith CBD Corporation hosted the morning tea. CEO Gai Hawthorn said the politicians were pleasantly surprised.

"They were a bit chuffed that someone actually thanked them," she said.

Mayor's News

The weekly views of Penrith's Mayor



More say through community panel

Penrith Council is undertaking an exciting and innovative new direction in deliberative democracy with the formation of a Community Panel comprising of everyday people to help shape the City's future.

About 35 people from all walks of life will be selected to form the Panel. It will comprise everyday people who represent our diverse communities. These people have jobs, leisure pursuits and families similar to the rest of us and they are being given the opportunity to comment and make recommendations on Council's services and assets.

We will arm them with detailed information on the opportunities and challenges Council faces as well as detailed information on our finances and resources.

The Panel will recommend ways to improve the work we do, to put Council in the best position to move into the future. In simple terms, more

decision making power is being given to community members.

To keep the process independent of Council the Community Panel selection, engagement and workshops will be undertaken by the new Democracy Foundation, a not-for-profit research group, who focus on best practice citizen engagement and democratic innovations.

The Community Panel will meet six times from September to December.

Throughout the process Council will keep the broader community updated as to what is happening with information at www.yoursaypenrith.com.au/community-panel. Community groups and other individuals can also provide comment here.

Change brings opportunities, but challenges as well.

It is more essential now than ever, that Council and community work even closer together.

ROSS FOWLER OAM

Mayor of Penrith

Parking pain continues but there's some relief ahead

DALE DRINKWATER @daledrinkwater

45 more parking spaces for the Penrith CBD are now on their way, and are expected to be completed before the end of the year.

Penrith City Council has approved to transfer unofficial parking on the corner of Castlereagh Road and Jane Street into the control of Transport for NSW (TFNSW).

A TFNSW spokesperson said while still finalising agreements with Council, the transfer is expected to allocate 45 temporary car spaces consistent with the adjoining car park.

"Subject to final design, approximately 45 car spaces will be constructed on the corner of Castlereagh Road and Jane Street, and are expected to be available by the end of the year," the spokesperson said.

"The current informal parking in this area would be unavailable to commuters during construction however, around 150 spaces were opened on Jane Street and Lord Sheffield Circuit this year."

The ongoing lack of parking has not only caused issues for locals who commute for work, but also those who work in the CBD.

Belle Henry, from Blaxland, lives just 10 minutes from work at Penrith Westfield,



Belle Henry, from Blaxland, struggles to find parking for work at Westfield

and has to leave at least half-an-hour early to find parking.

"It's ridiculous trying to get parking, sometimes there's absolutely no spots," she said.

"The thing is, people park here (Castlereagh Road and Jane Street) to catch the train when there is a whole multi-storey car park on the other side of the station."

Miss Henry said 45 car spaces may not be enough, but hopes that they are finished before Christmas.

"During Christmas shopping it's really bad," she said.

Park is a waste

From all reports, it looks like Penrith City Council has caught the dreaded "Clover Syndrome". Instead of using ratepayers' hard earned contributions to build much needed infrastructure such as additional parking stations, they have decided to waste \$2.5 million on a so-called "pop up park" at the western end of the main shopping precinct. If feedback from the locals is any indication, there is a lot of objection to this waste of money. Councillors seem to have been caught up with the 'kumbaya' philosophy that is permeating through all our city/municipal Councils. Councils must realise that they have been put where they are by ratepayers they are supposed to represent, so start representing instead of pursuing some sort of radical social agenda.

KEITH EVERETT, VIA EMAIL