BCE Chairman's Report 2014

Another year has passed and I believe we have again showed what a team of volunteers with a passion for their community can achieve.

To start the year off we were approached by Greg Smith chairman of the Don River Improvement Trust to coordinate another ministerial meeting as he was concerned that progress on removing sand from the river wasn't happening following Minister Cripps' promises at the forum we coordinated last year. After discussions with Member for Burdekin Rosemary Menkens and Nikki Wright from DSDIP it was decided that it wasn't necessary as all the appropriate steps were underway. To see the river running with a clear flow on Saturday and the understanding that 3 operators are drawing sand for commercial purposes is a win win all round, not only for our economy but the safety and we'll being of a fair proportion of our population and something that we should be proud we played a part in.

A major concern this year has been the enforcing of the TLPI on the Bowen building industry, and after being raised at one of our meetings, contact was made again with Rosemary Menkens and Nikki Wright about what government help was available to ensure a practical outcome. In short the Deputy Premier has stated recently on ABC news report that the Morton Bay Regional Council has been directed to remove all climate change reference from their strategic plan, and I believe that this would be similar for the Whitsunday Regional Council.

Our major push this year has been promoting and reigniting the interest in Urannah Dam. Peter Tayler suggested that we aim to set up Statement of Interest Meeting here we get potential users, investors, builders, government representatives from all three levels as well as the relevant government departments around a table and we have been slowly heading that way.

Our key is obviously Dave Nebauer who has agreed to chair a steering committee as he has the passion and knowledge to present the practicability and value that this dam could make to not only the Bowen and Collinsville regions, but for the whole of Queensland with the water from this dam making the future development of the Galilee mining precinct along with the Bowen Basin a possibility.

 It was decided from the outset to work with WMDL and DISDIP, with the result being Whitsunday Growth Corridor Development Plan becoming a project of regional significance.

Some of the presentations of this plan that we have made so far.

Urannah traditional owners

Urannah Station lease holders

Northern Australia Senate Inquiry

ROC

Queensland Deputy Premier Jeff Seeney

Member for Dawson George Christensen

Member for Burdekin Rosemary Menkens

Member for Whitsunday Jason Costigan

Member for Capricornia Michelle Landry

Launch of the Deputy Premiers Regions Q in July there was significant support by participants from across the whole Mackay Isaac and Whitsunday regions.

Terry Pilcher is moving forward in working with Queensland Transport on expanding the NQCYC marina and this is a direct result of our boat harbour lease holders meeting and the continuing work on an overall concept plan by Queensland Transport for individual developments to happen in the boat harbour precinct.

Our Accommodation Register was called on by the Deputy Premiers office at short notice for potential contractors at Abbot Point and is something we should revisit early in the new year to ensure our local places are known.

BCE supported WMDL in showcasing Bowen to a Chinese delegation. The potential of our region for food exports was highlighted with visits to Arabon Seafoods, Bowen Boat Harbour, and VJ’s Produce.

A working group was set up for find a way to maintain our finances which consisted of Ross Meier, Danial Rochford and Terry Pilcher and the group have come up options that could deliver an income for us whilst maintaining our independence. The start this we have been very fortunate to receive $1500.00 towards our secretarial services from Glencore, and we are truly appreciative of Peter Tayler for making this happen, along with a donation from QCCU.

We supported Tourism Bowen and Business with $5000 towards guaranteeing the inaugural Bowen Superboats which turned out to be money we'll invested, with it now scheduled to be an annual event following reports that at least 3 businesses had their biggest trading days ever over that weekend.

2014 saw a good variety of presentations and opportunities for feedback including -

Glencore – Bernie O’Neill (January and November)

GFB Fisheries – Justin Forrester

Greg Smith - Don River Improvement Trust

Cameron Thompson - QCCU and MITEZ

Bianca Walker – BDGA

This year we have lost 4 of our members through change of circumstance.

Kevin Collins - Council Representative replaced by Andrew Willcox

Matthew Magin - North Queensland Bulk Ports representative replaced by Gary Riches

Robyn Dyer - TAFE yet to be replaced with the changes within that organisation

Danial Rochford - WMDL replaced by Jeff Aqualina

In conclusion I would like to thank all members for their support and attendance over the last year especially Ross Meier and Mardi Mathieson for the organising of the meetings. It is with this support that we can play our part in securing a future for Bowen and Collinsville while fitting in with the overall Whitsunday region.

Stephen Darwen

Chairman