

6th April 2010

Country Mayors Association meets.

Shoalhaven City Mayor Councillor Paul Green attended the Country Mayors Association Meeting on March 19th that was addressed by NSW Liberal Party Leader Barry O'Farrell.

In his speech, Mr O'Farrell outlined his vision for local government which includes the establishment of a 20 year State Infrastructure Strategy that would not be influenced by the three year election cycle.

The conditions surrounding the strategy would mean that it would no longer be possible to withdraw decisions when power changes hands at the state level.

Chairman of the Country Mayors Association, Councillor Keith Rhoades says "this would give local communities the security of knowing that the promised infrastructure that we often so desperately need, would be put in place regardless of the colour of the party in charge." He went on to say "It was also heartening to learn that as well as committing to infrastructure provision, a coalition government would re-focus on quality services, restore accountability and protect the local environment by returning planning powers to the people"

Other areas of interest outlined by Mr O'Farrell were a commitment to a ban on forced amalgamations of councils and a reassessment of planning rules to allow state and local government to plan ahead and negotiated acquisition of property when it is required by the state.

The Association has extended an invitation to the NSW Premier Kristina Keneally to address the Association who are looking forward to her comments on current and future policies and decisions.

Clr. Green was encouraged by Barry O'Farrell's presentation at the meeting and looks forward to future policies from the opposition on how they intended to deal with rate pegging, road funding and waste services.

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