

MEDIA RELEASE

Cr Michael Kerr enters 2020 Douglas Shire mayoral race as a candidate focused on a new decade of prosperity and community building.

Douglas Shire Councillor Michael Kerr has today confirmed his run for Mayor at the March 2020 Douglas Shire Election. Following a further groundswell of support received after the recent Gazette opinion piece and motivated by the desire to positively lead Douglas Shire into an exciting new decade ahead, Cr Kerr is ready to hit the ground running if elected.

Finely tuned to the community's needs and concerns through his roles as President of the Homeless Animal Society and Boarding Kennels Inc., President of the Douglas Theatre Arts Group Inc. and via ongoing involvement with many other local groups, Cr Kerr is uniquely positioned to take on this exciting challenge.

Running as an independent, he brings a fresh, transparent and balanced approach. "Being Mayor would be an absolute privilege but is something earned through the respect of constituents, whom I am told want change and want a Mayor who understands their concerns and difficulties," Cr Kerr offered.

During his four years as a Councillor, he has become acutely aware of a steady increase in resident dissatisfaction accompanied by growing financial hardship, citing the distinct want for greater transparency and open community consultation in the way Council operates, led by a Mayor with a clear and balanced vision. "While I'm people-focused and always ready to listen to local concerns, strong and confident leadership is important to ensure those concerns are actioned," Cr Kerr stated.

His vision for Douglas Shire is sensitive to its history and environment whilst being strong, bold and transformative. "I believe we must create and swiftly enact a sustainable recovery, development and economic growth plan to return Douglas to somewhere people want to live and invest in with confidence. We must prioritise water security, road maintenance, and work harder to develop aesthetic and usable public gathering spaces, all which I believe are the basic foundations of council."

In terms of development and commerce, Cr Kerr is committed to a sensible approach based on need, not greed, with more affordable housing for aged and employee's, a want to create non-hospitality jobs for year-round employment, construction of a safe swimming alternative in Port Douglas, a strong commitment to support for the Botanical Gardens & Powering the Daintree and investigate an economical yet reliable solar powered regional transport system connecting Mossman, Port Douglas and Greater Douglas areas high on his agenda.

Plans and policies would be conceived or amended to alleviate many issues locals feel strongly about, including: A "Water security level of service strategy plan" and a thoroughly consulted, "Climate Change and Carbon Policy Strategy Plan", all which will be suitable and appropriate for a small regional tourism council like Douglas, if he is successful.

Cr Kerr adamantly believes that Douglas Shire Council must find other revenue streams to prop up needed expenditures. "I do not believe that the people of Douglas Shire would continue to accept any further substantial rate increases." he said.

Cr Kerr also feels strongly about caring for the Shire's ageing population, determined to facilitate ways of supporting them in and towards their retirement. "Many have given so much, and now need affordable and suitable accommodation as they grow older. Without this they are being forced to leave their communities. To leave the place they call home."

When asked about prospective Councillors, Cr Kerr is confident he can work with whomever the people elect, saying "I only ask that the new Council comes together with an open mind, but, most importantly, remembering they are the voice of the people who elect them."

Cr Kerr's official election campaign will commence early next year as he still holds a Councillor position and meetings are still to be completed. In the meantime, he is available to the community and anyone wishing to connect with him. Updates about his campaign and drop-in-meeting times will be announced on his website www.michaelkerr.com.au and through his social media once the campaign commences.

For further information or comment regarding the election campaign, contact: -
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Cr Kerr is still available for Council related matters on michael.kerr@douglas.qld.gov.au