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20 NEWS

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YOUR GOLD COAST

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Gold Coast Bulletin

COAST WANTS ACTUAL COPS

STOP playing semantics, Premier.

Stop hanging your police commissioner out to dry by claiming he has responsibility for budgeting and police numbers on the Gold Coast every time the going gets tough in the *Bulletin* and in Parliament.

Yesterday the Gold Coast learned, as a result of a fiery question time, that there will be no drug squad based here despite increasing overdoses; despite out-of-control production, peddling and use of the dangerous drug ice; despite the acknowledged link in many instances between illicit drug use involving ice and steroids, and domestic violence; despite the armed robberies, break-ins and bashings that go with the illegal drugs industry; and despite the misery caused to thousands of families having to live with addicts or cruel partners, and the hurt suffered by victims of crime.

The Government will also not channel any of the \$60 million left over from Commonwealth Games funding to policing, even though the city's northern suburbs in particular are feeling the impact of soaring crime that is accompanying a soaring population.

Police Minister Mark Ryan likes to tell Parliament the Government does not hide bad news, yet in the raging debate about police numbers on the Gold Coast over the past two weeks he and the Premier have given changing and conflicting figures on how many officers there are.

The latest strategy is to talk about approved figures rather than actual.

What's in vogue at this moment is an "approved strength" rather than "actual strength". In a ministerial statement to Parliament this week, Mr Ryan said the Coast's approved strength is 1015. That sounds much better than the 842 Premier Annastacia Palaszczuk cited when debate began in earnest out last month (OCT 11).

Now we're practical lot here on the Gold Coast. We like to deal with the actual - and when we look at the actual figures, we know we're being duffed, despite the weasel words of people in power.

Based on the Premier's figure of 842, the Gold Coast is actually down 44 on the 886 officers it had in 2016. Not only that, but before the election in November a year ago Ms Palaszczuk actually promised the Gold Coast would be allocated an extra 44 police. That has yet to eventuate.

And that means we're actually down 88. Labor's Gaven MP Meaghan Scanlon, herself the daughter of a hardworking police officer, was elected in part off the back of that pledge. She is the Government's only representative for this city.

It is time the Palaszczuk Government honoured its promise and began doing its job of protecting all Queenslanders, instead of playing games with words and figures to protect itself.

GOLDEN WARDS

EVERY day miracles unfold in the wards of the Gold Coast's public hospitals, and there are many sad stories too. But based on the huge figures tossed about in Gold Coast Health's annual report, one of the miracles is surely the way the service is able to handle a tidal wave of demand, with the emergency departments dealing with more than 171,000 patients in a year.

YOUR VIEWS

WRITE TO: PO Box 1, Southport 4215 EMAIL: letters@goldcoast.com.au FACEBOOK: facebook.com/goldcoastbulletin

Decisions we make today will determine city's tomorrow

ARE we the victims of our own success? Do we take a leaf out of Trump's book and build a wall to stop people moving here? If we don't, how do we house them, create jobs or get them around a linear city as their vehicles clog the roads?

There are a lot of reasons why people object to encroachment of highrise development in what they see as idyllic neighbourhoods - lifestyle, economic, change and emotional attachment.

On the flip side our city leaders and to some extent, we as a community, have to contend with growth. As a founding and long-standing former member of the Light Rail Business Advisory Group, let me advise you the issue

of growth was a significant consideration in the planning and make-up of this project.

The argument has been put that high-density development is the cost of making the light rail a sustainable project, suggesting it was a plot to line the pockets of developers. In fact, the light rail is there to address current and future public transport needs with the added benefit of addressing future growth. It is also a live project that will form the backbone of an integrated system to move people throughout our city.

Some may see the result as the same, but the motivation has been misrepresented.

This is and will continue to be a highly charged emotional de-

bate that will polarise the city. Our councillors are between a rock and a hard place given that they must decide between the expectations of their constituents and addressing future growth.

We all remember the disruption during the light rail construction, the upgrading of our main roads and underground infrastructure around the city, even the current widening of the M1. This is all necessary to deal with growth. Had our previous city elders envisaged what we would become, perhaps this would not be necessary but then the cost at the time would have been prohibitive.

It's a tough call. Few of us would like to be in the position to have to make it, but those who

are, are duty bound to do so.

We have a choice, we can look at the shortcomings of the past and address them in finding realistic and pragmatic solutions or, figuratively speaking, we can build that wall.

Every city that has persevered throughout history was built on the bones of another making effective use of the available land. What we decide today will determine the lifestyle of future generations so factoring in their needs should be part of our decision-making process. If it's not, they will be presented with the same challenges and turmoil we face today.

BOB JANSSEN, PRESIDENT GOLD COAST & HINTERLAND BUSINESS ALLIANCE

Letter of the Week

Have strong opinions, write in an engaging way?

You could win our Letter of the Week, and with it a book from our friends and sponsors, the publishers HarperCollins. This month's book prize is *Table for Eight* by bestselling author and master storyteller Tricia Stringer. It tackles troubled relationships, second chances and love old and new in this uplifting story of unlikely dining companions thrown together on a glamorous cruise.



Rules: Best letter competition runs until January 19 next year. Entries close each Thursday at 5pm. The winner is selected by 2pm each Friday. Book of the month valued up to \$48. Entrants agree to the Competition Terms and Conditions located at www.goldcoastbulletin.com.au/entrants and our privacy policy. Entrants consent to their information being shared with HarperCollins for the express purpose of delivering prizes.

ON Monday I travelled "The G" home from my office in Ashmore.

Arriving home, I realised that my phone and wallet were missing and called G-Link customer service to report this.

Being prepared for the inevitable recorded selection menu, imagine my disbelief when the call was answered by Ariel - a real person.

When I told her my name she instantly said "and you've lost your phone and wallet, the driver has it and will bring it to the depot, give it to security and they will deliver it to you at the nearest station to where you live".

All this within about 12 minutes of me exiting the tram.

Sure enough two very pleasant G-Link security staff, Astrid and

Anthony, delivered my phone and wallet.

In this day and age when you can spend an hour on hold to a public utility, I was impressed by this level of professional and courteous service. I don't know the name of the tram driver but I guess it had to be Adam - this was obviously G-Link's A-team.

J. MOIR, SURFERS PARADISE

IT seems a misunderstanding led to the LNP giving the Byron Bay City Council permission to hold citizenship ceremonies on January 26. The Green-led council has now vowed to hold ceremonies on January 25 after the misunderstanding. This is an arrogant council that is unrepentant in its decision not to obey Prime Minis-

ter Scott Morrison's edict that such citizenship ceremonies will be deemed invalid. And so they should be.

If new Australians cannot accept the law, they will be the ones disadvantaged. The council has no right to deny them the benefits of becoming an Australian citizen.

Indigenous feelings should not take precedence in this issue. No living indigenous person was directly disadvantaged by the events of January 26, 1788.

Enough said! Another example of a minority political group supporting a minority cultural group! KEN JOHNSTON, ROCHEDALE SOUTH

A COUNCILLOR in Dublin, Ireland, has suggested not flying the national flag because it could offend foreign residents.

A flag represents many things to people although the national flag represents the country, its history and what it stands for. There are very few flags that should not be flown high and the only ones that come to mind are those used by terrorists as a rallying point.

The idea of not flying a flag because it may offend some foreigners devalues the cost that many paid to protect it. The foreigners who have come to a new country do so because they want to be part of the new country and the flag represents the qualities they want.

Honor the values that the flag represents and make sure it is flown high.

DENNIS FITZGERALD, BOX HILL

SUBMITTING LETTERS: Send your letters to letters@goldcoast.com.au. Make sure to include your name, address and phone number to have a chance of being selected as 'letter of the week'. Please note the *Bulletin* reserves the right to edit letters for reasons such as clarity and length.

PRIVACY POLICY: Our privacy policy www.apnrm.com.au/privacy includes important information about our collection, use and disclosure of your personal information (including to provide you with targeted advertising based on your online activities). It explains that if you do not provide us with information we have requested from you, we may not be able to provide you with the goods and services you require. It also explains how you can access or seek correction of your personal information, how you can complain about a breach of the Australian Privacy Principles and how we will deal with a complaint of that nature.

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