CHAIR'S REPORT

BELCONNEN COMMUNITY COUNCIL AGM

17 NOVEMBER 2015

* The BCC has undergone a major transformation this year. Some of our internal highlights since the last AGM include:
  + modernising our logo
  + setting up a new, functional website which looks and feels modern
  + produced promotional material, including business cards, magnets, stickers and pull-up banners, and updated our e-mail newsletter format
  + simplified and clarified our membership requirements
  + updated our constitution; and
  + finalised the professional photos of Belconnen which we commissioned last year
  + grown our Facebook and Twitter followers enormously and established an Instagram account – all which we post on regularly, especially Facebook, which has had a 300% increase of likes and a reach that is in many weeks in the thousands and tens of thousands
* In terms of community consultation, we:
  + facilitated broad community engagement with the Belconnen Town Centre Master Plan; so much so that we believe the draft is largely a genuine reflection of community views and desires (except maybe what’s proposed for Lathlain Street)
  + hosted a pop-up photography exhibition at Westfield Belconnen to promote a local artist, photos of Belconnen, and the Belconnen Town Centre Master Plan
  + had stalls at and partnered with numerous fetes including the Charny Carny, the Hawker Primary fete, and the Scullin and Kaleen Parties at the Shops
  + participated in and hosted a community consultation session on the Statement of Planning Intent (released yesterday) – we were the only CC to host our own consultation on this
  + provided a detailed submission on the Smart Parking Trial
  + provided submissions on the UC Public Hospital, Riverview development, CSIRO development, the budget consultation – to name just a handful
  + participated in numerous community meetings, including on the Basin Priority Project, West Belconnen, UC Public Hospital and light rail
  + campaigned vigorously for the Department of Immigration to stay in Belconnen, including promoting the grassroots approach in the community, writing numerous letters right across the board, and hosting a joint town hall meeting with Belconnen Community Service which was attended by planner, real estate agents, and both Zed Seselja and Andrew Leigh
  + regularly appeared in television, radio and print news;
  + judged a Belconnen art competition
  + and held meetings – more than monthly – on issues of local concern, especially Mr Fluffy and the West Belconnen development, and taken them to other venues to increase our reach
* I’m particularly proud of the stronger relationships we have formed with the Belconnen Arts Centre, Belconnen Community Service, University of Canberra and Westfield Belconnen.
* None of this happened by accident.
* Some of you may have heard the comments in the Assembly a week or two ago, and today, about whether Community Councils are genuinely representative – both in membership and reach.
* None of this criticism is new.
* In fact, this year we very deliberately set about increasing our reach and engaging the community in new ways – beyond just relying on our public meetings and the opinions on our very active committee members. We also went about simply increasing the community’s awareness that we exist.
* We’re far from perfect and some things have worked better than others, but we have been driven in this desire and I think we’ve come a very, very long way.
* It’s safe to say that I’m very proud of our achievements in 2014-15. I think the fact that many people think being BCC Chair is a full-time, paid job is a testament to the work that we put in as a committee of volunteers.
* I’d like to acknowledge each committee member for their enormous contribution this year:
* They are:
  + Damien
  + Chris
  + Charles
  + Chander
  + Brian
  + Matt
  + Timothy
  + Graeme
  + Sarah
  + Karl and
  + Paul
* It’s an exciting time to be involved in shaping Belconnen’s future - for example the consultation on the draft Belconnen Town Centre Master Plan closes on Friday, and the consultation on the draft Kippax Master Plan has just begun.
* I strongly encourage you to all become members if you're not already – it’s free!