

Summit talks...

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But there's no more money for the Cassowary Coast

LINDA TIMMS

Cassowary Coast Regional Council mayor-elect Bill Shannon and acting chief executive officer Mark Kelleher attended a summit of councils in Brisbane last Thursday.

Mr Shannon said local government representatives met with Queensland Premier Anna Bligh, Minister for Local Government Warren Pitt, Minister for Infrastructure and Planning Paul Lucas and Federal Minister for Infrastructure Anthony Albanese.

"The meeting provided background information into local government," Mr Shannon said.

"A new local government act will come into place next year.

"The rewritten laws are to be less prescriptive and more based on principles.

"The meeting included a very worthwhile presentation by the Local Government Association of Queensland.

"There was a breakdown between the state government and the LGAQ over the forced amalgamations but there is an effort being made to mend those bridges.

"A lot of photographs were taken, and there was a lot of talk about the historic nature of the occasion.

"Premier Bligh announced that five regional offices of the Department of Local Government will be established and 150 staff from Brisbane will be relocated to these offices."

New regional offices will be established in Far North, North, Central, South West and South East Queensland.

ECQ'S POOR PERFORMANCE

Mr Shannon said there had been a lot of discussion during the day regarding the poor performance of the Electoral Commission of Queensland.

"We were informed there would be a

formal inquiry into what went wrong," Mr Shannon said.

"In the CCRC election although I was had close to 50 per cent of the primary vote with the next closest candidates on 21 and 19 per cent, the poll was still not declared after nearly two weeks."

RAISING REVENUE

Mr Shannon said there had been a lot of talk about local government funding issues.

"Local governments are under pressure to do more and more with restricted revenue sources," Mr Shannon said.

"Relying on rates as the main source of revenue is a problem and in the future local government will have to look at the big picture for other income sources."

FIRST MEETINGS

The CCRC Mayor and Councillors attended a workshop on Tuesday ahead of today's Statutory Council Meeting.

Today's meeting is in Chjowai Hall, Innisfail starting at 10.30am.

NO FURTHER LOCAL GOVERNMENT FUNDING

The state government will provide \$1.35 million to the Cassowary Coast Regional Council to assist with the post-amalgamation transition process.

However despite Minister for Local Government Warren Pitt announcing this funding at the Premier's Summit of Councils last Thursday, this is not additional funding (see Letter to the Editor on page 4).

The funding is part of the Local Government Reform Funding Package which was first announced in August 2007.

CCRC election wrap, page 2.