

MEDIA RELEASE

Cairns Regional Council Employees Set To Take Industrial Action

17 MARCH 2018

Employees at Cairns Regional Council recently voted to take Protected Industrial Action (PIA) in support of a fair wage outcome.

This decision is a last resort and has come as a result of Council management still refusing to reasonably alter their sub-standard pay offer. Council has added insult to injury by cancelling any further negotiations.

Council's current offer sits at a \$2500 lump sum up front plus 4.5 per cent from July 2018, with 2 per cent annually from July 2019.

Staff has asked for 3.5 per cent backdated to July 2017, with 4.5 per cent from July 2018, and 2.5 per cent annually from July 2019.

This is manifestly reasonable, given that employees have been without a pay increase to base rates of pay since July 2014!

In that time, the Mayor Bob Manning, Deputy Mayor Terry James and Councillors have all been in receipt of the annually gazetted wage increases which have been over the CPI increases (currently at 1.9 per cent).

Secretary of The Services Union, Neil Henderson said members feel that the wage offer is offensive.

"Our members have not had a pay increase to their base rate in almost four years, which means their wages are not covering the increase to the cost of living," Mr Henderson said.

"The latest wage offer proposed is still a slap in the face by a Council that is in a good financial position. That good financial position is something which can be attributed to the hard work of employees."

"Cairns has recently been a location for the Commonwealth Games and employees have been working tirelessly to ensure not only the Games, but also Festival 2018, ran smoothly. Additionally, employees have gone above and beyond ensuring that the City coped with the recent high rainfall and flooding in the lead-up to Festival 2018."

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TRADING AS
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BRANCH SECRETARY:
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"Our members never stop delivering for the Council and the residents of Cairns. They deserve a fair pay rise!"

"I know Chief Executive Officer John Andrejic has been very keen for Council's Agreement with its sub-standard wage offer to go out to staff for their tick off."

"But Mr Andrejic needs to know that to reach agreement he needs a proposal which does not reduce real wages and he needs to meet with the Unions representing the Council's workforce."

"Our members are serious about ensuring a fair outcome and this is why they have voted to take action. It's time Council management start to value its staff," Mr Henderson said.

The Services Union along with other unions has advised Council that Industrial Action will commence on and from Thursday, 19 April 2018.

A RALLY supporting Council employees will be held on Thursday, 19 April 2018 at 8:00am outside the Spence Street Admin Building.

All media welcome.