

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**17<sup>th</sup> October 2008**

### **Committee for Ballarat on Excellence in Local Government**

Committee for Ballarat has a strong interest in the quality of local governance in Ballarat and our region. We are aware that issues that shape our future, like strategic planning, responsible budgeting, major future-oriented projects and community wellbeing, are influenced by how well a local council sets a positive agenda for now and the future, and delivers on it with vigour, persistence and integrity.

Committee members have been concerned that some aspects of both short and longer term planning, and delivering on plans, have left something to be desired. Committee has been working collaboratively with Councils in an attempt to address some of those issues.

In February this year Committee for Ballarat wrote to City of Ballarat and regional councils encouraging them to adopt a six point plan. This aimed to promote better information for voters of what is involved in good governance, better understanding of good governance by community members, and more informed candidates at the coming elections.

The plan included: Informing our communities on the key aspects of good governance; promoting extensive community discussion on governance; giving prominence to good governance issues on Council's website; providing additional, extended opportunities for potential candidates and councillors to understand competencies and criteria for good governance; and including in Council's plans and 'blueprints', action plans for continuously raising the quality of local governance.

More details are available for interested people. These include references to well recognised sources on what makes good governance and how to deliver it.

City of Ballarat undertook to do each of these things, or something equivalent. We were pleased that the commitment was given and have taken it in good faith. Members of our community will be able to comment on whether the actions are visible to them and effective. We remain optimistic that a newly elected Council in Ballarat, and each of the neighbouring shires, will take these matters very seriously. We undertake to work collaboratively with them to help ensure this happens.

Committee for Ballarat remains keen to ensure that candidates for the upcoming election are well informed on good governance, and take their responsibilities seriously. Candidates who understand and will act on these fundamental issues are welcomed by Committee in the forthcoming election. We invite any interested candidate to contact us for more information.

Doug Lloyd, CEO