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16 May 2006

I write in response to the letter (The Courier, May 16) from Daryl Devereux.

The Committee for Ballarat supports the concept of upgrading the rail corridor from Sunshine to Southern Cross Station. In fact it was the Committee that raised the issue with the Premier of Victoria more than 12 months ago.

Premier Bracks has been positive in his attitude to the possibility of a dedicated line through the suburban network to further speed up fast train services and the Committee applauds him for that.

Any such major project, however, needs to be financially viable and logistically practical and, to that effect, the Committee has sought responses from the government to four questions.

They are, was the project viable, how much would it cost, how long would it take to complete and how much commuting time would it save? These are all reasonable questions.

The Committee is pleased the government is continuing to investigate the project and has not changed its view since it mooted the idea more than a year ago.

All I was saying in the article referred to by Mr Devereux was that the committee is still awaiting responses from the government to those questions.

To suggest that, as a result, the Committee for Ballarat ``is nothing more than a Liberal Party front'' is drawing a very long bow indeed.

As to the comment that ``Mr Coxall is really showing his Liberal Party political colours'', I was simply representing the position of the Committee of which I am chair, within a legitimate public discussion about a matter of significant interest to this city.

Noel Coxall
Chair
Committee for Ballarat.
17 May 2006