

# NO PARKING FEES

*An opinion by Mark Edwards.*

Today we have an opportunity for all of us to voice our opposition to the unfair parking fee proposal that Redland City Council have decided to implement. It is important that we as an island community convey to the Council the unfairness of this decision and the serious consequences that this financial burden will have on the fabric of our community and severely limit the potential of the islands.

Each of us have our own message to deliver and I will be calling upon the Council today, to reconsider their position and make a public statement, **at this meeting and before all of us**, not to proceed with this unjustified tax that no other community in our City is burdened with. I believe that the Council should take this opportunity today to enter into a new and honest pact with our island community for true consultation with all the island groups, not just a few selected ones, to resolve issues and **determine outcomes that benefit us and not penalise us.**

The parking problems at Weinam Creek are a major issue that is not being solved by implementing a tax on those who cannot afford it. It is short sighted and offers no alternative proposals for us as a community to consider. There are several **other possible alternatives** regarding parking and we all need to have an input and seek consensus to the solution that best suits the islands. An unfair parking tax imposed by Council does not provide a solution for the island community and instead creates a far greater issue that will further break down our already strained relations with Council.

Many of us are angry at the continued inept and unfair manner in which the council administers our islands but we must show the Councillors today, **that we are reasonable and level headed people who care about our community and only seek fair solutions** and a Council that will consider our informed input to decisions that have major impacts on our quality of life. For many Councillors here today, it may be their first visit to the islands. **All** the Councillors have a responsibility to our welfare and I am sure they would benefit to be shown the real problems we face on the islands. **The biggest issue today is the proposed parking fees which we must convince the Councillors to overturn. Our best weapon today is logic and sensible argument and shows the council that we people worth helping, not hurting.**

I am not appealing for any of you to hide your anger and desperation at the way you have been unfairly treated. However at the end of the meeting, the councillors need to reflect on the fact that parking fees should not be imposed and that there are other alternatives which should be presented to the islands.

I look with hope that the Council today will come to a new understanding of the islands and realise that there is too much at stake. The council needs to start to working with us not against us.