

QUEANBEYAN AGE COLUMN 25 JANUARY 2008

Capital Region BEC – our resource of the week

More than seventeen years ago a dozen or more Queanbeyan business and community people, coming together under the leadership of Terence O'Connor, Gaye White, Cr. Hope Marland and QCC's then Planning Manager Bob Ogilvie met to do something really positive for the business community. This was a selfless project to provide real help for new and struggling micro businesses.

Available was a three-year grant from NSW Government of the day, plus the active support of Queanbeyan City Council.

Seventeen years later the organisation originally known as 'Queanbeyan Business Advisory Service' and later 'Queanbeyan BEC' and 'Capital Region BEC' is stronger than ever under the long term chairmanship of the indefatigable Cr. Sue Whelan supported by an energetic board of local business people and managed by Steve Jamieson.

The BEC web site www.crbec.com.au is a marvellous resource that every local business should have on their web 'favourites' list – and should refer to at least once a week. It contains articles, links, referrals, seminar information and more.

Whilst Queanbeyan City Council has been an active supporter in terms of accommodation and infrastructure from the beginning, the BEC has fought for survival for these seventeen years by securing contracts from NSW and Federal Governments – but only those which are relevant to Queanbeyan and Region's business community.

As well as contributing to Queanbeyan's sustainable business growth, and consequently employment growth, the BEC has provided real employment opportunities within its own organisation.

This is a prime example of a group of people taking a leaf from late US President Kennedy's "Ask not..." speech and making a difference to their community - even though there was "nothing in it for them".

Queanbeyan Business Council

In much the same way, another group of dedicated Queanbeyan business people came together in 2004 under the leadership of Ian McNamee to address the long-term lack of a business voice in the City. Drawn from across the business and associations spectrum, Queanbeyan Business Council is now well respected within Queanbeyan and well beyond.

Addressing such diverse issues as tourism promotion, Queanbeyan Land Release Enquiry, sustainable water issues, CBD improvements, retail promotion, improved City signage, roads and transport infrastructure and

more, QBC makes a positive impact on behalf of the community and thus facilitates sustainable employment growth.

In direct employment terms, QBC itself employs full time and casual staff as well as operating a volunteer program.

QBC welcomes new Members – particularly those willing to contribute energy and purpose. QBC's Annual General Meeting takes place at Queanbeyan Golf Club at 4 pm on Tuesday, 26 February. Under QBC rules, Founding President Ian McNamee will formally stand down and a new President will be elected. Visit www.queanbeyanbusinesscouncil.com.au for more details.

Have you visited the Visitor Information Centre recently? If not, then you really should – particularly if you are part of the business community. It is a great shop window for visitors and has received glowing praise for its display and information.