Urgent WCC meeting to endorse racehorses at Levy’s Beach

Description

Such is the might and power of the racing industry, the W'bool City Council will hold an urgent meeting this Friday to endorse plans to get racehorse training at Levy's within weeks. Image: horsestock

Carol Altmann – The Terrier

An urgent meeting will be held by the W'bool City Council this Friday (21/12) to allow large-scale racehorse training at Levy's Beach, starting almost immediately.

Planning Minister Richard Wynne, as predicted, has intervened and asked for interim changes to the local planning laws – the same laws that found racehorse training was illegal in this section of the Belfast Coastal Reserve.

The council is now classing the matter as so "urgent and extraordinary" that a special meeting will be held on the last day before the holiday break to endorse this decision.

> **Not a word of this was raised in public last night (17/12), when the council held a meeting to talk about waste management and new signs at the entrance to the city.**
>
> **Once that meeting finished, however, the real fireworks began with councillors called to a confidential "briefing" where they were given details of Mr Wynne's intervention.**
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> **All of this in the last week before Christmas, when everybody is distracted and busy. But, of course, that is precisely the point.**

Governments of all persuasions know the best time to bury controversial decisions is around the biggest holidays of the year.

What a gift to the racing industry. What a slap – again – to our precious environment.

Those councillors who vote for this on Friday night and call themselves environmentalists are a bit like self-declared vegetarians who eat meat once a week.

You can't, pardon the pun, have a bet each way.

You either stand for the environment, and the endangered species and fragile dune system at Levy's Beach, or you don't.

To pretend this is some sort of "compromise" is simply a cop-out. Parks Victoria don't want this. The majority of people who responded to the management report for the reserve don't want this. Racing people who love the environment don't want this (**Clare Lindop**, I am looking at you x)

> **The only people who want this are a handful of wealthy, well-connected, well-resourced trainers who stand to make a lot of money from brutalising our beach.**

I am going to be there on Friday night, just to witness the capitulation, because that is exactly what it will be.

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Date Created
2018/12/18

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