Dr Karl to headline major Illawarra planning forum

Home-grown science broadcaster and self-proclaimed “sleek geek” Dr Karl Kruszelnicki will share his thoughts on the Illawarra’s future next week.

Well-known for making science and the future easy to grasp, Dr Karl will be one of two keynote speakers at a major NSW Government event called Talkabout: Your future Illawarra to be held on Friday 1 November.

The second keynote speaker will be Mark McCrindle, a social researcher who is internationally renowned for tracking global changes and analysing social trends.

The event is part of the Department of Planning and Infrastructure’s extensive community consultation campaign to accompany the release of its discussion paper “The Illawarra over the next 20 years”.

An Illawarra native, Dr Karl grew up and was schooled in the area. He has since built up an international reputation as a science broadcaster and author of 34 popular science books.

“It is very true that knowing the lessons of the past is the key to understanding the future,” Dr Karl said.

“On the otherhand, as the Nobel Prize Winner Neils Bohr said, ‘...it’s very difficult to make predictions – especially about the future.’”

Mr McCrindle will be discussing how the demographics of the region will change and the consequent implications for housing and infrastructure.

“You will also get an insight into how people's tastes and needs change over time, the influence of future technology on the community and the need to start planning for it now,” Mr McCrindle said.

Department Southern regional director Brett Whitworth said the evening is part of the department’s unprecedented level of community consultation and awareness raising as it works to shape Illawarra for the next two decades.

“With more than 65,000 more people expected to call the Illawarra home over the next 20 years, planning needs to start now, and gathering the community’s opinion on how the area should develop is an important part of this process”, Mr Whitworth said.

The Illawarra discussion paper focuses on some of the challenges facing the region and seeks the community’s comments on how to:

- Secure more housing;
- Provide jobs in emerging knowledge and service industries including ICT, engineering, health, education and port-related development;
• Support the growth of the key centres of Wollongong, Warrawong, Kiama, Dapto and Shellharbour City Centre;
• Make it easier to travel within the Illawarra and surrounding areas; and
• Balance the need for development with protection of the environment and heritage.

The Talkabout event is being held at Wollongong University on Friday November 1 from 6-9pm. After the presentations, the audience will be able to ask questions and discuss planning issues.

The event is hosted by the Department and admission is free.

Bookings can be made at

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