

17.3.2014

**Local Government Team  
The Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal  
PO Box Q290  
QUEEN VICTORIA BUILDING NSW 1230**



**Dear Team Leader,**

**Re: Ku-ring-gai Council's application to continue on a permanent basis the Infrastructure Levy.**

**I strongly urge that IPART very closely examine this application. This Council's ratepayers are currently stuck with four (4) levies that almost equate with rate income. Levies should be of short term duration.**

**Community consultation has been pathetic. A couple of gabfests with a few hundred people. For Council to maintain that the community fully supports continuation of the levy is nonsense. The only true way to gauge community support is to hold a voluntary secret ballot that can very easily be done these days online. I know Council would not support this because it cannot control the outcome. Council should not be able to tie a ratepayer's vote to their property, which happens now when a ratepayer wishes to make a submission to Council. IPART should insist on a ballot being conducted before a decision is made.**

**Ku-ring-gai Council are woeful and incompetent financial managers. Why would knowledgeable**



**ratepayers willingly want to give them access to more money?**

**I certainly don't want to be targeted by Council because I don't trust them and that is the reason this letter is being sent anonymously.**

**Yours sincerely,**

**A concerned ratepayer.**

**Cc: Ku-ring-gai Council**



# Asset sale to pay down debt

Leesa Smith

KU-RING-GAI Council is carrying more than triple its target debt and needs to sell 19 public assets within three years to shake the heavy burden.

The controversial move to sell the assets was made to pay off the purchase of the council's new chambers. However, if the sale of all

of these assets does not go through in the planned three-year period, the council will have to reduce spending to services and infrastructure.

"All may not be sold depending on the reclassification process," a council spokeswoman admitted.

The sites that have been earmarked for sale and have caused an outcry among the community are the Killara train station carpark, the Lifeline building and the Gordon Preschool.

Cr Christian Berlioz expressed her reservations about the direction council

was taking in selling so many assets.

"I certainly don't believe we should be reducing service provisions to the public," she said. "We should be really scrutinising the delivery of our new facilities and being sure we stay on budget because it's too easy to

sell off extra land to make up for gaps in our budget."

But Cr Chantelle Fornari-Orsmond said the council could not put its head in the sand and reject reclassification of all of the assets because the interest on the loan for the new chambers site was \$900,000 a year.

## COUNCIL NEEDS MONEY TO COVER PURCHASE OF CHAMBERS

### THE PLAN

- Ku-ring-gai Council plans to finance a \$22.4 million loan used to buy a new council chambers building in December 2012 by selling 19 public assets
- Currently no borrowings are proposed beyond 2015-16 in Ku-ring-gai Council's long-term financial plan
- Details: kmc.nsw.gov.au

## Levy could stay



**Ku-ring-gai Council** must retain its

infrastructure levy to have any chance of paying down its infrastructure backlog in the next decade, council financial documents say. The council estimates a \$77 million shortfall over the next 10 years if the infrastructure levy, which brings in more than \$2.7 million each year, is not charged. The levy expires in June but the council has asked the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal to make it permanent.

### KU-RING-GAI

## Tribunal looking at rates increase

THE Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal has begun assessment of Ku-ring-gai Council's application to increase rates above the rate peg of 2.3 per cent.

The council has applied to continue and make permanent an existing temporary special variation of 7.3 per cent from July 1.

