

John Letts



IPART

Objection to Warringah Council's Application for Special Rate Variation for 2014/15.

On 26/2/2014 I posted a letter of objection to you against Warringah Council's application for a Special Rate Variation. There are additional matters I wish to raise.

On Saturday 1 March the Manly Daily published a full page advertisement for Warringah Council, which I have attached. This advertisement, I believe indicates the council is wasting money, when it claims it needs further income.

Part of the advertisement is self-promotion for the Mayor and items in the advertisement have been enlarged purely to fill the page. Two major items include a talk by Matthew Hayden about life and the other is about keeping backyard chickens. The advertisement could have been reduced to half a page.

Inquires at the Manly Daily 4/3/2014, reveal that the cost of a full-page advertisement in the Manly Daily has a cost of about \$6393 and a half-page cost of about \$3196, a saving of \$3197. Even if the council is not paying these amounts there is a considerable saving between a page and half page advertisement. I suppose if you are Hart receiving over \$1000.00 a day seven days a week, the saving is negligible. This shows why the council cannot properly manage the rate-payers' funds with which they are entrusted.

Previous complaints to the Mayor had reduced the Warringah Council Manly Daily advertisement to half a page. Now they have returned to a full page with exaggerated content. In 2012/13 the Warringah Council spent \$318,473.60 on advertising in the Manly Daily. Whilst I recognise the council requires advertising expenditure, they are wasting rate-payers money on self-promotion and unnecessary advertising. This small example is an insight into the council's inability to properly husband the rate payers' resources.

If the council is so short of future funds and require this Special Rate Variation, why do they waste so much money? Other wasteful expenditures included \$27,000.00 to replace the Council's flower logo. A \$6,985.00 advertising campaign to launch the Council's new logo and \$2236.00 for the party to launch the new logo. They are currently wasting money when they claim they don't have enough for the future.

Their current financial incompetence will only increase when they receive extra income.

John Letts
4/3/2014



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Objection to Warringah Council's Application for Special Rate Variation for 2014/15.

On 16 January 2014 I emailed IPART about a possible submission from Warringah Council for a Special Rate Increase. Your reply stated the application had not been submitted, though it was expected. You advised that I could object after 24 February, 2014, the date the council had to have their submission lodged. I am now making that objection.

Warringah Council disregards the views of rate payers. The council spent \$56,892 on a special rate variation campaign. Despite many objections to this 26.25% rate increase they still continued with their application.

Many of us residents are on fixed incomes or pensions and will not receive this massive 26.25% increase in income over the period. Many of us long term residents in Warringah have paid for the current infrastructure in Warringah. It is now unfair that we on limited incomes, should be placed under unnecessary financial stress to support the enormous salaries and inappropriate expenditure of self-interested members of the Warringah Council.

I, as a Warringah rate payer for over 35 years object to this special rate increase. The reason this council is applying for the rate increase is because they are incompetent in managing their finances. Consider the obscene amount of money paid to Mr Hart. Last year's annual report indicates he was paid \$396,748 and his two assistant GM's \$572,953 a total cost for three employees of \$969,701. Compare this to what the Australian Prime Minister receives. Then compare it to what the ABC's 7.30pm of 16/1/14 said, that the average Australian household income is \$1,240.00 per week. Hart receives \$7629 per week.

The council is financially incompetent, wasting income on excessive wages and other expenditures. They spent \$1.7 million on a media and marketing unit and \$318,473, excluding GST, on newspaper advertising. The \$56,892 spent on the special rate variation campaign was to justify the rate increase they were proposing. Many of these expenditures are to promote the council or some of its members rather than to inform. These are a few examples which clearly indicate a council which is not looking after its residents' interests, but feathering the financial interests of some employees. Employees who clearly do not deserve the enormous salaries they are paid now, and who will want increased salaries in the future, which they will receive.

Hoping the Independent Pricing and Regularity Authority will reject this extravagant and inappropriate application.



John Letts

26/2/2014