

I oppose Randwick City Council's (RCC) proposed cumulative rate increase of 19.85 per cent over the next three years and its associated borrowing of \$27 million.

Council has justified its rate hike on the basis of a survey conducted over the Christmas holiday period which elicited a response rate of less than 5%. The survey was biased because RCC explicitly indicated that it preferred the third of three options put to ratepayers, this option being by far the most expensive. Even so, a 50.3 per cent majority of the 6,316 respondents opposed this third option.

If RCC had disclosed that the proposed rate increase would be permanent so that the \$27 million debt can be serviced, it is highly likely that the majority percentage of ratepayers opposing the third option would have been significantly higher. It is notable that previously elected RCCs produced operating surpluses for a number of years but that the newly-elected council is seeking a significant increase in rates allied with significant borrowings to fund its activist political agenda.