

# **ANNEXURE 6 - Formal Submissions regarding SRV Application**

[REDACTED]  
SANS Soud 2219  
[REDACTED]

Kogarah Council,

Opinions were asked on rate increases or a drop in service provision.

I am in favour of nominal increases & ongoing, to keep the standard of all services

Thank you

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

KOGARAH CITY COUNCIL	
Customer Service Centre	
1 FEB 2013	
Officer .....	<i>K. Green</i>
Time .....	12.45 PM
No. ....	

Re: Revised - notice of Community Reference Group Meeting, Wednesday 23 January Page 1 of 4

**Rebecca Dalton**

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, 17 January 2013 7:01 AM  
**To:** Rebecca Dalton  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Re: Revised - notice of Community Reference Group Meeting, Wednesday 23 January

Dear Rebecca,

I very much regret that I am unable to come to the meeting on Wednesday 23 January at 6 pm on account of a prior engagement that I was not able to change.

However, I have read the information you sent me in the post, and I am very much in favor of Kogarah Council proceeding with 'setting a rate' so that council fees can be increased, and so that council's excellent work in so many areas can be continued.

Please can you take into account, at the meeting on Wednesday, my strong preference that council goes ahead and sets it own rate for council rates, as per the latest issue of Kogarah Life (Special Edition – January 2013)?

Thank you very much Rebecca for your confirmation of this.

Sincerely,

Amanda

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

**Sent:** Monday, 4 February 2013 11:02:01 AM  
**To:** Kogarah Council Mail  
**Subject:** Rates Proposal

Page 1 of 1

It seems preferable to increase the rates as proposed rather than cut services

Rebecca Dalton

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 16 January 2013 4:02 PM  
**To:** Rebecca Dalton  
**Subject:** Re: Notice of Community Reference Group Meeting - Wednesday 6 February

Dear Rebecca,

Yes, I will do my attend the meeting. Not many residents love to increase our rates, but if we have to, we have to.

Have a very goo

[REDACTED]

Sent: Wednesday, 23 January 2013 6:33:34 AM

To: Kogarah Council Mail

Subject: Community Strategic Plan: response

I have just read council's 'Kogarah Life' newsletter outlining the Community plan and related Resourcing Strategy, Financial Plan, Asset Mgt and Delivery Program in context of proposed rate increases and rate pegs

I would like to congratulate all involved in this work. While the results and delivery have yet to be shown, there is no doubt that 'Kogarah Works' well at present and the framework of planning and financial management presented suggests Kogarah will continue to be a great place to live

Can you all please move to the Federal arena?

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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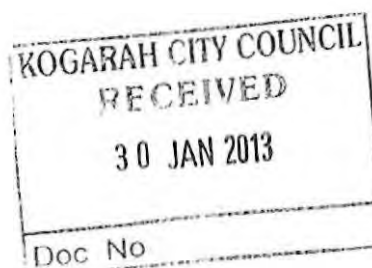
From: [REDACTED]  
Sent: Tuesday, 29 January 2013 11:55 AM  
To: Kogarah Council Mail  
Subject: Rate setting

Hello,

This email is written in support of Council's intention to request a rate increase so that sufficient funds are available to carry out all services over the next four years.

Kogarah Council is positively involved with its community in many ways, several of which I continue to experience. The programs listed as possibly being reviewed are entrenched and are likely to cause a community outcry if they are reduced or cancelled. Road and footpath maintenance? Serious problems would ensue. Our libraries are one of the services that I believe have already felt the brunt of belt tightening, so it is important sufficient funds are available to enable Council to provide adequate servicing.

[REDACTED]



x

30/01/2013

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From: [REDACTED]  
Sent: Tuesday, 12 February 2013 5:30 PM  
To: Kogarah Council Mail  
Subject: We support Council requesting a rise above the rate peg limit

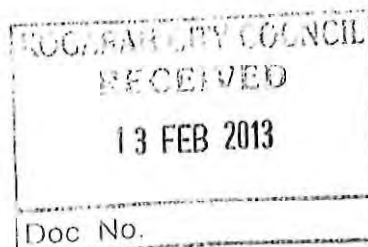
We understand this may result in an effective increase to rates by 2.8% in 2013/14 and 4.8% per annum for the subsequent three years.


We want Kogarah City Council to continue its current level of funding for the following services:

Bushland management

Specific services and activities for key target groups eg aged, youth, people with a disability Waste and recycling education Libraries and associated educational programs  
Road and footpath maintenance

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]





## **Submission to Kogarah City Council on the Community Strategic Plan and Council's Proposed Increase in Rates**

14 February 2013

Submitted by: 

### **Executive Summary**

This submission is provided in response to a request from Kogarah City Council for community feedback on the Council's Community Strategic Plan and on Council's proposed increase in rates above rate pegging.

My submission is that:

1. There are considerable inefficiencies in the manner in which Council operates which have not been addressed in the Community Strategic Plan or in the proposed application to IPART;
2. Council should objectively examine what are the core functions of Council and what activities they should properly be involved with;
3. Council rates should not be used as a form of taxation to redistribute funds to groups or organisations that Council wishes to preference on a subjective basis; and
4. Council should be utilising the significant investment funds of approximately \$35 million to achieve the core functions of Council.

On balance, I recommend the Council's proposed increase in rates above rate pegging be withdrawn or that IPART makes a decision not to allow such increases. Alternatively, any increase above rate pegging should be clearly conditioned on Council providing genuine access to Council processes, committee meetings, information & financial reports, and to realising efficiencies in the short term.



## Nicole Rogan

**From:** Jennifer Selby  
**Sent:** Friday, 15 February 2013 9:31 AM  
**To:** Nicole Rogan  
**Cc:** Paul Woods  
**Subject:** FW: Kogarah City Council rate set for next 4 years

Hi Nicole,

Email below for your information.

Jenny Selby  
EA to the Mayor & General Manager  
Kogarah City Council  
2 Belgrave Street, Kogarah NSW 2217  
[jenny.selby@kogarah.nsw.gov.au](mailto:jenny.selby@kogarah.nsw.gov.au)  
T: 9330 9503  
M: 0438 478 630  
F: 9330 9514  
[www.kogarah.nsw.gov.au](http://www.kogarah.nsw.gov.au)

x

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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, 14 February 2013 4:36 PM  
**To:** Kogarah Council Mail  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Kogarah City Council rate set for next 4 years

Attn General Manager,

1.  
Kogarah Life Special Edition, January 2013 is lacking in explanatory detail.  
There is no mention of -
  - a) staffing levels 2012, compared to March 2010 of 322.
  - b) number of ratepayers represented in the total of 59,000 residents.
  - c) overtime hours in the year 2011 / 2012.
  - d) s.94 funds for each contribution plan held in Council reserves.
  - e) increased income base for last 2 years from new apartments across the LGA.
  - f) opportunities for grant funding including -  
Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency (DCCEE), Low Carbon Communities Program,  
Land and Property Management Authority,  
Department of Urban Affairs and Infrastructure.
  - g) impact of the closed Local Government Superannuation Retirement Scheme since 2010 / 2011, as shown on page 114 Draft Resourcing Strategy 2010, 'bright future better lifestyle'.

2.  
Special Rate Variation (SRV) was approved in 2010 for 4 years at 5.9%, ending 2013 / 2014.  
Included in the 5.9% SRV is the Environmental Levy of 3.04%, and this levy ends on 30 June 2013.

One of the projects to be funded by the environmental levy (refer Kogarah Quarterly May 2001) was "the upgrading of stormwater systems and installing pollutant traps to remove litter, sediment and pollution flowing into the Georges River and our bays".  
Council has not kept pace with the need for gross pollutant traps (GPTs) around Kogarah Bay. Council proceeded to install Net-Tech GPTs at some stormwater outlets around Kogarah Bay with knowledge that these devices were not designed to minimise the input of sediment and cigarette butts. At least 15 years of effective sediment control have been lost during a period of increased sediment from building construction work in the catchment areas entering Kogarah Bay and the Georges River.

Currently the open stormwater outlet at Len Reynolds Reserve has no net device, and the kerbside drain outside 1 Vista Street has been demolished for some months. It would be a valuable exercise to do an evaluation of all stormwater outlets around Kogarah Bay, and compare with the status in May 2001.

3.  
Council has many opportunities to internally address the forecast shortfall in Council's budget of \$1.2 million based on current levels of services outlined in the Delivery Program. As the last page of the Special Edition indicates, a 'referendum' for the community to decide whether annual rate increase for the period 2013 – 2017 is appropriate and should be implemented during this month.

Regards,

[Redacted signature block]

From: [REDACTED]  
Sent: Wednesday, 30 January 2013 3:56 AM  
To: Kogarah Council Mail  
Subject: Have your say!

Hello,

This is some feedback to the have your say column in the 'Kogarah Life' special edition leaflet.

In relation to 'Some of the ways your rates are used' column I would like to say that it has so nicely worded. It's a typical Saturday morning....'

However, the part mentioned about taken the kids the local pool raises great concern for me especially since I love swimming and so do my grandchildren. The numerous times I have taken my grandchildren to the Carss Park Pool – our local, I have been outraged and it has put me off going until the urgent upgrades are followed through.

The facilities such as the gym are just of such a poor standard, as is the condition of the pool, tiling, roof, walkways, canteen, etc etc etc it is so old.

It makes such a bad impression. Where are the council rates going? Certainly not into this local pool which is desperately in need of an upgrade for many years now. The overall tidiness is also questionable. Sand still left in the pool days later and one notices this when one goes day after day for a swim there.

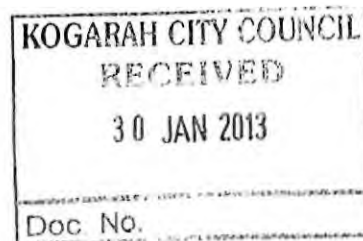
Only recently I was on holidays in Melbourne and was so impressed by their local council run pools.

They make Carss Park pool look like it belongs in a 3<sup>rd</sup> world country. What a disgrace – Carss Park is meant to be a somewhat affluent area. This pool lets us down. I have since been going to Caringbah swimming pool and many others feel and do the same. More loss in business for the pool.

The council rates are too high in my opinion for what we get.

Looking forward to your reply,

[REDACTED]



From: [REDACTED]  
Sent: Saturday, 9 February 2013 6:30 PM  
To: Kogarah Council Mail  
Subject: Attention General Manager Directors & Councillors : Re Rate Increases and More

Dear Sirs,

I am responding to media calls, as there is no obvious invitation on the home page of the Council website, for rate payer comments on the proposed rate increase and reported shortfall should rate revenues not be increased by the 4.8%. You do NOT have our support.

Although there is certain to be an argument as there always is about increases in costs to cover expenditure, there is also a broader question of governance and accountability and whether the revenue raised is being administered effectively and in the best interests of rate payers. We were born in this municipality and apart from work outside Australia have always remained residents and ratepayers choosing to live here for the wonderful human and environmental amenities of the area, and the responsible, just and community focused manner in which they were managed. In recent years however we have witnessed the degrading of our local environment, parks, parkland, sports fields, gardens, library, roads and facilities generally.

The streets and public places are fouled and filthy, with no attempt at clean up or educate residents to do so (bring back the manual street sweeper as we never see even a mechanical version), contractors are employed who have no interest in their work or the quality of their performance and include tree mutilators in the false guise of arborists. We have a Council, complacent, lacking in civic pride and disinterested in community, and with touted environmental credentials that are laughable. On this issue the situation is so bad in Baldface, we have taken matters into our own hands (we are owed \$1000's by Council to date) and during walks for exercise or incidental visits to friends and neighbours we carry plastic bags to clean the streets ourselves of the rubbish that is lying in wait to be sucked down the stormwater. On any one day this garbage could exceed six full bags. See attached images taken of one example.

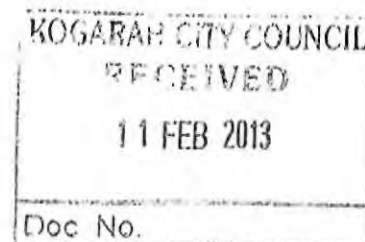
When phone calls have been made (numerous reported by neighbours and acquaintances) to alert Council to breaches of codes, concerns about illegal activities, dumping, water pollution, health and safety issues (rats) and recently the illegal removal large eucalypts in Stuart St Blakehurst the response has been - 'there is nobody to send, or for you to speak to, ... sorry, bye'.

This is not the profile of a Council that requires additional funds, as it clearly is unable to manage the revenue already raised in the interest of its constituents. The question is in whose interests is it currently being spent?

The answer is NO to increasing rates by an additional 4.8%. However the answer is YES to whether Council needs to reflect upon its role, the core values of current governance, audit its finances in view of its ethical and moral responsibility to the community and make urgent and essential changes to how current Council revenue is utilised and with something to show for the rates we pay.

Sincerely,

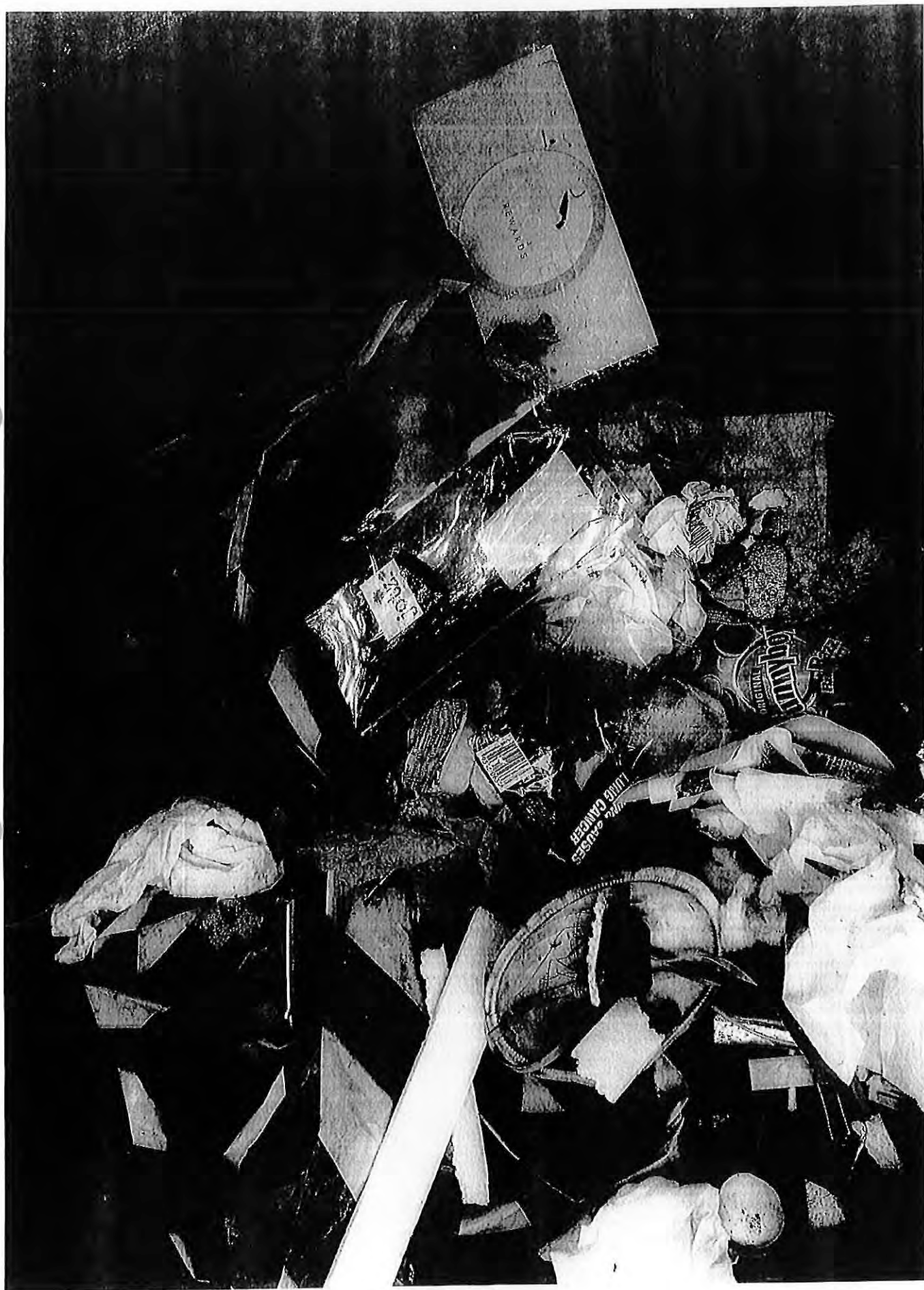
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] Environmental Management



11/02/2013









[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
Mr P Wood

Dear Sir,

In our letter  
it is said we should write  
to object our Rates go up.

Here is my reason for no Rate  
raise.

I have lived & paid Rates for  
64 years in this house yet I  
have no concrete footpath (The  
other side of Road with all the  
new 2 story houses yes they have  
concrete footpath.

The Bus stops are not marked  
and people park on them  
when you say you are parked on  
Bus stop you get thrown back  
No markings.

I have Traffic Hump with garden  
each side and 3 plants nearly  
dead in them I have a park  
next door and the Scrubs need

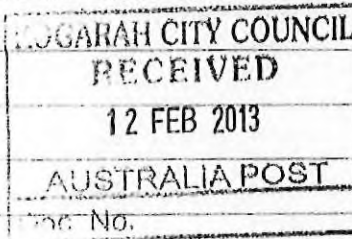


Trimming badly

Now I ask you why should  
our Rates go up when Nothing  
gets done in 64 years

Sincerely

[REDACTED]



FILE ONLY

KOGARAH CITY COUNCIL  
MAYORAL MAIL  
25 JAN 2013  
Rec. By Record [REDACTED]  
Cor No. [REDACTED]

To GENERAL MANAGER [REDACTED]

CITY of KOGARAH.

N.S.W.  
22/01/13.

ATT NICKOLAS. VARVARIS ACTION OFFICER  
PAUL WOODS

Dear Sir,

Why do we/council need a rate increase? Why can't the council keep the rates at 2012 level?

[REDACTED] lives over the road from us in [REDACTED]. He suggested to me the Kogarah City has in excess of \$M's of Dollars, why can't the council draw down on some of that money?

Another Question [REDACTED] and your City council disagree on, is the Amalgamation of the 3. St George Councils !?!. Why Not.

Also our street is some times a mess!!

Yours Sincerely [REDACTED]  
SIGNATURE [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]  
Address: [REDACTED]  
Telephone: 9587 4610  
Date: Monday, 21/1/2013

To: The General Manager  
Kogarah City Council  
Locked bag 8  
Kogarah, 2217

Dear sir

Re: Opportunities for "Rate Savings" by further prioritising current Council Services

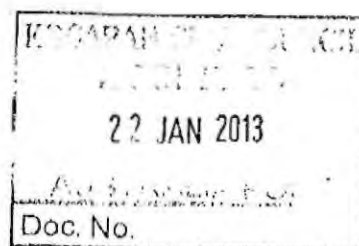
In response to Kogarah Council's notification of their intention to increase local property rates, & the invitation to make comments & suggestions on which current Council projects could be acceptably culled, I wish to submit the accompanying appendix for your information & referral.

I must point out however that the selection process has been made very difficult by council's failure to provide no information comparing the annual running costs of each facet they require us to formulate an opinion on.

So all they are effectively doing is encouraging an emotional response from us, with no relevance to actual positioning in their cost structure.

That is not a fair way to undertake & seek any meaningful public response. It projects the inference that decisions have been already reached, & require no further public response.

[REDACTED]



## Appendix

- 1 I think Council needs to get back to identifying in two lists what are "essential primary council responsibilities", & I suggest the secondary list contains just the "fuzzy feel-good council services".
  - 1.1 An annual statement of the running cost of every activity on both lists should next be itemised.
  - 1.2 The nett cost p.a. of the four basic council services (roads & footways + drainage + garbage + street lighting) should then be identified.
  - 1.3 The remaining "surplus" (between this very basic-needs expenditure (parag. 1.2) & the "annual nett available budget") should then be identified, & that money allocated on a priority basis until all of that monies runs out. Obviously some items will miss out in receiving any annual funds, but they could choose to defer their funding until later years, or accept a reduced level of funding for that year.
- 2 I would list the items with the lowest need for annual funding onto activities as follow ... art exhibitions, public art, opportunities for musicians, the Australia Day fireworks display, the Chinese Carss Park new year festival, & the Greek Carss Park festival.
- 3 I would very seriously reconsider the quality & need for having three library facilities each functioning in duplicity. I would like to have the annual expenditure for running the Oatley & South Hurstville branches quantified. By comparison, what would it cost to equip & run a mobile semi-trailer library-van in lieu, & have it "service" both of the above, plus the Hurstville & Rockdale Council Areas concurrently? (*As provided in some NSW Country Regional Areas*).
- 4 It is very obvious that the role of the hard-copy books is diminishing rapidly. And yet Kogarah's Library facility appears to be expanding, in the complete reverse. What efforts have been made to move the Kogarah Library towards this foreseeable future electronic book system? Such a move will significantly diminish future library expenditures, including the level of accommodation needed to contain them, & therefore the ensuing operating costs.
- 5 I worked as a high level Engineer in Australia's most major utility for a continuous period of 41 years ('55 to '96). Every year a draft capital works programme (DCWP) for the ensuing three years was developed. We engineers had to argue & justify our needs for funding allocations. Frequently our total needs had to be pruned back to comply with the available funding. Every year the approved capital works programme (ACWP) was developed, & each time all sub-sections had to individually justify our funding demands. These demands depended upon 5, 10, & 20 year perceived projections of potential future service needs.
- 6 I am sure a similar arrangement to parag. 5 applies within Kogarah Council, at least I hope so. But I see a very strong case for funding to be provided each year based upon (firstly) "day-to-day local management & housekeeping needs", & (secondly) "major contractual development needs".

- 7 Kogarah Council need to be more "open" with its ratepayers in identifying the intended ACWP (capital works programme) every year. Surely an annual special-edition of the newsletter "Kogarah Life" would be appropriate.
- 8 As a retired person, I see a lot of inefficiencies in Council's attitude when it comes to street cleaning. My street comprises mainly home units, of which all of their garages are, in the main, full of household furnishings. Consequently their cars are mainly parked in the street. But Council regularly uses a huge street-sweeper to clean-up the street. Because of its size & the proximity of parked cars, the gutters rarely ever get swept by this machine. So, in addition, Council employs two or three extra council men (on foot) to hand-sweep the gutters either fortnightly, or three-weekly ( *but never after "any severe wind-storms"*). One man sweeps the gutter, while the other shovels the leaves into a plastic garbage bin. *Surely the use of two commercial-type household leaf-litter vacuum-cleaners would quickly prove to be more cost efficient? I think it was once trialled for a short period, & then lapsed in use. Why? When it was so obviously better & more efficient.*
- 9 For a considerable time council staff would turn-up in a large council truck every day & park, appear to sleep, & eat their lunch outside a block of home units in my street (ie. o/s 2 → 4 Hamilton Street). They were never working in that area, merely came to this site over a prolonged period, taking regular lunch breaks in the shade of a large gum tree. *(Predictably they were using ratepayer-funded petrol to drive (unofficially) between this lunch site & their nominal work site.)* When I was the first line manager of my own field staff, I told them to never flaunt their arrogance out in the public's view. By all means take a refreshing lunch break. But do it out of sight of public viewing, & never regularly in the same place. *(I notice, by way of exemplary conduct, that similar field staff from Hurstville Council, regularly park & take their lunchtime R. & R. break by parking more discretely in Roberts Lane, & overlooking Kempt Field).* At the time of the Kogarah staff parking regularly [REDACTED] gutter gully-pit on the [REDACTED] is regularly filling with leaves & discharging water daily down the tarmac of [REDACTED]. I wrote to & spoke by phone to council's engineer (Adam De Clouett), & even identified the constant daily source where the water-discharge was (& is) coming from in 424 → 426 Railway Parade. Despite the obvious slippery hazardous condition of the road surface, the "men in the truck" never once got out of their truck to clear the leaf blockage. *If "Fox Transport" can utilise GPS monitoring to identify vehicle locations, then surely Kogarah Council can perceive of a similar requirement in such cases of illegal vehicle usage.*
- 10 Having recently undergone 5 way bypass surgery I am constantly vigilant about tripping over & damaging my yet to be fully "knitted" rib cage. I have become very patently aware of the large number of displaced concrete footway slabs that have been dislodged by tree roots. Thus placing myself & other frail & elderly residents at risk of falling, & of consequence, Kogarah Council at risk of litigation claims. It seems that the basic problem emanates from council's gardening staff selecting inappropriate trees to plant in inappropriate width footpaths. Generally this has involved the standard 12 foot wide footpath (3.6 M) being selected as planting sites for massive 40 foot high gum-trees. Surely 12 foot high bottle-brush trees would be more appropriate? And far less damaging. Regularly, & locally, I see council staff come & dig out the askew footpath-slabs & re-lay new ones. But it is an ongoing



process, as it is never very long before the replacement slabs again need replacing. Or the temporary use of bitumen is employed to provide a short term ramped-up solution. Surely "better tree-selection in the first place" would create less-need for such ongoing short term replacement costs.

*(Question .. don't council's gardening staff ever communicate & interact with council's footpath staff, & identify these ongoing costs emanating & being charged unnecessarily to the ratepayers? This is surely an obvious venue for saving ratepayers unforeseen unnecessary additional expenditures. Surely the relationship of these two areas has been noticed & reacted upon at the managerial level. Or has it? It seems not! So why not?)*

- 11 Another example of where council's parks & garden staff waste ratepayer's money has occurred o/s the home unit block located in [REDACTED]. Previously there were two huge gum trees in the footpath outside this property. The easternmost one became unsafe & had to be cut down & uprooted. Consequently a replacement gum tree was planted in the footpath in its stead. But little regard was made to the best time of the year for planting. It was planted leading into summer, instead of into a cooler period. Consequently the tree was never watered, & has obviously died. *(So again ratepayers' money has been wasted by people who clearly "don't use their brain enough to think about the right time to plant a young sapling".)* Multiply that one incident with other probable plantings elsewhere, & it is easy to identify where council wastes ratepayers' money. This is an obvious "first-call" area where money could be saved with just a little forethought. Such "failures" need appraisal before "The Admin" takes the easier path of increasing the level of rating. *(My experience, from my working life, is that such wastage usually emanates from the selection of unmotivated supervisory staff right from the top right thru to the bottom. It only needs somebody nearer the top to start the motivation-process rolling, & it soon rolls right down thru the entire supervisory-chain.)*
- 12 I recently had occasion to report to the Kogarah Customer Service Centre a hole in the footpath in the Allawah Shopping Centre that was two house-bricks long & had been there for half a week undetected. It was located in the footpath o/s the Little Italy Pizza Café, on the SE corner of the busy traffic-light intersection of Elizabeth Street & Railway Parade (right opposite the pram ramp). Despite it being at the major bridge-crossing's intersection, & the major pedestrian-path to & from the Allawah Railway Station, the lady to whom I reported it had no local knowledge of the area, & so was oblivious to the volume of pedestrian usage the location carried, & as were being put at risk. *(Surely staff more conversant with the environment's needs should have been employed as the "first level of response" in that position at that time?)*
- 13 Some items in council's list of activities (Special edition – January 2013) are quite ambiguous in what they involve. Despite living [REDACTED] for 70 years I have never seen any need to get involved in (i) educative road safety, (ii) youth & multi-cultural programmes, (iii) active aging, (iv) youth week, (v) senior's week, (vi) community grants & community safety programmes. *Surely they all should be on the list of possible funding deletions (immediately after the arts & music grant deletions).*

- 14 I believe that there is a very strong case for allocating ALL parks + pools + playgrounds + gardens + sportsground maintenance out for private tender. I would also strongly recommend that roads & footpaths be included in that category. *(Again, from personal experience, the nominated council supervisors for each contract must be specifically chosen to manage such contract work efficiently, & not fall foul of intimidation by the contractor(s).)*
- 15 Graffiti management is also listed on council's list of possible funding deletions. *(We must all be "angels" in the [REDACTED] because I haven't seen any evidence of public nuisance graffiti in this area for years.)* There IS evidence of presumably Kogarah Council Staff having provided graffiti on the northern footpath of the Allawah shopping area. This footpath had been recently beautified, painted blue & maroon, & the surface "scrolled" to represent false slab work. Then rumour had it that Kogarah Council intended to update & re-model the Allawah shopping area. Staff went ahead & painted out & symbolically identified every utility buried beneath the subject footpath. Their paintwork wasn't attractive. That all occurred possibly two or three years ago, the proposal lapsed, the "artwork" remains to this day, & no effort has ever been made by council staff to come & clean-up their painted "mess" they left us with. *(Incidentally, in my utility, we regularly dug-up roads & footpaths, we never resorted to painting utility locations on the footpath, we acted in a professional manner, & had staff prepare composite public utility plans (maps) of every service buried in the subject area.)* So where was the graffiti clean-up budgeted money spent, were it intended never-ever to be destined to be spent on Allawah's shopping centre's northern footpath?
- 16 "Local business support & economic development" is yet another nebulously Council claimed funded responsibility. Any interface between the local Chamber of Commerce & Council could hardly be regarded as a full-time career duty for any council staff. Surely it is merely undertaken infrequently, & on a seldom needed basis.
- 17.1 What, if any, is the amount of ex-ratepayer collected money, purportedly collected ONLY for day-to-day council operations, has Kogarah Council currently invested in the overseas investment market?
- 17.2 What is the annual rate of monetary return from this investment?
- 17.3 Has this "earning" been factored into the considerations leading up to the naming of the suggested rate increase option?
- 17.4 If not, then why, & what is the expected resultant deferral of the suggested rate-increase, if the previously stated "conditions-of-culling" were still to be applied?
- 18.1 There is a general perception, rightly or wrongly, that the effects of the carbon tax have had a great influence upon general living costs, including council rating levels.
- 18.2 If the Federal Liberal-Coalition Party were to be successful & elected to govern post 2013, & they elect to abandon all current carbon-tax commitments, then will Kogarah Council give a formal commitment NOW to its ratepayers to re-assess its rating format to account for such resultant lower running costs? Particularly as the impact will be at its highest in the street lighting arena.
- 18.3 Or will council formally indicate NOW, & in its stead, its intention to retain its rating levy at the rating figure involving carbon tax, & as introduced prior to the forthcoming 2013 Federal elections?

- 19 So, in conclusion .....
- 19.1 I reiterate that council must get back to its "four core-responsibilities" as its first priority. Then "top up" any minor commitments solely on the basis of each "contender for funding" putting up their best business case & listing the ramifications of part or nil funding. Fully funding any such minor issues in these austere times should never-ever again be regarded as "the norm". Such funds must henceforth be "competed for" annually, & only the best presentations get awarded any "surplus" funding. Also, that common practice of "frivolity spending uncommitted funds on less than urgent projects towards the end of each fiscal year" must be closely monitored & prevented at all cost.
- 19.2 My own perception, based upon my observance of your own engineer + your customer service lady + your litter cleaning field staff + your street tree planting people, is that there is a general rundown of "interest" exhibited towards their jobs. *This may be resultant from frustrations from their perception of upper-management's co-operation, or its policies.*
- 19.3 Very early in my career I was given the three following "golden-guidelines", which I successfully made great use of.
- (i) It doesn't matter how qualified you are personally, what makes you a good supervisor is how you best manage the staff & resources at your disposal to achieve job fulfilment, even despite being given very obvious inadequacies to work with.
  - (ii) It is good practice, when making design & managerial decisions, to invite a contribution from subordinates. Often their advice may be identical with your own, but never-ever indicate that to them. If you are perceived by them to be accepting their advice, then they become more interested in their job, & more self-motivated. Best of all, they become "their own supervisors", require little other "outside supervision", & stake their own reputation upon giving you a job that has been well done & to the best of their ability. *(A lot of younger insecure engineers argued that this meant that they had "lost a little face with their staff". But I found (throughout my 41 years) that the nett gains far exceeded any perceived personal losses. In fact it vastly improved my staff relationships.)*
  - (iii) Another common activity where I worked that lead to quality improvement, was in having executive management take an active interest in field work in progress. Such unscheduled visits became "an inquisition". Field supervisors were questioned on their route selection, their choice of mechanical aids, staffing levels, & the job's progress. *Such executive interest (exhibited irregularly) has real value in keeping subordinate supervisors "on their toes", & it overcomes any tendency to let jobs just drift along, & overrun both economically & in their completion commitments.*

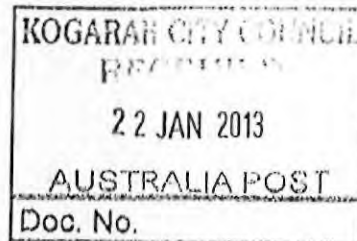
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██████████  
██████████  
BLAKEHURST NSW 2221

21 January, 2013

The General Manager  
Kogarah Council  
Locked Bag 8  
KOGARAH NSW 2217



Dear Sir,

**Re: Council Rates & Charges – IPART Pegging Rate**

I refer to the recent edition of Kogarah Life setting out the Council plan regarding increases in council rates and requesting feedback on the proposal.

Council also needs to take into account that ratepayers have been subjected to increases in other household and domestic expenses and not just council rates. The increases in electricity costs and refrigeration (feron gas) due to the introduction of the carbon tax are well known and documented. The cost of electricity is expected to continue to rise as the carbon tax increases progressively over the next few years. The cost of annual Greenslips and registrations for cars has also recently increased. The increase in household costs including council rates will have a major impact on persons with fixed incomes such as pensioners and self funded retirees.

Kogarah ratepayers have already been subjected to increases in council rates above the IPART peg rate. The rate increases over the past several years have been nearly more than doubled the rate pegging limit determined by IPART. I don't believe ratepayers should be subjected to further increases. If Council is unable to deliver its program then budget cuts should be made to services which are least important to ratepayers. Alternatively, have across the board reduction all in all services so that the reduced budget can be met with rate income pegged at the IPART rate.

Hurstville Council has kept its rate increases in accordance with the IPART pegging limit and I do not understand why Kogarah Council cannot do the same. The roads in Hurstville area are being maintained to a reasonably good level whereas the maintenance of roads in Kogarah Council is shocking as some parts of Princes Highway resemble a third worlds country. Maybe Kogarah Council should review Hurstville policy and adopt it.

In addition to rate increases above the IPART pegging rate, Kogarah Council also imposed a \$25 annual stormwater levy over the past several years. Again, Hurstville Council does not impose an annual stormwater levy.

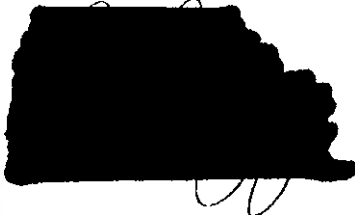
It is not evident from the Kogarah Life newsletter that the budget shortfall of \$1.2m projected on the pegging rate increases of 3.25% will have a major impact on the services outlined in the Delivery Program. If Council's Administration & Wages costs are part of the shortfall, then staffing levels at the council clearly need to be reviewed and brought in line with other local councils' staff ratios.

It should be noted that even though Kogarah Council wants to increase the council rates above the IPART peg rate over the next four years, there are no guarantees that the budget will be met and that the expected additional services will be delivered to a satisfactory level over the same period. The maintenance of roads is an area which clearly has not improved over the past several years when Kogarah Council was already charging councils rates well above the IPART peg rate limit.

I oppose any further rate increases by Kogarah Council which are above the IPART pegging rate limit. I also oppose to the annual stormwater levy being by Kogarah Council which other councils do not charge. Kogarah Council's budget needs to be reviewed and costs reduced such that the projected revenue from council rates set at the IPART peg rate can met the revised budget amount rather than increase council rates to met the higher budget amount.

I await your response to my letter and should you wish discuss my letter please contact me.

Yours faithfully,

A large, irregular black redaction mark covers the signature area. Below the redaction, there are some faint, handwritten scribbles.

To: Rebecca Dalton  
Fax: (02) 9330 9560  
Hi Rebecca

From: [REDACTED]

Thanks for the letter.

I am sorry that I won't be able to attend the meeting due to work.

Regards some topics in your letter. Please find my options below:

1) The proposal set ~~rate~~ for the next four years.

I think that it is reasonable for a rate cap of 3.4% for next financial year and the following 3 years as well. Because it will above the gov's inflation rate between 2-3%/p.a. As you know many families not only pay the council rates, there are many more bills to be covered.

Council may say there is not enough money to do many things. I think that council should think about other ways to make money and/or save.

As the rate of 4.8% is more than 4.18% increase from 3.4%. It should make it much harder for many families to cope with.

2) The impact of not that rate:

I think that some of services frequency need to be reviewed. And to cut unused service such as free shuttle bus or cut some specific services and activities for key target groups if the group has little participation. And to do graffiti services only once a year.