

Sent: Friday, 13 March 2015 3:32 AM

To: IPART Mailbox

Subject: I support Ashfield Council's application for a Special Rate Variation.

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WHY WE NEED AN SRV

Our 50 year old outdoor pools are at the end of their life span. Our ageing stormwater, roads and footpaths, some over 110 years old, need escalated maintenance and repairs. Parks, playgrounds, canteens and community facilities need upgrading and/or construction. Our town centres need reinvigoration.

Ashfield has the worse ratio of open space per person - 1.06 hectares : 1,000 people, less than a third the acceptable level. We are the second or third most densely populated municipality in NSW. Almost half our community is from overseas with English as a second language. Many of our families with children live in flats with NO place to play.

Good infrastructure is important for disadvantaged communities.

Compared to the Sydney average we have

twice as many flats to houses,

a high proportion of renters and transients compared to owner occupiers,

more nursing homes and

more boarding houses, many unregistered (illegal).

Please don't further disadvantage our community.

THE COMMUNITY IS WELL AWARE OF THE SRV APPLICATION

Council undertook significant community consultation.

Three anonymous INCORRECT fliers have been distributed to all households, scaring our residents and encouraging them to send objections about the SRV to IPART. Those objecting now, will be the first to complain as their services and infrastructure degrade further. The majority of our municipality some 44,000 people have not responded to IPART, despite the anonymous propaganda, because they want our local pools and infrastructure fixed. Their silence is in support of the SRV.

IMPACT ON RATE PAYERS

Many years ago there was a period when Ashfield didn't apply a yearly CPI rate rise, at all. This had a cumulative disastrous effect on our ability to provide services at the level expected by our community. We are starting to catch up with fixing our infrastructure.

Most people do not realise that the previous SRV ceased last year i.e. dropping future rates charges.

The rate rise is averaged out over the whole municipality. More flats do not give Ashfield Council more rates income. The increase in dwellings actually reduces the average rates charged. The increase in 100s of dwellings being built along Liverpool Road, Ashfield will reduce the rate rise per dwelling. The SRV impact on our community will be reasonable and modest.

Pensioners are to receive an increased rebate to protect them from the effect of the rate increase. Seniors will have free pool entry.

COST CONTAINMENT

Ashfield Council runs a lean organisation and takes advantage of SSROC purchasing capacity etc. We are frugal with our budgets and network with other Councils. We know grants are scarce and mostly very small. Historically we have worked in partnership with the community, offering seed funding for social programs, tailored to local needs.

The impact of cost shifting has had a huge impact on Ashfield.

To refuse the SRV application, is to see the outdoor pools potentially close. Our infrastructure situation is dire. Please don't let a scare campaign affect your decision. I hope that IPART will approve Ashfield Council's SRV application, so that our children, the current and next generation of residents can enjoy decent community facilities, improved infrastructure and renewed outdoor pools.

Mrs Monica Wangmann