

**INDEPENDENT PRICING AND  
REGULATORY TRIBUNAL  
(IPART)**

**Special Rate Variation Application**

**Wollongong City Council 2014-15**

**Attachment 14  
Media Articles and Coverage**



Challenging: Reuben, 10, Stella, 8, and Gabby Livingston, 12, of Mangerton prepare for a wet weather walk to school this week. Picture: ANDY ZAKELI

## Children learn benefits of exercise

MICHELLE WEBSTER

A BROLLY might be a good idea, but don't let a few drops of rain put you off leaving the car in the garage and walking the kids to school instead.

The Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District is today encouraging families to chuck on some sneakers and take a stroll as part of national Walk Safely to School Day.

Health promotion officer Pip Budgen said the day was about promoting regular walking, reduced car dependency, cleaner air, improved diet and the use of public transport, while

also reinforcing road-crossing skills.

"It may not be possible for families to walk the entire way, so public transport or parking the car further away from the school gate may be some further options," she said.

More than 60 per cent of primary school kids are now being driven to school, and many are getting very little exercise, surveys have revealed.

Mum-of-three Samantha Karmel said her kids had been walking to school since they were in kindergarten.

"When I'd pick them up from school in the car they were

cranky and hungry and always fighting about who would sit where," she said.

"I disliked the traffic jams and the fact there was no parking."

Instead they ditched the drive and gave walking a go, and Gabby, 12, Reuben, 10, and Stella, 8, have been reaping the benefits ever since.

"They build confidence, become independent and it is quite social," Ms Karmel said.

"It is a challenging walk with some hills, but it gives them time to wind down and reflect on the day."

For more information visit walk.com.au.

# City could face asset fire sale

KATE McILWAIN

WOLLONGONG City Council's top bureaucrat has warned public assets could be sold and services cut as the council attempts to bring its troubled finances under control.

General manager David Farmer yesterday went public with his concerns about the city's financial future, saying "nothing was off the agenda" when it came to selling off assets, scaling back services or even raising rates over the next 12-18 months.

His comments came after a NSW government report on the state's 152 councils last month found Wollongong to be in a moderate financial position, meaning it had recorded "minor to moderate operating deficits".

"This is hardly a resounding endorsement of our future financial viability," Mr Farmer said.

"It's saying we are currently unable to replace all our assets [when necessary]... and that we need to take some action to address this."

"If you can't maintain your assets then things fail, they come out of service and they inconvenience the community."

He said the council did not have enough money to fund projects such as the kiosk at Mount Keira lookout, the Berkeley Community Centre, the \$5.3 million Bald Hill revamp or stabilisation works on Harry Graham Drive at Mount Kembla.

"We have been working on [stabilising Mount Keira Road] and we anticipate being able to commence work on that reasonably soon, but the kiosk at the top of Mount Keira has failed and reached the end of its useful life and we don't have the resources to prioritise it higher and to replace it at this stage," he said.

The council was also struggling to maintain its "bread and butter" facilities, like footpaths, roads and public toilets, which were valued at \$2.3 billion but would cost more than \$3.5 billion to replace, Mr Farmer said.

"Our business turns over less than \$300 million a year, so we've got a fairly small turnover business to look after vast amount of assets," he said.

"We're replacing some of them at the moment, but we've still got a suite of them that are not at the standard that our community would expect."

"They are past their use-by date."

Mr Farmer said the council



MR FARMER

### UNDERFUNDED PROJECTS

- Mount Keira lookout kiosk
- Stabilisation works on Harry Graham Drive
- Berkeley Community Centre
- Road renewal in the Dapto and Berkeley area
- A \$5.3 million master plan to redevelop Bald Hill
- Thirroul Beach pavilion and kiosk refurbishment
- North Wollongong Surf Life Saving Club refurbishment
- Purpose-built Helensburgh library
- Southern suburbs regional playground and refurbishments at William Beach Park in Brownsville and Nicholson Park in Woonona

### Council assets that need to be maintained

- 717 buildings
- 151 playgrounds
- 87km cycleways or paths
- 419km footpaths
- 890km roads
- 282 car parks
- 638km stormwater pipes

would ask the community whether they would prefer to sell, replace or simply remove various buildings, facilities and services in order to make savings.

He said the council could look at privatising assets that had an income stream - such as public pools or leisure centres - but noted many of its paths, roads or toilets simply couldn't be sold.

"I think to put anything off the agenda would be wrong - they are just decisions the council will have to make and we will have to have conversations with the community in doing those things," he said.

Mr Farmer also said he could not rule out a rate rise in the near future, but said he would prefer to look at whether Wollongong council could save money on services.

## 3D printing technology helps save sick baby boy

IN a medical first, US doctors have used plastic particles and a 3D laser printer to create an airway splint to save the life of a baby boy who used to stop breathing nearly every day.

It's the latest advance in the booming field of regenerative medicine - making body parts in the lab.

In the case of Kaiba Gionfriddo, doctors didn't have a moment

spare. Because of a birth defect, the little Ohio boy's airway kept collapsing, causing his breathing to stop and often his heart, too.

Michigan doctors used computer-guided lasers to "print out" 100 tiny plastic tubes of various shapes and sizes. They implanted one in Kaiba - the first time it has been done.

Suddenly, a baby who doctors thought would probably not

survive, could breathe normally. He was three months old when the operation was done in February 2012. Kaiba has not had a single breathing crisis since going home.

"He's a pretty healthy kid right now," said Dr Glenn Green, a paediatric ear, nose and throat specialist at CS Mott Children's Hospital of the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, where the operation was done.

It's described in the latest edition of *The New England Journal of Medicine*.

Independent experts see the potential for 3D printing to create more body parts to solve unmet medical needs.

"It's the wave of the future," said Dr Robert Weatherly, a paediatric specialist at the University of Missouri in Kansas City.

Kaiba had an incompletely

formed bronchus, one of the two airways that branch off the windpipe to the lungs.

The splint, placed around his defective bronchus, has a slit along its length so it can expand and grow as the child does - something a permanent, artificial implant cannot do. The plastic is also designed to degrade and be absorbed by the body as healthy tissue forms to replace it.



# Tough call over 'last legs' centre

KATE MOLLWAIN

WOLLONGONG City Council has warned that the Berkeley Neighbourhood Centre is on its last legs as it hunts for funds to build a much-needed replacement.

The 36-year-old building is a lifeline for its community - providing emergency bus tickets, homework help and social activities for primarily young and sometimes struggling Berkeley citizens.

But now the building is showing its age with cracks in the walls, structural damage and the ceiling is sagging almost beyond repair.

The council's community facilities manager, Jan Noble, said the neighbourhood centre's fragile and increasingly costly state meant Berkeley residents faced "tough decisions" over its future.

With residents, Ms Noble had drafted plans for the newer Berkeley Community Centre building next door to make way for neighbourhood centre activities.

"Given this building is in a poor condition and the other facility is in much better condition, our thought is that it's possibly better to refurbish that building so it better meets everyone's needs," Ms Noble said.

"There's the opportunity to move youth activities into there and not impact on the seniors who currently use it.

"We want to have children's play

areas and set it up for the future to meet the needs of this community."

However, she said she did not want to "raise community expectations" about the facility being upgraded as the council grappled with financial troubles and a growing list of unfunded projects.

"The issue is that we have a large number of buildings and the ongoing maintenance costs of all of these buildings, particularly when they are older, is very high," she said.

"The community needs to make those hard decisions about what facilities they require and what is most important so the available resources we have can be allocated to provide the 'best bang for the buck'."

Last month, general manager David Farmer went public with concerns about the city's financial future, saying "nothing was off the agenda" when it came to selling assets, scaling back services or even raising rates.

Berkeley Community Centre, Mount Keira lookout kiosk, the \$5.3 million master plan to redevelop Bald Hill and North Wollongong Surf Life Saving Club's refurbishment are among several projects that cannot be funded in the council's existing budget.

Ms Noble said the council would need to apply for government grants to fund any Berkeley Community Centre refurbishment.



Cracks in walls: Wollongong City Council's Jan Noble says Berkeley residents will have to make hard decisions over the future of the run-down Berkeley Neighbourhood Centre. Picture: ROBERT PEET



JOSHUA DUKES

## Escapee is dangerous, police say

POLICE say a man who escaped from a South Nowra jail on Saturday is dangerous and should not be approached.

Joshua Dukes, 30, was discovered missing from the South Coast Correctional Facility just before 2pm on Saturday.

He is described as being of Caucasian appearance, 175 centimetres tall, with a medium build and shaved head.

At the time of the escape he was wearing green shorts, T-shirt and shoes.

Dukes is facing numerous charges including for an alleged armed robbery.

Police consider him dangerous and warn he should not be approached.

Anyone who sees Dukes or knows of his whereabouts is urged to contact triple-0 immediately.

## Passion for lifesaving earns medal

MICHELLE WEBSTER

GINA Crick has always been a water baby.

Like many Illawarra youngsters she grew up by the ocean, and to this day is never far from the water.

When she's not teaching swimming at her daughter's Figtree school, the busy grandmother can be found battling the waves behind a heavy oar, or on patrol with Woonona or Bellambi

Surf Life Saving Clubs.

Mrs Crick's dedication to surf lifesaving was rewarded last week with the prestigious National Medal, which recognises long service in organisations that protect life and property at some risk to their members.

She is the first female to accept the award since Surf Life Saving Australia (SLSA) joined the Commonwealth honour scheme in 1986.

"I was honoured to be receiving it," she said.

A SLSA spokesman described Mrs Crick, 57, as a trailblazer and said her achievement was "beyond impressive." In the early '70s when Mrs Crick first met husband Kevin she became involved in the ladies auxiliary.

"I wasn't allowed to join the surf club as a member as such because I'm a female, so I helped out with the

ladies auxiliary, like doing all the cooking," she said.

Then, when the rules changed in 1980-81, Mrs Crick earned her bronze medallion and became a patrolling member.

At the Australian Surf Lifesaving Masters Championships earlier this year Mrs Crick took out a gold medal in the flags, bronze in the 2km beach run, silver in the sprints and silver in boat racing.



Dedication: Gina Crick with learn-to-swim kids Bradley King, Kayla Wearing and Xavier Godbee at Nippers 2 Flippers. Picture: KIRK GILMOUR

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# Shellharbour rates

## RATES ON THE RISE



**SHELLHARBOUR CITY COUNCIL**  
**2013-14: 8.4%**  
**2014-15: 9%**  
**2016-17: 10%**  
 Includes the standard rate peg of 3.4%  
**What it means for ratepayers:**  
 A cumulative increase of 43% over four years. Average rates of \$1043 (2012-13) a year will rise by \$88 in the first year and \$448 over four years, to \$1491 by 2016-17.



**WOLLONGONG CITY COUNCIL**  
 Rates pegged at 3.4%  
**What it means for ratepayers:**  
 Average rates of \$1095 (2012-13) will increase by \$40 in 2013-14.



**KIAMA MUNICIPAL COUNCIL**  
 An increase of 9.74% (including the standard rate peg of 3.4%) for 2013-14.  
**What it means for ratepayers:**  
 Average rates of \$1288 (2012-13) will rise by \$44 in 2013-14.



**SHOALHAVEN CITY COUNCIL**  
 An increase of 8% in 2013-14 (including the standard rate peg of 3.4%).  
**What it means for ratepayers:**  
 Average rates of \$880 (2012-13) will increase by \$70 in 2013-14.

## Council given thumbs up for 43 per cent rise

KATE McILWAIN

SHELLHARBOUR residents are facing the steepest rate rise in NSW after the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal yesterday approved a cumulative rate increase of 43 per cent over the next four years.

This means average households will be slugged with an extra \$450 a year by 2016-17 if the hike is approved at tonight's council meeting.

Farmers will face an average rise of \$1140 over four years and the average business rate will rise by \$321 in 2013-14 and \$1640 over four years.

The hefty increase was approved despite less than 20 per cent of surveyed Shellharbour residents supporting the large rate rise.

Of 1000 home owners surveyed earlier this year, 41 per cent supported a smaller rate increase on the basis of affordability and 40 per cent did not support a rate increase above the statewide rate pegging limit.

A total of 23 NSW councils applied to increase rates above the 3.4 per cent rate peg this year, with IPART also approving variations in Kiama and the Shoalhaven. Average Shoalhaven ratepayers will face a rise of \$70 in the next financial year, with IPART approving an increase of 8 per cent.

IPART also approved a Kiama rate increase of 9.74 per cent for 2013-14.

However, because this replaces two existing special variations, average rates will only increase by about \$44, which is in line with the 3.4 per cent rate peg.

Wollongong City Council did not apply to raise rates above the rate peg, however general manager David Farmer has recently flagged the city's troubled finances and said he could not rule out future rate increases.

Shellharbour Mayor Marianne Saliba yesterday welcomed IPART's

approval, saying it would allow the council to improve its financial sustainability and address an \$18 million maintenance backlog over the next four years.

"The tribunal has made it clear in the report that the council's case for the recommended [rate rise] is not only warranted, but is necessary for our city to achieve financial sustainability," she said.

"The report goes as far as to say that if we were to adopt anything less than the recommended 9.3 per cent increase, we would be in financial deficit in the next 10 years."

She said extra funds would be used to fix 153 roads, 39 public buildings and 24 stormwater projects, but - under conditions imposed by IPART - could not be used to fund the council's \$57 million City Hub.

"I welcome the condition in the IPART decision that the proposed [special rate variation] is not to be used for the funding of the City Hub," Cr Saliba said.

"This is entirely consistent with the council's application, and should satisfy those who had concerns on this issue."

In approving the rate rise, IPART said it expected it would "have a high impact on ratepayers, especially given the council has a relatively high level of rates".

It noted Shellharbour included areas with a low socio-economic status and said public submissions had expressed concerns about the affordability of the rate increases and the council's financial management.

However, the tribunal also said the need for the rate rise was demonstrated and would "allow the council to prevent further deterioration in its assets and to improve its financial position".

Shellharbour council will hold an extraordinary meeting tonight to consider the recommended rate rise.



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# hike tops the state



Worried: Tatianja Clout says her family and many other middle class families are already stretched to the limit.

Picture: SYLVIA LIBER

## Mum fears family may have to move elsewhere

KATE McILWAIN

TATIANJA Clout loves living in Shellharbour, but is worried a rate increase of 43 per cent in the next four years will be too much. With rates already at \$1340 a year, Mrs Clout will end up paying just shy of \$2000 a year by 2018-17, after the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) yesterday approved Shellharbour

council's bid to increase rates by an average of 9.3 per cent a year. Mrs Clout said her family couldn't work any harder to make ends meet. Her husband Jeff works for long stretches as a fly-in, fly-out mines assessor in Western Australia and she is unable to work because of a chronic illness. They also support Mrs Clout's 19-year-old son. "My husband works on

the other side of the country and is home for five days a month at the moment," she said. "Everyone thinks people who work in the mines earn stacks of money but that's not true - he earns enough money to pay our way but the downside is he's never home and any increase to any of our bills just makes me think we're doing all this sacrifice for nothing," she said.

"This is a beautiful place and I don't want to have to leave, but I've got to be able to afford to live here and I don't think my family can work any harder." The tribunal said yesterday that the average Shellharbour household rates would rise \$448 over four years, but based on her current rates, Mrs Clout will pay an extra \$600 a year by 2016-17. She said: "We're not one

of those couples that goes out to dinner all the time because he's not here - so [we will have to cut] spending our money on food, feeding a teenager which is expensive, and all the normal bills. "With a chronic illness, I also need to pay for medication - so will I need to put my health at risk to pay my bills? Where do you trim when you've already cut back as much as you can?"

### HOW RATE RISE WAS JUSTIFIED

IPART assessed Shellharbour City Council's application for its rate increase against set criteria. Here is how it justified the council's submission to increase rates by 43 per cent over four years:

■ The council has engaged extensively with the community to determine its priorities and level of support for the special variation. It conducted an independent survey on the special variation, which identified alternatives to the rate rise and the community's willingness to pay.

■ The consultation also showed community concern over the necessity for the works program, the council's efficiency and the impact of the rates increase on ratepayers.

■ However, the results of the survey showed: 19 per cent supported the full special variation, 41 per cent supported a smaller rate increase on the basis of affordability, 40 per cent did not support the rate increase on the basis of affordability and the council's efficiency.

■ In addition, we noted: \* The Shellharbour LGA includes areas with a low socio-economic status. \* Public submissions expressed concerns about the affordability of the rate increases and the council's financial management.

\* The council does not have a formal hardship policy but it does have a strategy in place to assist ratepayers in financial hardship.

■ The special variation is large, so it will have a high impact on ratepayers, especially given that the council has a relatively high level of rates.

■ Socio-economic indicators show the local government area is moderately placed compared to its peers, which suggests that the community may be able to afford the increase.

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news 9

# Ratepayers' tough choice

## Service cuts or a hike in rates

KATE McILWAIN

WOLLONGONG ratepayers have been put on notice: choose which council services you can do without or face an extra rate rise next financial year.

Councillors will vote at next week's meeting on endorsing a comprehensive financial review that will ask residents to decide which services could be cut back or stopped or whether they would prefer to pay higher rates.

The council's administration will also face increased pressure to achieve further "efficiencies" in an effort to meet its multimillion-dollar infrastructure backlog.

General manager David Farmer flagged the council's financial difficulties in May, saying "nothing was off the agenda" when it came to ensuring the city had a sustainable financial future.

He revealed the council did not have enough money to fund projects such as the kiosk at Mount Keira look-

out, the Berkeley Community Centre, the \$5.3 million Bald Hill revamp or Graham Drive at Mount Kembla.

He also said the council was struggling to maintain its "bread and butter" facilities, like footpaths, roads and public toilets, which were valued at \$2.3 billion but would cost more than \$3.5 billion to replace.

Yesterday, Lord Mayor Gordon Bradbery warned none of the solutions to meeting this infrastructure backlog would be easy for residents to accept.

He said community expectations outstripped what the council could afford.

"We will be going to the community and asking what they will not and can not do without," Cr Bradbery said.

"And if they want everything, we might have to look at the financial solution and that might mean a special rate increase."

If the council wants to raise extra rates next year, it

must notify the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal by December.

Cr Bradbery said councillors would need "courage" to endorse the financial review at next Monday's meeting, which he acknowledged was a politically unpopular decision.

"As councillors we have to be responsible, because we were elected not only to make easy decisions but also to make the hard ones," he said.

"It is going to be challenging and there are going to be some painful moments, but it has to be done because we can't leave a deficit situation where our assets aren't being properly managed."

"Even if I don't get a second term at least I and the councillors, will leave this council in a more sustainable situation."

If councillors vote to endorse the review, the council expects to launch its community consultation campaign next month.



Welcome: Encouraging UOW students to join clubs are from left Bransen Noel-Gough, Johnny Quach, Alison Brown, Melody Lewis and James Taurua. Picture: ANDY ZAKELI

## Balancing study and life

THE social side of university life took centre stage on campus at UOW yesterday at the spring session Clubs Day.

Representatives for more than 80 clubs and societies manned stalls and offered sign-up sheets to thousands of passing students and staff.

Acting Centre for Student Engagement program co-ordinator, clubs and societies, Sam Rathbone, said the day was intended to showcase what was available on campus, beyond the lecture theatres

and tutorial rooms. "During academic study it is very easy to forget the importance of having a life outside of study," he said.

"Clubs and societies help students and staff to get out of their comfort zones and experience new activities, meet new people and most importantly, have fun."

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Media 1

FLAGSTAFF HILL EIGHTH WONDER OF WORLD? PAGE 3

# ILLAWARRA MERCURY

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## Nathan the real winner in this race

**Mental exercise:** Vision-impaired athlete Nathan Johnston runs with Opposition Leader Tony Abbott during the City2Surf race in Sydney yesterday. Mr Johnston, from Helensburgh, ran the 14-kilometre event in a time of 1 hour 22 minutes. Mr Abbott declared that the famous run from Hyde Park to Bondi Beach had put him in a "good frame of mind" for last night's debate in Canberra with Prime Minister Kevin Rudd. "Everyone does these things in their own way ... I like to get a bit of exercise every day. It's part of my mental health regime," Mr Abbott said. **REPORTS:** Pages 2, 4

Picture: ALEX ELLINGHAUSEN



## Dragons fall just short

PAGE 15



PAGE 13

## Cuts would ease pressure for increase: Crasnich

# LIBS FIGHT RATE HIKE

KATE McILWAIN

WOLLONGONG City Council should privatise parks and leisure centres and cut back welfare and cultural services before embarking on a rate rise, Liberal councillor Bede Crasnich said. At tonight's meeting councillors will vote whether to begin a comprehensive financial review that will ask residents to decide which services could be cut back or stopped, or whether they would prefer to pay higher rates.

The review is aimed at shoring up the council's finances into the future, as it struggles to meet a multimillion-dollar infrastructure backlog. Cr Crasnich said he and other Liberal councillors would be fighting hard to hold off a rate rise for as long as possible. "I do not want a rate rise because I just don't think it's fair as a new council to be upping rates two years in," he said. "A lot of our assets - things like Beaton Park and Lakeside Leisure

Centre - can be leased out to private tenders. "And we do a lot of welfare-oriented services that the state and federal government do as well, that are not really a requirement of local councils. "I'm not talking about getting rid of them all, but temporarily scaling them back for the next few years may be necessary." Cr Crasnich also named Stuart Park, JJ Kelly Park and Mount Keira Summit as council assets that could be leased to private

operators and said community activities, such as Refugee Week, were not the responsibility of local government. He said rates in Wollongong were already too high and called on the federal government to fund more of the city's cultural and welfare programs. "While I think Refugee Week is a great thing, it is one of those things we should only do if we are financially viable," he said.

CONTINUED PAGE 2



# Mates make running



Cobbers: Tony Abbott and Nathan Johnston ran together in a marathon last year.

KATE McILWAIN

HELENSBURGH local Nathan Johnston has never run the City2Surf before, but as he did so yesterday there were TV cameras and newspaper photographers mapping his every move.

And while there's no doubt the 28-year-old visually-impaired triathlete runs a pretty good race, the lenses were following his running mate - Tony Abbott.

Last night, still on a high after finishing the race in 1 hour 22 minutes, Mr Johnston said he was exhilarated to have run his first-ever City2Surf alongside one of Australia's most high profile men. "It was pretty fun and quite high profile," he said. "We had a lot of dignitaries and police following us along the way, because of the election campaign."

"It was very humbling to have him there with me and I take my hat off to the bloke."

It wasn't the first time the pair have run together, with Mr Abbott helping to guide the Illawarra athlete as he completed his first marathon last September.

They kept in touch, so when Mr Johnston was given the chance to run in the gold class category of the City2Surf he asked if Mr Abbott would like to join him.

"On Friday, we got a call to say he'd be there," Mr Johnston said. "That's how he has to roll at the moment."

Hours after the Sydney run ended, Mr Abbott had to leave for Canberra to prepare for last night's election debate against Prime Min-



Starter: Opposition Leader Tony Abbott, left, with visually-impaired athlete Nathan Johnston, centre, cross the finish line of the City2Surf run at Bondi Beach yesterday.

Pictures: ALEX ELLINGHAUSEN

ister Kevin Rudd.

"He was pretty relaxed, flying in from Arnheim Land last night and turning up at 6am in Sydney this morning," Mr Johnston said.

"And he was pumped about the worm in the debate, which he brought up when we were running through Kings Cross."

Mr Johnston said his connection with the Liberal Party leader was

based on a love of sport, rather than politics, but said that didn't stop some of his friends from ribbing him about Mr Abbott's views.

"It's a funny thing, that I've got this mateship and connection with the opposition leader and I live in Helensburgh, which is a mining town and everyone votes Labor," he said.

"I'm not really political but they stir me about it - everyone has their own opinions and can vote their own way."

"But it would be nice to see him as the Prime Minister - we'll have to see on September 7."

**M POLL2013**  
The great debate: Page 4

## TV vet Chris Brown collapses during City2Surf run

CELEBRITY TV vet Chris Brown is recovering after collapsing during the City2Surf run.

Dr Brown, or The Bondi Vet as he is known from the popular TV show of the same name, was one of seven people transported to

hospital after the annual fun run from Hyde Park to Bondi.

Dr Brown said he required medical assistance at the 12km mark of the 14km race.

He was treated by first aid officers on site and taken to St

Vincent's Hospital for observation. Dr Brown, who was running to raise money for the Westpac rescue helicopter, said he had been suffering from a respiratory virus and wasn't feeling "100 per cent".

## Stanwell Tops rescue

THE police rescue helicopter was called in to rescue a man and woman lost at Stanwell Tops last night.

It is believed the pair became lost after hiking along a bush track to a beach north of Bald Hill yesterday afternoon.

Police rescue officers and Polair were called when the walkers were unable to find their way back along the track in the dark.

The man and woman had been located by emergency services and were in the process of being rescued at 8.30pm.

Wollongong police duty officer Inspector Phil O'Neil said the rescue served as a warning to hikers, reinforcing the need to plan their trip and take water, warm clothes and a charged mobile phone.

"If you're going to go walking in the afternoon, it is important to make sure you leave enough time to get back," he said.

"And it's important to remember that these types of actions can put others at risk, because police have to attend to rescue people who put themselves in these situations."

## Man, 44, hit with hammer

A 44-YEAR-OLD man was taken to hospital last night after being hit in the head by a hammer during a Shellharbour home invasion.

Police said the man was injured after three men forced their way into the home about 7pm.

Emergency service crews reported the man was being transported to hospital with a head wound caused by the hammer and a knife puncture under his arm.

It is believed he was also injured from a 1.8 metre fall.

A second man was also in the house during the home invasion but is not believed to have been harmed.

# Rates increase not a good look: Deputy Lord Mayor

FROM PAGE 1

"The community and cultural services part of Wollongong City Council is important but it is not more important than infrastructure, roads, rates and rubbish and environmental management."

If the council wants to raise

rates more than the standard 3.4-per cent rate peg, it must notify the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal by December.

Deputy Lord Mayor John Dorahy agreed with Cr Crasnich's push to avoid a rate rise, saying he would like to see more efficient council services ahead of an increase.

"To achieve the financially sustainable position we really need to look at our services, see where we can improve those services to make them more efficient and look at those services which we could be doubling up on with the various state and federal bodies," Cr Dorahy said.

"But as far as any rate increase is concerned, I would suggest that we as a council are on the higher end of rates already... so I think it's not a good look and not good economics to put that in place."

However, Cr Dorahy said he would like the council to make its leisure centres and caravan parks

more profitable rather than leasing them to private operators.

If councillors vote to endorse the financial review, the council expects to launch its community consultation next month.

**HAVE YOUR SAY**  
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news 2

# Citizens panel to help council's razor gang

KATE MCILVAIN

A PANEL of randomly selected Wollongong citizens will play a pivotal role in deciding which council services should be cut or saved and whether the city should implement an extra rate rise.

Wollongong City Council yesterday announced the core components of its public engagement strategy to help decide how to make the organisation more financially sustainable.

General manager David Farmer first flagged concerns about the council's bottom line in May, saying "nothing was off the agenda" to fix a \$20-million annual shortfall in maintaining council assets.

Mr Farmer announced plans to begin an extensive public consultation process to decide which services were most valued, where the council could operate more efficiently and whether residents would support a rate rise above the statewide 3.4 per cent.

At the heart of the wide-ranging strategy is a citizens' panel, members of which will be selected by an independent market research firm, to suggest the best way to improve the council's finances.

Residents cannot nominate for the panel but will be chosen at random during the next two weeks.

Market researchers will select about 25 to 40 people from differing age groups, genders and suburbs, and panel members must be available to attending briefings at the end of this month, as well as at least two intensive workshops.

Mr Farmer said this type of community consultation was considered to be "best practice" and was designed to ensure "interested parties and sectional interest groups" did not dominate discussions.

The engagement strategy will also include public submissions, online forums and workshops with councillors and staff.



MR FARMER

The panel's creation has alarmed members of resident group Save Our Services, which formed after Mr Farmer first raised concerns.

Group spokesmen Stephen Spencer, who addressed councillors at Monday's meeting, said he was worried the panel would unfairly set the agenda for the rest of the consultation process.

"We believe this panel, while set up by this third-party consultant ...

would presumably receive input from council staff by way of information or suggestions," he said.

"Further to that, our concern is that once the panel has come to some conclusion, those recommendations will be regarded as the community's viewpoint when the panel itself has had no direct link with any part of the community."

"So while other groups will be given the chance to say something, we will not have the weight that this panel has."

However, Lord Mayor Gordon Bradbery said there were no preconceived notions about what the panel would decide.

"No decisions have been made," Cr Bradbery said.

"This is a conversation we want to have with the community ... and the process is very transparent."

The council will place community information packs about its financial review online in coming weeks.

## Alleged killer in court

A MAN accused of stabbing a fellow worker to death at a western Sydney building site has not slept or eaten for two days, a court has heard.

The 54-year-old victim, reported to be a bricklayer, was found by police with multiple stab wounds after they were called to the site at St Clair on Monday morning.

His alleged attacker, 41-year-old Chun Huang, turned himself into Campsie police a few hours later.

His lawyer, Anthony Goodridge, told Burwood Local Court yesterday that his client needed an urgent medical assessment because he had not eaten or slept for two days.

Huang, who was wearing a white and blue tracksuit and needed a Mandarin interpreter, appeared worn out in court.

Magistrate Christopher Longley accepted the request and adjourned the case until today. AAP

## University rated by employers

THE University of Wollongong has consolidated a spot in the top 2 per cent in the QS World University Rankings for 2013.

UOW has also maintained its top 1 per cent spot in the world for the "employer reputation" of its graduates for the sixth year in a row.

UOW was ranked 276th overall and 109th in the world for how the university's graduates are rated by their employers.

In the area of engineering and technology UOW was ranked 128; in social sciences and management it was ranked 213; in arts and humanities 234; and in natural sciences 245.

## Police dig for body

POLICE forensic experts are using earthmoving equipment to dig up a property in northern NSW as they search for a young woman who has been missing for four years.

Jasmine Morris, 24, was last seen outside a South Grafton supermarket at 3pm on October 6, 2009 and her family reported her missing on October 20.

Yesterday, forensic experts were working with an earthmoving contractor to excavate parts of the property.

Ms Morris, also known as Jasmine Moore, was wearing a long black cotton skirt, purple top and things when she was last seen.

She is of Caucasian appearance, with an olive complexion, about 155cm tall, around 55kg, with shoulder length, black hair and brown eyes.

Police have renewed their calls for information about her. AAP

## Wilton abandoned as site for Sydney's second airport

GLEN HUMPHRIES

THE incoming Liberal government has effectively ruled out Wilton as the site for Sydney's second airport.

Deputy Prime Minister Warren Truss said yesterday that Wilton should never have been seriously considered.

"A second Sydney airport at Wilton was never a practical option and it is no surprise that the site was all but ruled out in the latest study on Sydney Airport released in April," Mr Truss said.

"The Wilton study was a distraction to enable the government to put off making a decision about Sydney's airport needs until after the election."

"The site is too far from Sydney, creates huge environmental issues and would never attract the patronage of other options."

Wollondilly Shire Mayor Col Mitchell, a long-time opponent of the Wilton site, said he was pleased to hear it had been ruled out.



Moving on: Wollondilly Mayor Col Mitchell says the council can now get on with planning the new suburb of Wilton Junction, which is to cater for 30,000 people.

"It's certainly a good result for us," Cr Mitchell said.

"I know people will say, 'What about the loss of employment?', but you can be from here to Badgerys in about 30 minutes down the Northern Road."

"It's not going to make any difference there. We

have a lot of people working at Mascot now from out in this area."

He said the decision would mean the council could get on with the work of planning the new suburb of Wilton Junction, which would cater for 30,000 people and was next to one of the possible

airport sites. Cr Mitchell said the airport issue had been "a political football", with the outgoing government preferring to commission more studies rather than make a decision.

Mr Truss said the decision of the location of the second airport would not

be delayed by further studies and the new government would base a decision on major analysis completed last year by state and federal governments.

That analysis backed Badgerys Creek as the site, suggesting that the Royal Australian Air Force base at Richmond could be used in a limited commercial capacity before Badgerys was built.

Mr Truss said this same report suggested there would be constraints on Kingsford Smith Airport's operations as early as 2015 and these would need to be addressed in the Sydney Airport Corporation's forthcoming master plan.

He suggested that newer planes could reduce the number of flights in and out of Kingsford Smith, extending its life-span.

"Today, larger and quieter aircraft carry more people per flight and Boeing's 787 and A330 aircraft will soon replace smaller aircraft on high-density domestic routes," he said.

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**Advertiser** NEWS

**Rail commuters feel hard done by**

Once again, Illawarra residents are treated like second-class citizens when it comes to train travel.

Despite having one of the biggest commuter corridors in Australia, at close to 20,000 people, the region's rail commuters to Sydney were not well served by the state government's new timetable announced last week.

The timetable, to be introduced on October 20, will mean evening peak hour services to the South Coast cut in half with many smaller northern suburbs stations skipped.

In the evening period between 5pm and 6.30pm, the number of services that will depart Central and stop at Wollongong was cut from eight to four.

Many Illawarra commuters don't have much of a choice when it comes to rail travel.

They work in Sydney because there are not enough jobs in our region.

Facing Sydney traffic on the roads is a nightmare, let alone the cost of parking.

The government needs to take into account how difficult it is for commuters to have a work-life balance and do the right thing by our region.

Or maybe they should try and create more jobs here so that people don't have to travel.



**Editorial**  
with Antony Field



Season starts: Ben McRae, Lachlan Pritchard, Jason Foye, Jackie Percy, Mark Sleigh, Wollongong Lord Mayor Gordon Bradbery, Angus Turner and Beau Wheeler launch the swim season. Picture: ANDY ZAKELI

**Time to swim sensibly**

By AGRON LATIFI

Wollongong City Council has gone all high-tech in its surf safety strategy to coincide with the start of the swim season.

Beachgoers at Wollongong's 17 patrolled beaches can access a series of safety videos on their mobile phones before they hit the surf. The videos are accessible by scanning the QR codes that are on signs around the beaches, and will focus on surf safety as well as three of the region's problem beaches.

Beach services co-ordinator Jason Foye said the council decided to create specific videos for Puckeys, Coniston and Stanwell Park beaches in an effort to

stop people swimming in dangerous conditions.

"These are some of our higher-risk locations... at Coniston we are seeing a lot more people because it is an off-leash dog area and people are generally having a swim with their dog and we wanted to highlight some of the hazards," he said.

"With Puckeys, we've had a lot of fatalities in the past. We have consolidated walkways, re-signage and have an emergency-response beacon. We also have CCTV cameras watching that particular location."

Mr Foye said the council had also launched an initiative with Destination Wollongong to enhance beach safety education.

Destination Wollongong general manager Mark Sleigh said the beaches were regularly visited by domestic and international visitors to the city.

"We have over 3.5 million day trippers a year and there is no doubt a lot of those are here for the beaches and to enjoy the natural assets of Wollongong," Mr Sleigh said.

Mr Foye urged beachgoers to pay attention to all signs, swim between the flags and make sure they were well informed about surf conditions.

Lifeguards will patrol beaches between Stanwell Park and Windang from Monday to Saturday, while volunteer lifesavers patrol on Sundays and public holidays.

**BRIEFS**

**Council's finances**

Time is running out for Wollongong residents to have their say about what the city council's priorities should be as it looks to secure its long-term financial sustainability.

Residents can take part in an online survey on the council's website, an online discussion forum and make submissions to a citizen's panel until October 8.

For more information, go to [haveyoursaywollongong.com.au/projects/financial-sustainability](http://haveyoursaywollongong.com.au/projects/financial-sustainability).

**Funding applications**

Non-profit women's groups can now apply for funding through the International Women's Day Illawarra Committee.

The committee holds the IWD fund-raising lunch each year to celebrate the achievements of Illawarra women. Since 2006, the lunches have raised \$145,000. This year, \$15,000 was raised for the Illawarra Women's Health Centre to help run workshops for year 8 girls. Funding applications for 2014 are now open at [www.iwdillawarra.com.au](http://www.iwdillawarra.com.au) till January 10.

**Tourism winners**

Three Wollongong organisations won at the South Coast Tourism Awards last month.

Skydive the Beach won the adventure tourism category, Destination Wollongong won marketing and promotion for the It's ON! summer campaign and Novotel Northbeach Wollongong won for meetings, functions and business tourism.

**Belly dance festival**

The second annual Wollongong Belly Dance Festival will be held this weekend.

The festival starts on Friday and continues on Saturday and Sunday at Illawarra Master Builders Club. It will include spectacular displays of traditional and contemporary belly dance, workshops, market bazaar and festival showcase.

Tickets: 4226 1861 or [bellydancefestival.com.au](http://bellydancefestival.com.au)

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**Sun shines on Relay for Life crowd**

Great weather, a large crowd and some new features combined to make the 2013 Illawarra Relay for Life one of the best yet.

More than 2000 people took part in the relay at Kerryn McCann Athletic Centre on Saturday and organisers hope to raise \$320,000 for the Cancer Council.

Community relations co-ordinator Terry Deegan said some new features were very successful, including the children's games and activity zone and the healthy passports program, which involved 700 people.

Donations can be made for the next three weeks at [relay.cancer.council.com.au/2013/illawarra\\_2013](http://relay.cancer.council.com.au/2013/illawarra_2013)



On the march: The Ridge View Legends put their best feet forward at the Illawarra Relay For Life last weekend. Picture: ROBERT PEET

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# Squeeze on council budget



What it cost: Beach patrols cost Wollongong ratepayers \$5.3 million last year. Council is reviewing a range of services which impacted on its budget in 2011-12.

KATE McLWAIN

AS Wollongong City Council strives to get its long-term finances under control through a comprehensive review of services and rates, last year's financial statements reveal it is losing money on almost 90 per cent of its services.

Of the 35 functions and activities listed in the council's 2012-13 financial reports, only four - solid waste services, local government regulations, camping areas and caravan parks, and town planning - make money.

In contrast, beach patrols costs the council \$5.3 million, libraries and community centres cost \$11.9 million and swimming pools cost \$5.5 million.

Despite making \$2.2 million through fees and charges, public cemeteries cost the council \$63,000 after expenses, and animal control costs \$238,000 despite an income of \$532,000.

Although these expenses are high, Lord Mayor Gordon Bradbery said yesterday that the council's finances were "fairly healthy" in the short term.

He also pointed out that many council functions were not designed to make money.

"Libraries, for example, are not a business - they are a resource for the betterment and wellbeing of our community," he said.

"These may be a cost, but at the same time the ratepayers are paying for these services and they have a lot of expectations about them."

"In the financial review we're going to ask the question 'what patrolled beaches can we do without?', and I don't know whether we can do without any of them ... because beach safety is a big priority for me."

However Cr Bradbery also said Wollongong residents would need to think carefully about which services and functions they would



Parks and gardens, including lakes



Swimming pools



Public cemeteries



Libraries and community centres

be willing to pay more for or do without in the coming months.

The council began a financial sustainability review in August, which is designed to help it meet an infrastructure backlog on assets which would cost just over \$4 billion to replace.

"Our issue is that the assets we have are now coming to their use-by dates and over the next 10 years or so they will have to be renewed, plus there's the expectation of the community that we will expand our assets," Cr Bradbery said.

"So while [the finances] look quite healthy now, we want to

make sure it continues to be healthy as we replace these assets."

Last year's financial figures show the council's total income was \$263.4 million, up from \$238.5 million the previous year.

According to the council's manager of finances, Brian Jenkins, this boost was due to an "unusually large" amount of grants and contributions, which came mainly from West Dapto developer contributions.

The council's total expenditure was \$238.2 million, leaving an operating surplus of \$25.1 million

after capital grants and developer contributions were factored in.

However, without the grants the council posted a deficit of \$13.9 million - up slightly from the previous year's figure of \$13.6 million - which Mr Jenkins said showed why the council needed to rein in its finances.

"This is consistent with our forecasting, which says we will run a deficit of about \$15 million if we continue doing what we're doing," he said.

Other figures show the council collected \$148 million from rates of which home owners paid more

## THE FIGURES

Wollongong City Council income for 2011-12: \$263.4 million, including:

- Rates - \$148 million
- Grants/contributions - \$68 million
- Council tourist parks - \$4.9 million
- Crematorium/cemeteries - \$2.1 million
- Beaton Park and Lakeside Leisure Centre - \$2.3 million
- Parking fines - \$2.1 million
- Parking meters - \$1.2 million

Wollongong City Council expenses for 2011-12: \$238.2 million, including:

- Staff costs - \$91 million
- Capital works - \$53.9 million
- Carbon tax - \$2.1 million
- Contractors/consultants - \$61.4 million
- Street lighting - \$3.3 million
- Electricity - \$2.4 million
- State government contributions/levies - \$14.2 million
- Lord mayor/councillor wages - \$429,000

than double that of businesses. Residential rates amounted to more than \$80 million, while businesses paid \$37 million in rates.

Staff cost proved the council's biggest expense at \$91 million, however employee costs decreased by about \$2.5 million compared to the 2011-12 financial year.

Mr Jenkins said this decrease had come about because low interest rates had reduced the amount of long service leave entitlements and a change in legislation which led to a reduction in the cost of workers' compensation provisions.

The 2012-13 financial statements will be tabled at Monday night's council meeting.



mercury

news 5

# Rate referees stay secret

KATE McILWAIN

THEY are the 36 people who will set the agenda for Wollongong City Council's review of rates and services, but their identities remain a secret.

The council's randomly-chosen citizens panel members had their first weekend meetings on Saturday and yesterday, but none could be convinced to talk to the Mercury about the experience.

According to public relations manager Susan Wardle, the mem-

bers declined to appoint a media spokesperson as suggested by the council because they were worried about being lobbied by other residents.

The panel is a core component of the council's public engagement strategy towards making the organisation more financially sustainable.

Its members were chosen at random to represent a "mini-Wollongong" with market research company Taverner Research selecting members to

match the demographic breakdown of Wollongong based on age, suburb, education level, home ownership and ethnicity.

The council's executive manager of strategy Kerry Hunt sat in on the weekend's proceedings and said panel members had been hard at work assessing the council's services.

"They've been asking us lots of questions around our levels of income and how we put charges on some things but not on others," Ms Hunt said.

"They are interested in how well our services and utilities are being used by the community, so what visitation is like at pools, libraries and community facilities."

They were also asked whether they were satisfied with the condition of some of the council's core assets, like roads and footpaths, she said.

Despite the panel members' reluctance to speak to the media, Ms Hunt said they wanted to convey the message that they were taking the review of the council's

services and income seriously.

"There is the feeling that they have a strong responsibility to do this on behalf of the public, and they are taking that on in a very strong and positive way," she said. "They are having a lot of conversations and debates with each other and really thinking about what is best for Wollongong."

The panel will meet one more time, in about two weeks, before presenting a series of recommendations to be put out for public exhibition.

## Surfers enjoy a swell time amid hot winds and a heatwave



On the crest: Surfers at Shellharbour make the most of the big waves along the coastline yesterday. High temperatures were recorded across the region. Picture: SYLVIA LIBER

YESTERDAY'S hot winds whipped up wild waves along the Illawarra coastline, causing Shellharbour surfers to put on a show amid big swells and plenty of sea spray.

Elsewhere in the region,

residents flocked to the beaches as the mercury peaked at 33.8 degrees at Bellambi point at 3pm.

By late afternoon, the Bureau of Meteorology had issued an afternoon update of its earlier

severe weather warning, with cool and damaging winds expected to hit the region and drop temperatures to as low as 12 degrees overnight.

Today's top temperature is forecast to reach just 19 degrees,

but summery weather will return for the rest of the week with temperatures reaching up to 29 degrees on Thursday.

In the event of damaging winds, residents are advised to move vehicles under cover or away

from trees, secure loose items and keep clear of any fallen power lines. For emergency help, call the SES on 132 500.

**ONLINE GALLERY**  
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## Blaze 'damages property'

PROPERTIES have reportedly been damaged and there are fears some may have been lost as an out of control bushfire continues to blaze in the NSW Hunter Region.

The NSW Rural Fire Service said it had received unconfirmed reports that properties had been burnt in Fort Stephens.

A scrub fire is burning the Tilligerry State Conservation area between Salt Ash and Tanilba Bay and in the Fingal Bay area, also in Fort Stephens.

Authorities have set up an evacuation centre at a community hall in Williamtown. An emergency warning has also been issued for

Singleton, where residents are being advised to shelter as the fire-front approaches.

It was 32 degrees in Sydney at 5.45pm yesterday and the temperature was rising towards the forecast of 36 degrees. A change sweeping through is expected to drop temperatures by as much as 10 degrees.

The Bureau of Meteorology says the strong cold front will bring damaging winds of around 50km/h with peak gusts of 90km/h.

The NSW Rural Fire Service banned the lighting of fires yesterday in large parts of NSW, including greater Sydney. A grassfire near Sydney Olympic Park has been extinguished. AAP

## Woman flees villa destroyed in suspect fire

WOLLONGONG police are investigating a fire that completely destroyed a villa at Bulli on Saturday night.

Emergency services were called to the Hutton Avenue address about 7pm after reports of a house fire.

When they arrived, they found the villa well alight.

The 26-year-old female occupant managed to escape unhurt.

However, the home was completely destroyed in the blaze, which police



Gutted: A house hit by a fire in Hutton Avenue, Bulli, on Saturday night. Picture: GREG TOTMAN

are treating as suspicious. They established a crime scene on Saturday night and continued their examinations yesterday.

Initial investigations suggest the fire started in the carport, and appears to have been deliberately lit.

## MP criticises police effort

LIBERAL MP Bernie Finn wants Victoria Police investigated, saying they didn't do enough to stop violence at a rally when pro-choice protesters clashed with an anti-abortion march.

Mr Finn, an organiser of the March for Babies, said police did nothing to quell the violence as about 50 protesters tried to disrupt the anti-abortion event in Melbourne on Saturday. He said he would be asking the Victorian Parliament to investigate why the violence was allowed to escalate.

"We have a number of people who are injured as a result of yesterday," Mr Finn said.

"There was no attempt by police to control them at all."

He would not press charges but would make a complaint to police, he said.

An estimated 3000 pro-life demonstrators attended the annual march calling for the Abortion Law Reform Act, which removed all legal protection for children before birth in 2008, to be repealed.

Victoria Police said there were a couple of scuffles between opposing groups but they stopped once police intervened.

Pro-choice rally organiser Liz Walsh said the protests were "definitely lively and defiant", but "definitely not violent". AAP



mercury

news 11

# It's time for quad squad

GEMMA KHAICY

IT has four wheels, four cameras, a flashing light and travels at five kilometres an hour.

It's not a mobile speed camera and it's definitely not Google capturing images for Street View.

Wollongong City Council has commissioned an inspection of all its footpaths - 560 kilometres of them - in the city using four quad bikes equipped with cameras to collect data on the condition of paths.

The images will be used by the council to create a priority list of pathways that need maintenance, starting with the worst areas.

One of the quad bike riders, Nick Moore from Infrastructure Management Group (IMG), said he took a high-definition snapshot of the path every three metres.

Thankfully no-one has to go through every single minute of the approximately 300 hours of data collected, as they "grade the path along the way, every 20 metres", he said.

"If we grade it four or five, which are the bad ones, then it's posted by the people back at the offices in Sydney," he said.

"We'll be spending about three weeks here, it depends on the weather."

"For safety precautions, we are set to restrictions on the road to 30km/h, and on the footpath 5km/h, which is walking pace."

IMG has worked across Australia for various councils and the data gets sent to the company's head office in Perth.

IMG officially began its work in Wollongong streets on Monday, al-



Collecting data: Survey vehicle operator Nick Moore with one of the vehicles used to survey the footpaths in Wollongong. Picture: ROBERT PEET

though it did some testing in Wollongong last week.

Today the bikes will be out collecting data in Woonona and Thirroul.

Wollongong council's transport infrastructure asset manager Tim Cornford said the council had not used this method before - in the past someone had to go on foot to collect information on path conditions.

"The last time we did the whole city was in 2002, although we've done sections of it over the past few years," he said.

"We receive complaints generally about trips and falls."

The project cost was \$123,000, which was a fraction of the \$177 million value of Wollongong's footpaths, he said.

"It's part of a three- to five-year plan as council has an infrastruc-

ture financial sustainability outcome they want to achieve."

The council has asked members of the community to refrain from parking vehicles across footpaths or shared pathways and follow requests from the riders, or field technicians, regarding the safe use of the footpath.

ONLINE VIDEO  
illawarramercury.com.au



MICHAEL LE VELL

## Coro star seeks Perth hideaway

ONE of British television's most familiar faces is set to seek sanctuary in Australia after being acquitted of rape earlier this year, UK reports say.

Michael Le Vell has played mechanic Kevin Webster on the long-running soap opera *Coronation Street* since 1983. But he was in the spotlight for different reasons earlier this year, when he faced 12 child sex charges, including five rapes.

After a trial, which revealed personal problems including issues with alcohol and infidelity, Mr Le Vell was cleared of all charges.

But the unwelcome headlines continued, with reports of a social media campaign against Mr Le Vell, and damage to his car, which was parked outside his home in Greater Manchester.

London's *Daily Mirror* claims Mr Le Vell is now planning to travel to Perth to spend time with his brother Phil Turner, a teacher, who supported him during the trial.

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# Wollongong Advertiser

Wednesday, October 23, 2013

**FREE & LOCAL**

## War letters, photos not forgotten

By ANTONY FIELD

War is a such a waste of young life, says 81-year-old Wollongong resident Joan Reid.

Her uncle, William Sydney Duchesne (known to all as Syd), was 20 when he was killed at Gallipoli on Anzac Day, 1915. Her brother, Sydney James Allsep, was killed, also aged 20, in France during World War II. Joan and husband Brian treasure their precious family letters, photos and medals relating to Syd Duchesne.

They brought them to a recent Wollongong City Council Scan and Share Day so they could be added to an online database for the Illawarra Remembers 1914-1918 project.

The idea is collect residents' photos, diaries, medals, mementoes and stories from the Great War.

■ Continued on page 5



**Keepsakes:** Brian and Joan Reid with some of the photos and letters relating to relative Syd Duchesne, killed at Gallipoli on April 15, 1915. The last Illawarra Remembers Scan and Share Day will be held this Saturday at Wollongong City Library from 10am-4pm. Picture: KIRK GILMOUR

### ▶▶ CHILDREN



Win tickets to see HI-5 - p30

### ▶▶ PEOPLE



Head fire loves challenge - p11

### ▶▶ HISTORY



Tiger terrified towns - p29

# Financial review 'flawed'

By AGRON LATIFI

Neighbourhood Forum 5 co-convenor Felix Bronneberg can understand why members of Wollongong City Council's citizens panel don't want to reveal their identities.

But he said forum members were disappointed that the

panel, which was intended to make the council more financially sustainable, wasn't transparent.

This view is shared by Shellharbour MP Anna Watson, who called on the council to reveal the 36 members of its citizens review panel, which will set the

agenda for the organisation's review of rates and services.

The council's public relations manager, Susan Wardle, said panel members declined to appoint a media spokesperson because they were worried about being lobbied by other residents.

Mr Bronneberg said that

neighbourhood forums were also concerned that inadequate information had been made public about the council's overall financial position.

"The reports from council indicated it was looking at reviewing its rates and services at the beginning of the last financial year ... why

didn't it happen?" he said.

"We now have this mad rush. We [the forums] were only told by letter on September 3 that a citizens panel was going to be randomly selected to assess the financial sustainability of council."

■ Continued on page 2



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## Community spirit thriving on coast

Anyone visiting Wollongong would think we are a city of fitness fanatics who like cycling, running or walking in large crowds.

Blessed with a great location between the escarpment and the ocean, plenty of recreation facilities and a reasonably mild coastal climate, it is no wonder Wollongong provides the perfect setting for outdoor charity events.

Last month more than 2000 people took part in the Illawarra Relay for Life, raising almost \$300,000 for the Cancer Council, and at the weekend the first Run Wollongong drew more than 2500 people, raising more than \$107,000 for Wollongong Hospital Children's Ward and Illawarra Shoalhaven Children's Assessment Unit.

This Sunday the sixth annual Quota Charity Bike Ride from Wollongong to Clifton will be held, raising money for various local charities, and on November 3, thousands will cycle in the Sydney to Gong Bike Ride, to support the fight against multiple sclerosis. It's heartwarming to see so many people in our community supporting worthwhile charities.

Not only do the events show that community spirit is alive and well, they are a great advertisement for our city.



Editorial with Antony Field

## Advertiser

www.illawarramercury.com.au/community/

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Picking outfits: Dennis Simpson, Jessie Blundell and Marilyn Phillips pick out outfits from Lifeline to wear at the Op Shop Charity Ball in Dapto this Saturday. Picture: CHRISTOPHER CHAN

## Bargain belles recycle

By AGRON LATIFI

Dennis Simpson admits it might be strange if somebody turns up to this Saturday's Op Shop Charity Ball wearing clothes that he has recently donated.

But he says it will be "sweet" if the person donates the clothes back to the op shop after wearing them at the ball at Dapto Ribbonwood Centre.

People attending the event, organised by the Rotary Club of West Wollongong, were asked to buy their outfits from op shops then donate the clothes back to the shops at the end of the ball.

Mr Simpson said all money raised would support the work of

charities The Denny Foundation and Twilight Tournament.

The Denny Foundation supports individuals and families affected by mental illness, depression, addiction to alcohol and other drugs, and suicide.

A project of Illawarra Rotaract Club, the Twilight Tournament is a free sports tournament for underprivileged and at-risk youth aged 12 to 18 in the Illawarra region.

The sports played include basketball, hockey, Oztag and futsal. Every Saturday night the youth are provided with transport to the site, a nutritious meal and a life-skills workshop, which covers topics ranging from mental

health to personal finance.

"They are both very worthy charities," Mr Simpson said.

"Last year we raised \$13,000 for the The Denny Foundation and Community Cancer Link. Hopefully we can raise just as much if not more for our chosen charities this year."

Mr Simpson said patrons would have a good time enjoying the music of Short And Horney and taking part in the silent auction.

Tickets are \$65. The ball is from 6.30pm until midnight.

■ Tickets, information: westwollongongrotary@gmail.com or 0418 283 205

## Pressure on to identify citizens panel

■ From page 1

"This is a complex task requiring what we regard as independent professional expertise and experience.

"We question why there isn't a more professional methodology."

The neighbourhood forums, representing the entire city, stated in a petition and open letter that they were "very concerned that the extremely reduced timeframe is based on the need for a possible

recommendation for an extraordinary rate rise to be dealt with before the end of this calendar year."

"The council has indicated to us the state government deadline is around December 14," Mr Bronneberg said.

"We are not opposed to the panel but believe an independent, experienced management consultant should be appointed to allow a thorough investigation and overhaul of the council's

finances, methods and procedures," he said.

The council's randomly-chosen citizens panel members had their first weekend meetings on October 12-13, with one more meeting planned for next week, before presenting a series of recommendations for public exhibition.

Panel members were chosen at random by market research company Taverner Research based on age, suburb, education level, home ownership and ethnicity.

## BRIEFS

### Garage Sale Trail

Bargain hunters will gather at Dapto Ribbonwood Centre this Saturday for the inaugural Illawarra component of the national Garage Sale Trail.

Co-ordinated by Wollongong City Council, groups such as Dapto Seniors, Community Cancer Link, Dapto Lions Club and Big Fat Smile will showcase what they do and sell second-hand goods. All the money raised will go back to them.

Wollongong City Libraries will also hold a book sale. Information: www.garagesaletrail.com.au.

### Time to make a will

Life is so busy these days that important things like making a will can be overlooked.

This Saturday a Make Your Will Day will be held at NSW Trustee and Guardian's Wollongong branch at 59 Market Street.

Branch manager Matthew Kennedy said it was the perfect opportunity for busy working people to ensure they have an up-to-date will.

Those wanting to make a will must book, by calling 9744 0347.

### Carers Expo

A Carers Expo will be held at Westfield Warragong tomorrow from 10am to 2pm.

Hosted by Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District, there will be free blood pressure checks, information on local carer support groups, an occupational therapist on site and home health care displays.

### Singalong

Wollongong schools are being urged to take part in Music: Count Us In next week.

The national music education and participation program will be held at 12.30pm EDT on October 31. More than 500,000 kindy to year 12 students will sing the same song at the same time.

Registrations: www.musiccountusin.org.au/register.



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news 7

# Grand Walk backed amid budget review

DOMINIC GEIGER

WOLLONGONG councillor Greg Petty has lost a bid to postpone the Grand Pacific Walk master plan's public exhibition until after the council's financial position is better understood.

Cr Petty wanted to wait until after the Citizens Panel report into council's financial stability was handed down on November 5, amid fears too much money was being spent on new capital works projects and existing infrastructure was being neglected.

The council voted unanimously to endorse the public exhibition of the master plan at Monday night's council meeting, but not before Cr Petty raised his concerns.

Speaking to the Mercury yesterday, Cr Petty said the council should be allocating more money to "renewals" - such as the dilapidated Mount Keira Summit Park function centre and the road up to it.

"My concern is not about the Grand Pacific Walk project, my concern is about the fact we have a financial sustainability review panel currently investigating the long-term finances of council," he said.

"All my motion sought to do was to lay the matter on the table until councillors had the opportunity to hear the results of the panel."

Part one of the Grand Pacific Walk has been shortlisted for funding from the Port Kembla



Dilapidated: Mount Keira's Summit Park, which needs funding for restoration.

Picture: ORLANDO CHIODO

Infrastructure Fund.

However, Cr Petty said the project's cost had ballooned since being priced at \$2.7 million in March 2010.

He said estimates now put the project at \$7.2 million, and there was a chance that would increase.

During the meeting, long-time proponent of the walk Councillor Leigh Colacino criticised Cr Petty

for wanting to delay the master plan's public exhibition.

"I can't see there would be any reason to go against this ... if we took it off the table right now we could possibly lose \$5 million in state funding."

Cr Colacino said that once completed, the walk would unite communities in the north of Wollongong and would be an inter-

national tourist drawcard.

The proposal aims to create a shared pathway along the coast, eventually linking the Royal National Park to Lake Illawarra.

The proposed path would run parallel to the Grand Pacific Drive route, and encourage tourists and locals to stop along the way to take in the views, enjoy a coffee or check out nearby attractions.

## Govt denies cuts

A NSW government plan to slash truck inspector jobs just weeks after a deadly tanker crash will put lives at risk, a union says.

The government denies Public Service Association claims that up to 21 heavy vehicle inspection jobs will go at the Roads and Maritime Services.

The union says more resources, not job cuts, are needed to ensure fatal accidents like a recent one on Sydney's northern beaches don't happen again.

PSA spokesman Ian Lambert says the cuts mean 500 fewer trucks will be inspected each week.

But Roads Minister Duncan Gay said claims of job cuts were a "disgraceful distortion" by the PSA's Labor supporters. AAP

## Australia's shonkiest

SHRINKING tissues, a "free range" egg producer that crams hens and a consumer complaint line that charges \$2.50 a minute have won CHOICE's Shonky Awards for dodgy products.

Debt assistance company Credit Repair Australia was named and shamed for slugging cash-strapped customers a non-refundable upfront fee of \$990, while Qantas's Frequent Flyer Toolbar was outed for monitoring users' online activity.

Ecoeggs was also called out for having a stock density over 13 times the national free range code. EA Games also got a nod for charging complaint line callers \$2.48 a minute.

Kleenex's Mansize tissues are marketed with the tagline "big tissue, small box", despite shrinking 14 per cent. AAP

## Charities quizzed

A NEW body set up to regulate charities has received 245 complaints about the sector, including some that ended in investigations for alleged fraudulent or criminal activity.

The federal Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission (ACNC) was established in December, with charities not registered with the body ineligible for government support.

Of the 245 complaints the ACNC received in its first seven months, it said 56 were escalated for investigation.

The ACNC said 36 per cent of those involved alleged fraudulent or criminal behaviour.

A further 27 per cent of investigations were because a charity's activities did not align with its stated purpose. AAP

# Motion puts Lake Illawarra boardwalk under cloud

DOMINIC GEIGER

THE future of a "missing link" boardwalk at Joes Bay on Lake Illawarra is uncertain after Wollongong councillors voted to write to the state government requesting it be postponed.

The \$750,000 pedestrian and cycle boardwalk was a project of the Lake Illawarra Authority as part of its plans for a continuous shared pathway around the lake.

However, doubts were raised after the government disbanded the authority in July.

Its functions were moved under the umbrella of the NSW Department of Trade and Investment until a Wollongong and Shellhar-

bour council-run estuary management committee is established.

Two opponents of the boardwalk spoke during council's public access forum on Monday night before Cr Bede Crasnich introduced a motion to write to Minister for Regional Infrastructure Andrew Stoner requesting the postponement.

Primbee resident Catherine Gerloff said many of her neighbours felt they had not had the opportunity to have their say.

She said the walk was not wanted because it would detract from the natural beauty of the lake.

"The whole consultation process has been a shame," she said. "The Lake Illawarra Authority

from the outset said they had overwhelming community support, however we can find no evidence [of this]."

She said 600 residents had signed a letter opposing the development.

Cr Crasnich said he was concerned the council would be left with a "financial mess" if construction of the walk went ahead prior to the estuary management authority being established.

"I don't want us to be handed a half-eaten dirt sandwich," he said.

"I don't want us to be left with something the community hates and is an eyesore all because proper consultation didn't take place."

However, Cr George Takacs said the motion endangered the establishment of the planned continuous bike path.

The motion was passed seven votes to six with an amendment that the council request full disclosure of all Lake Illawarra Authority financial reports and audits, including audits undertaken by NSW Treasury, for 2010-2011, 2011-2012 and 2012-13 financial years.

Councillors Merrin, Blicavs, Dorahy, Colacino, Crasnich, Curran and Petty supported the motion.

Councillors Kershaw, Connor, Brown, Martin, Takacs and Bradbery voted against it.



Image courtesy of Martin Regan



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# Citizens panel to find cuts

KATE MCLWAIN

WOLLONGONG'S new citizens panel will meet for the first time this week, as it prepares to deliberate over which council services should be cut or saved and whether the city should implement an extra rate rise.

The panel - comprising up to 40 randomly selected people representing the region's demographics - will form a pivotal part of Wollongong City Council's public engagement strategy to help decide how to make the organisation more financially sustainable. It will be run by independent consultant Lucy Cole-Edelstein, who ran a similar panel at Canada Bay Council in Sydney last year.

Over the past week, Ms Cole-Edelstein's team has been phoning residents to develop a panel that represents a "mini community of Wollongong".

"It's often likened to a jury ... but with a jury the men and women are actually randomly selected, whereas we take a little bit more care than that," she said.

"We make sure they represent all the elements of the community."

There would be an even split between men and women, an equal number of panel members from each Wollongong ward and a representative number of people from different age groups, Ms Cole-Edelstein said.

Participants will be paid \$400 to



*We make sure they represent all the elements of the community*  
Lucy Cole-Edelstein

cover their expenses and time, as they give up two evenings and two weekends over the next month.

A residents' group called Save Our Services raised concerns about the citizens panel when it was first announced, fearing parti-

cipants might be able to be led by council staff to come up with preconceived conclusions.

However, Ms Cole-Edelstein said this was impossible under the citizens panel process.

"It's almost impossible for us to lead them, because we actually don't have an opinion and we don't live in Wollongong," she said.

"My job is simply to create a process in which the community can get the information that they need so they can make informed comments."

Ms Cole-Edelstein said the results of the Canada Bay citizens panel gave some indication of the kind of recommendations that the Wollongong group might develop. The Sydney panel recommen-

ded service cuts, including reducing the frequency of street cleaning and park maintenance, decreasing expenditure on events and getting rid of the costs associated with the council's sister city program.

It also recommended introducing new parking meters to increase revenue, upping costs of council services for non-residents of Canada Bay and increasing commercial activities in public spaces.

The panel agreed a rate rise of up to 9 per cent "could be tolerated" if the council took its other recommendations into account.

For more information, visit [haveyoursaywollongong.com.au/projects/financial-sustainability](http://haveyoursaywollongong.com.au/projects/financial-sustainability).

## Ethiopian sets marathon best



Scenic route: Runners make their way under the Sydney Harbour Bridge heading to the finish at the Sydney Open House.

Picture: GETTY IMAGES

AN Ethiopian woman has won the Sydney's marathon, breaking a 12-year record.

Biruktait Degefa crossed the finishing line before 11am

yesterday, setting a new record for the 42.2 kilometre course of 2 hours, 32 minutes and 45 seconds, beating the 2 hours, 38 minutes and 11 seconds set by Australian

woman Krishna Stanton in 2001. More than 34,000 people entered the various events in the Blackmoors Sydney Running Festival including almost 1500

international runners from 57 countries and 1900 interstate contestants.

The Harbour Bridge reopened at 11am, but other roads were

closed into the afternoon.

Kenyan Willy Kibor Koitile took out the men's division with a time of 2 hours, 13 minutes and 48 seconds.

## US man 'posted guns'

A US man accused of posting an assault rifle and a 9mm pistol in the mail to buyers in Australia may have also sold marijuana, hallucinogenic mushrooms and silver bullion through an online black market.

Adam Joseph Bunker, 33, from Bowling Green, Kentucky, is accused of using the German-based encrypted "deep web" website Black Market Reloaded to connect with buyers in Australia, the UK and Europe.

During a bail hearing in Kentucky on Friday prosecutors said Bunker was receiving 100 private messages a day regarding the sales of guns.

"He has no serious criminal history, but man, he has gone from 0 to 100," assistant US attorney Jo

Lawless told Judge Brent Brennenstuhl, the *Park City Daily News* reported.

Bunker's alleged illicit sales were first detected by authorities in Australia when on June 21 in Sydney a package containing an Xbox game console was intercepted.

A disassembled Star Echeverria Modelo Super 9mm pistol and two empty magazines were found inside the Xbox and the Australian buyer told the Australian Federal Police he bought it through Black Market Reloaded, it was alleged.

An investigation had also linked Bunker to posts on another online account that sold credit cards, fake IDs, marijuana, hallucinogenic mushrooms and silver bullion, Ms Lawless said. AAP

## Community given chance to vote

LABOR will hold community preselections in five NSW seats, in a bid to open up the party.

NSW Opposition Leader John Robertson says members of the community will be able to join with local branch members to vote for their Labor candidate for at least five seats before the 2015 state election.

The community preselections will be held for the seats of Balmain, Newtown, Campbelltown, Londonderry and Strathfield.

"This is an exciting moment for the Labor party and shows we are serious about opening our party up to new people and new ways of thinking." AAP

## Man's body found in bush 'not suspicious'

RESIDENTS of a quiet Figtree street were in shock on Friday after a man's body was found in nearby bushland.

Initially police said they were treating the death of the man, believed to be aged in his 60s, as suspicious. However, on Saturday morning they said they did not believe it was suspicious.

Police and paramedics were called to Roy Johanson Park, off Uralba Street, after a Wollongong City Council caretaker made the discovery about 12.15pm on Friday. Police said paramedics estim-

ated the body had been lying on an embankment leading to a creek for at least six hours before it was found.

The section of Roy Johanson Park was blocked off for most of the afternoon and children from a nearby school were forced to detour around the scene on their way home.

### GET HELP

Readers seeking support and information about suicide prevention can contact Lifeline on 13 11 14 and the Suicide Call Back Service 1300 659 467.



Illawarra Mercury, 6 November 2013, *The big squeeze: Council told to raise fees, cut services*, p1, 4 & 5.

CONVENTION CENTRE 'Let's get behind it' PAGE 7

Cruel thieves target pensioner PAGE 3

P-plater crashed at 155km/h PAGE 3

**P**

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## The big squeeze

### Council told to raise fees, cut services

WOLLONGONG City Council's new razor gang – also known as the citizens panel – wants to slash services and increase rates and charges to help fund the city's infrastructure backlog. In a report certain to upset thousands of ratepayers, the panel has recommended a rate hike of 7.5 per cent, to be introduced over three years to lessen the pain, as well as a raft of fee hikes, service cuts and closures. City councillors are divided on the panel's report with some already vowing to vote against any extraordinary rate rise to help ease the council's budget woes.

REPORTS: Pages 4-5

TODAY Sunny, windy 23° TOMORROW Sunny 28° DETAILS - P23 TV - P22 illawarramercury.com.au



# Stand by to pay

## Tears shed as panel discussed rate rise

KATE McILWAIN

RATES will rise by 7.5 per cent, the cost of CBD parking will soar, fitness trainers and sports groups will pay more and Lakeside Leisure Centre and Unanderra library will close if sweeping changes recommended by Wollongong City Council's controversial citizens' panel are adopted.

Also facing the chop are some of the city's annual fireworks celebrations, kids' playgrounds, ocean rock pools, the council-run crematorium and at least half of its new Crown Street facade rejuvenation scheme.

According to an extensive list of suggestions released by the panel yesterday, pool and library fees would go up, spending on the arts would go down and even charities and pensioners would not be spared, with their interest and waste exemptions slated to be removed.

Further, tourist parks, marketing and cleaning would be outsourced and staffing levels across multiple council departments would be cut through attrition.

The 34 citizens' panel members were randomly chosen by market researchers to play a pivotal part in the council's comprehensive financial review, which is designed to add an extra \$21 million to its yearly budget to meet a growing infrastructure backlog.

The unusual consultation process has drawn criticism from community groups and some councillors, who believed the panel would unfairly set the agenda for the rest of the consultation process and take responsibility for financial decisions out of the councillors' hands.

Selected to represent Wollongong's age, geographic, educational and cultural demographics, the panel members met four times during September and October to discuss ways to reduce services, raise revenue and make the council more efficient in the long term.

Led by an independent consultant from community engagement firm Straight Talk, they came up with a list of recommendations that - if accepted by councillors - will have far-reaching consequences for all citizens of the Illawarra.

In their report, which is now on public exhibition, the panel members suggest the council implement at least \$10 million of its \$13 million worth of suggested savings over the next three years, while introducing a maximum rate rise of 7.5 per cent and striving for further staffing and service efficiencies.

Faced with a list of more than 65 ways to cut costs or raise revenue yesterday, Lord Mayor Gordon Bradbery acknowledged he and other councillors had difficult decisions ahead of them in the coming months.

"I looked at some of the recommendations and thought, 'Oh boy, we're in for an interesting debate' - but that is what this is about," he said.

"I'm not resiling from that fact and I think the council has been very courageous in doing this because this should have been

done years ago."

Cr Bradbery said he recognised not all the panel's suggestions would be welcomed by other residents, but urged them to "face reality" and realise the council needed to operate more efficiently if it was to meet citizens' expectation in the future.

He also emphasised citizens' panel recommendations were not the end of community consultation under the financial review, and said councillors would make the ultimate decision on what changes go ahead.

Citizens' panel member Nicola Stanistreet said she believed the group's proposed measures represented the views of the wider Wollongong community and would be disappointed if the councillors did not act on their plans.

"If you look at the demographic of the group... we are the community," she said.

"We're pretty confident that, given the same amount of information that we had... they would come to the same conclusions as us.



*I think the council has been very courageous in doing this because this should have been done years ago*  
Gordon Bradbery

"I don't envy councillors having to make the final decisions... but we sat down and made these decisions and we will be very disappointed if they don't take them to heart."

The panel members had decided they needed a 66 per cent majority in order to gain "consensus" before putting forward each recommendation, she said.

Another panel member, Andrew Prusek, said he and his fellow members had held many passionate discussions during their meetings, only deciding on a rate rise after a lengthy and sometimes tearful debate.

"The rate rise was the most passionate debate, and that's where tears happened," he said.

"There were some people that were putting forward a much higher [rate rise percentage] but as a panel, we decided to keep the rate rise modest and phase it in over a number of years."

Ms Stanistreet said the panel hoped the "affordable" rate rise would lessen the impact of service cuts.

"We simply could not cut any more because there are disadvantaged groups in the community, among others," she said.

Comments on the panel's recommendations can be made at [haveyoursaywollongong.com.au](http://haveyoursaywollongong.com.au) until November 29. Councillors will then debate the proposal at the December 9 council meeting.



Public input: Citizens' panel members Andrew Prusek and Nicola Stanistreet with Lord Mayor Gordon Bradbery handing over the Financial Sustainability Report. Picture: RPK GILMOUR

## Councillor rights deprived by

GLEN HUMPHRIES

THE citizens' panel has usurped the role of Wollongong City councillors, according to Bede Crasnich.

"I just found this whole process very undemocratic, from our point of view," the Ward 3 councillor said.

"We've been deprived of our rights as councillors to pass policy."

"We were elected in September of 2011 to make decisions for this city, for better or worse. We're entitled to do that, it's our role to do that."

Calling a 7.5 per cent rate rise

"ludicrous and ridiculous", Cr Crasnich said he would not be voting in favour of it.

"I'm going to push what the people who voted for me want," he said.

"Many of those feel they're paying enough in rates, maybe even too much. So I won't be supporting a rate rise, no matter what the panel says."

But as for the cuts to services, Cr Crasnich said he was "all for a service reduction" but only without an increase in rates.

Cr Greg Petty said he also would not vote for the rate rise.

"I think council needs to look further afield than taking the easy

option of a rate increase," Cr Petty said.

"It needs to look at the way it does business. It shouldn't be relying on ratepayers to pick up many years of financial neglect."

He suggested a better approach was to stop spending money on new projects and transfer those funds to infrastructure renewal.

Cr Petty said he would table an alternate budget at the next council meeting, one without a rate rise.

Cr George Takacs felt many of the measures recommended by the citizens' panel were necessary and said the councillors needed to treat the suggestions seriously.



# more, get less



## whole 'undemocratic' process

"I think the process that we had in place should have delivered us what you might regard as the carefully considered opinion of the silent majority of people if they're presented with all the facts," he said.

"I think because of that we need to take the recommendations of the panel quite seriously and any that we choose not to implement, we need to come up with good reasons for not implementing them."

Cr Takacs said there was a sound reason for both cutting services and raising rates.

"The magnitude of the problem in terms of shifting the

appropriate amount of resources into asset maintenance is such that we can't do it with just one measure or the other," he said.

"If we tried to do it with just a rate rise it would be a massive rate rise which the residents wouldn't accept."

"If we tried to do it just with service cuts, again, it would be a massive cut to services and people wouldn't accept it. So I think it's got to be a combination of the two."

The community group Save Our Services Wollongong has been opposed to the citizens panel since it was announced.

Convener Stephen Spencer said

he wasn't surprised by the recommendations to cut services, believing the process was directed by the council.

"They certainly wouldn't have been prompted to build up services," he said.

"The whole thrust of the whole exercise was that council was looking at financial difficulties and it was clear there was going to be cuts."

"We believe council has really divested itself of the responsibility in trying to get this citizens' panel to come up with recommendations that they portray as the community's viewpoint when it's not."

### WHAT'S PROPOSED

#### SERVICE CUTS

Measures to save up to \$4.35 million a year include:

- Close Lakeside Leisure Centre and sell off the land for \$300,000 saving
- Shut Unanderra Library, due to its proximity to other services, for \$200,000 saving
- Reduce Coalcliff/Scarborough beach season hours from seven to three hours
- Cut fireworks celebrations to one night each year and cut Viva La Gong funding by \$50,000
- Centralise playgrounds through a minimum 10 per cent reduction in the council's 151 playgrounds
- Run down ocean rock pools which are close to other services, cut pool season by up to four weeks, and slash Berkeley pool hours from 96 to 55 hours a week
- Roll back funding for the new Crown Street facade rejuvenation to just \$300,000 over two years
- Remove waste exemptions for pensioners and charities to gain \$400,000 a year.
- Shut the council-run crematorium

#### REVENUE HIKES

Measures to raise \$10.1 million a year include:

- Introduce a maximum 7.5 per cent rate increase over three years to generate an extra \$8.4 million
- Extend parking meter hours to raise \$80,000
- Increase CBD parking fees by 50 per cent to raise \$600,000
- Raise sports field and fitness trainer fees by 25 per cent.
- Increase heated pool fees by 10 per cent over the next three years

#### EFFICIENCY PLANS

Measures to save \$7 million a year include:

- Reduce staffing levels across the organisation, shift to fewer permanent staff and not replace staff that exit the organisation.
- Outsource Russell Vale Golf Course to save \$150,000
- Lease out tourist parks for a \$1 million saving
- Cut community safety and graffiti staff funding by \$50,000
- Shift to more electronic books in libraries to save \$200,000

### Tax certainty hailed

THE removal of a host of federal government tax measures that have not been legislated will lift a layer of uncertainty for business and tax practitioners, accountancy experts say.

Since the election, Treasurer Joe Hockey and Assistant Treasurer Arthur Sinodinos have been reviewing about 100 tax proposals dating back 12 years that have never been legislated.

The results of this exercise are expected to be announced soon.

Institute of Chartered Accountants Australia CEO Lee White said addressing this backlog of tax measures that had not been enacted could provide a clean slate for the new government's economic agenda. AAP

### Holden pay rise

HOLDEN workers who agreed to a three-year pay-freeze deal will instead get a rise in less than a fortnight if the car maker does not commit to building two new models beyond 2016.

Australian Manufacturing Workers Union state secretary John Camillo says Holden's Adelaide workforce accepted a new pay deal in August to help save the company's Australian operations.

This was based on Holden committing to build its Cruze and Commodore models in Australia from 2016.

If Holden makes the commitment, the workers will then lose their 3 per cent rise. AAP

### Shot man charged

A MAN who turned up to a Sydney hospital with a gunshot wound to his leg has been charged after refusing to say who shot him.

The 25-year-old man turned up at Liverpool Hospital yesterday, but allegedly refused to provide police with details about how he got the injury. He's been charged with concealing a serious indictable offence and will appear in court in coming weeks.

It comes after a 13-year-old girl was shot on Monday night when she got caught in a volley of gunfire aimed at a Blacktown house. AAP

### Snake kills woman

A WOMAN has died after being bitten by a snake while gardening near Newcastle.

The 59-year-old died at John Hunter Hospital yesterday morning after being found by her husband in their backyard at Glen Oak on Saturday afternoon.

She had been bitten by a snake. The species is unknown but John Hunter Hospital's snake expert, Geoff Isbister, said snake bites were not uncommon in the region at this time of year.

Usually, warm weather between November and April rouses the snakes, he said. Most bites occurred when the snake was being interfered with. AAP

### Port sale gets nod

THE NSW government is going ahead with its planned sale of the Port of Newcastle after a study showed it would benefit the state.

The government announced a 99-year-lease of the port as part of the state budget in June.

Yesterday Treasurer Mike Baird said the decision to green-light the sell-off came after a comprehensive scoping study confirmed it was in the state's interest.

"Today is an exciting day for the people of Newcastle, who are one step closer to achieving the much-needed revitalisation of their city centre - a major investment which will be made possible through funds raised by the lease of the port," he said. AAP



Illawarra Mercury, 7 November 2013, *Little information on service cuts and fee hikes but you've got 2 weeks*, p1.

**PORT RSL EXECUTIVE SACKED FOR 'SIGNIFICANT BREACHES' - P3**

# ILLAWARRA MERCURY

Thursday, November 7, 2013 \$1.40 (incl GST)



**Little information on service cuts and fee hikes but**

# YOU'VE GOT 2 WEEKS

**WE SAY**

THE WOLLONGONG public has reacted with dismay and confusion to the citizens panel's recommendations for wholesale cuts to council services and steep rises in fees and rates.

Dismay, because the cuts and fee rises are so wide-ranging.

And confusion, because so many of the recommendations have so little detail to them, to the extent that it's actually impossible to understand what some of them even mean.

No doubt Wollongong council's budget is a mess that needs drastic surgery. Surgery that will involve great pain.

No doubt the citizens panel has done its best with a thankless task.

And no doubt, too, that the desire to seek broad community input and consultation is laudable.

But this is the most far-reaching overhaul to council finances in living memory, yet Wollongong residents are being given a mere two weeks to chew it over before council sits in judgment.

It's an impossible deadline, one that is driven by council's need to decide by December 13 whether it will seek permission for an extraordinary rate increase.

And it begs the question whether, by design or circumstance, this entire process has, as they say, been set up to fail.

■ REPORTS: PAGES 4, 5

**TODAY** Sunny, windy 27° **TOMORROW** Chance of storm 28° **DETAILS** - P16 **TV** - P24 [illawarramercury.com.au](http://illawarramercury.com.au)



# Tourism to suffer

## Burning issues considered by citizens panel

KATE MCLWAN

**CREMATORIUM** - exit. Citizens of Wollongong, respond.

No, it's not an existential HSC question, it's one of the recommendations put forward by Wollongong City Council's citizens panel.

It seems likely - given the aim of the panel is to add \$21 million to the council's annual budget - that the words "crematorium - exit" mean the council should stop operating its Kambala Grange crematorium to save some cash.

But there is no detail about when it would be closed, whether it would be shut down completely or sold off to a private provider, or what the actual monetary gains of doing such a thing would be.

This is just one of 63 recommendations made by the citizens panel, but it is not the only ambiguous one.

Others include: "Youth services - revenue"; "Customer service - reduce - apply an efficiency target"; "GM & executive - reduce - efficiency"; "Which youth services? What revenue? Which customer services should be reduced? By how much should they be cut? How exactly do you 'reduce' a General Manager?"

Similar questions were raised by some frustrated Mercury web commentators yesterday. One, posting under the name Sam Tyler, addressed a recommendation which reads: "City Gallery - reduce - \$20K increase in revenue - could also review?"

"First of all... reduce what?" Mr Tyler wrote.

"And by how much? Secondly, how is this 'reduce' going to generate a \$20K increase in revenue? Thirdly, what on earth does 'could also review' mean? Of course you 'could also review', anybody 'could also review' anything at any time. Review how it operates? Review its existence?"

Even the more detailed recommendations put forward in the panel's report leave plenty of questions.

For instance, the report suggests the council implement a rate rise of up to 7.5 per cent over three years, to generate about \$8.4 million a year in extra funds.

However, it doesn't include details on whether the rise would be

### ANALYSIS

delivered in increments, if it is in addition to the statewide rate peg of about 3.4 per cent or if the rise would come in next year.

Normally, with decisions of this magnitude, councillors would receive full and lengthy business paper setting out the history, detail and financial benefits of such a move.

With so much unanswered in the citizens panel's report, the Mercury approached the council for clarification hoping we would be able to speak to a staff member about the meaning behind the numerous vague statements.

However, we were told some information would probably not be forthcoming because the recommendations did not belong to the council, but the panel - who are not available to comment.

And when asked for specific details about how certain recommendations would work, it appeared council staff were also forced to rely on their own interpretations to decipher what the citizen's panel meant.

Receiving the panel's document on Tuesday, Lord Mayor Gordon Bradbery was careful to stress this was just the beginning and all Wollongong residents would get their chance to have a say before it was put to a councillor vote in December.

Indeed all residents are invited to fill out a submission form on the council's Have Your Say website or take to an online forum to share their thoughts before November 20.

In contrast, the review into the future management of the Garrawarra Cemetery gives residents nearly two months to have their say on the issue.

The Have Your Say website also provides detailed papers and a 15-minute video delving into the cemetery's history to help inform their decisions.

Yet citizens have just two weeks to express their thoughts on a proposal that will impact every person living in the city.

And with vague recommendations like "crematorium - exit", who knows? Maybe it will impact on them when they're no longer living too.

BEN LANGFORD

WOLLONGONG'S success in setting itself up as an event-driven tourist destination will suffer if cuts to the events and tourism budget recommended by council's controversial citizens panel go ahead.

The panel has recommended slashing the tourism marketing budget by \$100,000 a year, cutting one fireworks night to save \$30,000, and axing \$50,000 from the funding given to the Viva la Gog festival.

The latter proposal has not gone down well with the arts community, given Viva la Gog is the city's main arts festival.

Wollongong City Council yesterday said the event cost "about \$200,000" a year to run.

Regular Viva la Gog performer and former Circus Monoxide artistic director Tamara Campbell said such a cut would have a "massive effect" on the festival.

"It doesn't have a huge budget anyway," she said.



*It's important that Wollongong has a vibrant identity*  
Tamara Campbell

"It's a fantastic opportunity for people to showcase what they do, all across the arts and different genres - music, dance, theatre.

"I think it's important that Wollongong has a vibrant identity, not just a consumer driven identity, and Viva la Gog is a very important part of that.

"If you take that away it starts to eat away at the soul of a place."

In recent years Wollongong tourism leaders have focused on drawing visitors to a series of major events held in the city, with the 'In the Gog' campaign. On it worked - Destination Wollongong visitor numbers showed 3.6 million domestic day trippers had visited the Illawarra in the 12 months to March, up 10 per cent on the previous year.

Destination Wollongong chief Mark Sleight did not want to comment on the proposal to cut tourism marketing.

But he said he was pleased the panel saw the value of tourism assets.

"When Destination Wollongong was established, Wollongong City Council made a significant strategic statement about the importance of tourism to the region," he said.

"We will continue to work with Wollongong City Council to ensure that as much funding as possible is made available for marketing Wollongong as the premier regional destination in NSW.

"Importantly, the community consultation panel recognised the importance



## Increasing parking

KATE MCLWAN

**RAISING** Wollongong parking fees by 30 per cent would be "the nail in the coffin" for many struggling businesses in the city centre, Downtown Newsagency owner Noel Perry said yesterday.

The suggestion to extend metered parking hours and put up parking charges by 50 per cent was one of a suite of recommendations made by Wollongong City Council's controversial

citizens panel this week.

In the 2012-13 financial year the council earned \$1.2 million from parking meters, and the panel hopes a hike in prices would add an extra \$800,000 to the council's bottom line to help fund infrastructure renewal.

If accepted by councillors, a proposed 50 per cent rise would mean the cost of parking would be \$3 an hour in some areas, while stopping for half an hour in Lower

Crown Street near Mr Perry's shop would cost 75c instead of 50c.

"The newsgagent said his business had already suffered due to parking meters, and didn't know if he and other retailers would be able to survive "another blow".

"To think of putting these fees up is like driving a nail into the coffin, because things are tough as it is without further discouragement," he said.

"They might as well put

of investing in key tourism assets."

The citizens panel said another \$50,000 could be saved by "integrating" the management of the Illawarra Performing Arts Centre and Wollongong Town Hall.

The town hall is managed by Sydney company Pegasus Venue Management.

The Sydney firm chosen to manage Wollongong's town hall had come in with a "significantly lower" price tag than the tender from the Illawarra Performing Arts Centre.

## City's proposed

UP, UP AND AWAY			
How your rates could rise over three years			
Suburb	Average house rate	with 7.5% rise	with full rise, including annual increases
Dapto	\$1013	\$1069	\$1187
Farmborough Hts	\$1146	\$1231	\$1342
West Wollongong	\$1234	\$1327	\$1440
Towradg	\$1276	\$1379	\$1513
Wollongong	\$1582	\$1711	\$1866
Austimmer	\$1868	\$2116	\$2308

\* Based on a 3% annual pegged rate rise



# if cuts go ahead



Opposed: Andrew Reveley says raising parking fees will discourage shoppers.  
Photo: KIRK GILMOUR

## fees last straw for CBD business

road blocks up and say we're closed for business." Wise Eyes Optical owner Andrew Reveley, who has been a vocal opponent of parking meters since they were introduced in 2010, also voiced his concerns about the proposed hike.

"I would be dead against any raise because the cost of on-street parking to some degree assists GPT, who own the majority of car parks in the city centre, in setting their fees," he said. "Wollongong is one of the

few shopping centres in Australia that doesn't have some form of free parking - whether that's one hour or three hours or something - and raising the parking fees on the street will lead to a raise in off-street fees too.

"And that will just further reduce the number of people coming into town to spend their dollars."

These sentiments were echoed by Illawarra Business Chamber chief Debra Murphy, who said a rise in parking costs would

"be detrimental to businesses within the CBD."

The proposal was also unpopular among Illawarra Mercury readers, who took to social media to express their thoughts.

When asked on Facebook what they thought of the panel's suggested changes to CBD parking, some respondents labelled them "ridiculous" and said they would be more likely to shop at retail centres like Shellharbour and Miranda

if fees went up.

Sabrina Alister said she thought "Wollongong [would] become even more of a ghost town" while Michelle Garcia said she thought "the council [was] trying to entice people back to the mall, not the opposite".

"The parking prices are reasonable at the moment (and increasing the fees will decrease patronage," Phil McQuade said.

"It doesn't make any sense, especially with the

current construction in the mall already affecting trade."

However, some said they would be happy to pay 50 per cent more in parking fees for the convenience of being able to find a space and shop closer to home.

Residents are encouraged to comment on all recommendations at [haveyoursaywollongong.com.au](http://haveyoursaywollongong.com.au) before November 20, before the councillors debate them at a council meeting on December 9.

### READERS' REACTIONS

SOMETHING has to pay for \$20 million of grey pavers and gum trees in the mall.  
Joel

Keep pushing Wollongong down the drain. More cuts, less services. Less fun for everyone unless you have the \$\$. We'll end up like Detroit, where you can buy houses for \$1 off eBay. Do you think people will want to stay or move to an area which is so expensive and is so poorly run?  
Reality is here

Really, how could they possibly spend less than they already do on the arts? Or do not object to paying more for extra services, but for less.  
Lisa Martine

The words "randomly chosen by market researchers" should never be seen together in the same sentence, unless you are writing a child's fairytale.  
Sunshine

Best way to save money is to merge with Shellharbour and save on administration costs. To offer less and take more is an insult, but unless people move business we have no choice, so I have no doubt that council will do what they want.  
Shane

Way back in 2007 council already had a backlog of infrastructure maintenance of just under \$200 million. Instead of prudently dealing with that they continued to spend millions on the white elephant called The Southern Gateway tourist information centre. That was followed by the North Beach Bathing Pavilion, the Blue Hill, the mall refurbishment and then the Civic Plaza makeover/Wollongong CBD is all flash and no cash.

Helen

More comments, page 14

## rate rises may be much higher than they appear

BEN LANSFORD

WOLLONGONG residents may have to brace themselves for potential rate hikes above 11 per cent over three years, if the recommendations of the council's citizens panel are taken up.

The panel has proposed increasing residential rates 7.5 per cent over three years to raise more money for council services.

Residents and ratepayers of Wollongong have been given just two weeks and a day to comment on the proposals raised by the panel.

Information included on the public consultation website [haveyoursaywollongong.com.au](http://haveyoursaywollongong.com.au) shows the predicted impact of the 7.5 per cent rise on average rates in a variety of suburbs - from a \$16 increase in Dapto to \$148 in Austimber.

But the figures provided in these consultation documents may not give the full picture, as rates will already rise each year by an amount set by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART).

The 7.5 per cent rise over three years is likely to come on top of this IPART-set figure.

With each year's rate rise compounding on the previous year's figure, the actual rate hike could be 17.22 per cent over three years. This gives a more accurate figure that includes both the 7.5 per cent rise, and the IPART-pegged rises.

The Illawarra Mercury's figures are informed speculation. But Wollongong City Council did not provide an answer to multiple inquiries on the topic yesterday.

A spokesman said only "as per their interview yesterday the panel is not keen to rely on a rate rise to address the issue of financial sustainability".

The Mercury's figures are conservative - they are based on an annual IPART-pegged rise of 3 per cent.

The most recent IPART-pegged rise, for the 2013-14 financial year, was for 3.4 per cent.

Our analysis also does not take into consideration that the council could apply to IPART for a rise above and beyond the pegged rate.

So while it is not clear what the final figure would be, we can be certain it would be considerably more than 7.5 per cent over three years.



NSW SES COMMISSIONER TO FACE ICAC INQUIRY - PAGE 2

# ILLAWARRA MERCURY

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Friday, November 8, 2013

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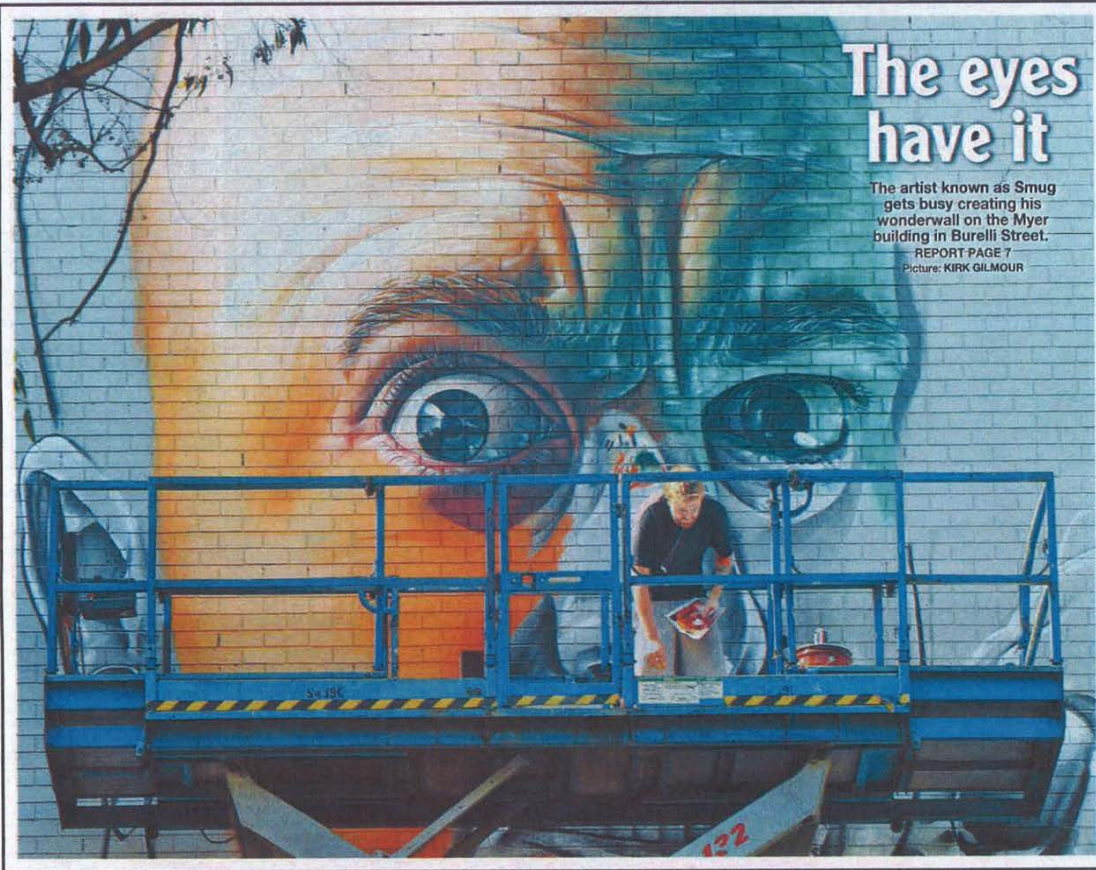
Discover  
the Viva  
vibe  
PAGE 3



Immoos  
backs  
WEC site  
PAGE 9



Ryles  
ready  
to roll  
SPORT



## The eyes have it

The artist known as Smug gets busy creating his wonderwall on the Myer building in Burelli Street.

REPORT PAGE 7  
Picture: KIRK GILMOUR

# 'Don't blame us'

## Citizens panellist defends report

WOLLONGONG'S controversial citizens panel has fired back at criticism of its report on how the city can save money, blaming the city council for confusion over its recommendations.

Panel member Nicola Stanistreet said it was the council's consultants who had typed out the final report, which has been branded vague

and ambiguous. "The reason that there's not a great deal of detail in the report is that we expected the council to provide that information," she said.

Ms Stanistreet yesterday offered to

clarify some of the more confusing recommendations in the report covering service cuts and rates and fee hikes (see page 5).

The panel's suggestions, which cover everything from cutting the

number of children's playgrounds to reducing the number of council staff, have received angry responses across the city.

Union spokesman Greg Gollidge slammed the recommendations on staff cuts, saying the proposal ignored the needs of the community.

■ MORE REPORTS: PAGES 4, 5



# Council jobs targeted

BEN LANGFORD

## Citizens panel encourages attrition

MAKING more permanent workers temporary, not replacing staff who leave, outsourcing more work and axing bonuses for executives - Wollongong City Council's workforce is in for a shake-up if the citizens panel recommendations are adopted.

The controversial panel, tasked with finding ways to make the council more financially sustainable, saw the opportunity to save significant costs on staff wages.

It recommends: "reduce staffing levels across the organisation (indoor and outdoor staff), and suggest increasing casual workers and contractors."

Meanwhile, staff numbers - 1126 at present - would be reduced by attrition. The panel suggests "do not replace staff that exit the organisation".

The cadet, apprenticeships and trainees program would be cut in half to save \$1 million.

Public toilet cleaning could be outsourced and staff could be reduced in the design and technical services, roads and bridges, and customer service divisions.

The panel predicts these strategies would save \$90,000 to \$100,000 per position, while the council's Enterprise Bargaining Agreement could be revised to make it more "cost effective" for new staff.

Not even general manager David Farmer's office, and the council executive, are safe - a reduction is recommended.

Yesterday Mr Farmer told the Mercury the council did not have a staff reduction program in place.

"Council currently reviews each vacancy as they arise and determines the appropriate response to deal with the individual situation," he said. "We then discuss

with the relevant staff unions in accordance with our Enterprise Agreement.

"Council has no current staff reduction program."

Mr Farmer said decisions on outsourcing were made case by case.

"Council makes continual assessments about how a particular service may be delivered," he said.

"There has not been a comprehensive study into outsourcing undertaken in recent years."

Citizens panel member Nicola Stanistreet said staff were "very well paid" in comparison to other councils.

"We think the executive needs to look really seriously at what they're doing and work more efficiently," she said. "We also think any staff bonuses

for executives and the general manager need to go.

"Staffing costs at the council are way above the award for local government... because we have had our enterprise agreement for a long time and it was set up at a time when Wollongong council was trying to compete with BlueScope for staff and it needed to be attractive."

She said moving temporary staff to temporary conditions mainly concerned seasonal jobs.

"We're talking about moving permanent staff working at, for example, pools to a more temporary arrangement. Because this is seasonal work, so we shouldn't have to try and find a place for them in the off-season when the pools aren't open."

For a region that has been suffering the loss of thousands of

jobs in traditional industries over recent years, one of the largest employers shedding staff would be a damaging blow.

United Services Union industrial officer Greg Colledge slammed the recommendations, saying the proposals ignored the needs of the community.

"Wollongong doesn't need this, advertising the fact that they're going to reduce jobs in one of the largest employers here," he said.

"This area doesn't need more temporary employment."

Mr Colledge said cutting apprenticeships and trainees would mean less skilled labour that was home grown, so more skilled workers would need to be imported from overseas.

Comments on the panel's recommendations can be made at [haveyoursaywollongong.com.au](http://haveyoursaywollongong.com.au) until November 20.

Councillors will then debate the proposal at the December 9 council meeting.



Playing out: Horacio Rodriguez watches his son Jordan, 11, who loves the monkey bars at Cordeaux Heights Todd Park.

Picture: CHRISTOPHER CHAN

## Playgrounds under threat in bid to save cash

BEN LANGFORD

ANY council that moved to cut the number or quality of kids' playgrounds would quickly find out about the special place these facilities hold in people's hearts.

Wollongong City Council has 151 playgrounds scattered from Helensburgh to Dapto, from major structures at Towradgi and Stanwell Park to smaller ones dotted throughout the suburbs.

It is the smaller ones that appear to be in the sights of the council's citizens panel, as it seeks ways to save money.

The panel's report has been released for public comment before the council decides how to proceed.

Under "service level changes", anticipated to save \$4.35 million, the panel's report recommends: "Playgrounds - move towards improved centralised facilities rather than lots of little ones."

It aims for a "minimum 10 per cent reduction across 151 playgrounds based on utilisation, location and condition", identifying a saving of \$105 million.

Another recommendation of the panel suggests small parks should be sold. It says: "Parks - divest in small parks - reduce number by 10 per cent based on utilisation, location."

But as a visit to Todd Park at Cordeaux Heights yesterday showed, it is often these smaller playgrounds and parks that

residents feel most attached to.

"I'm an advocate for keeping them all open," said Horacio Rodriguez, who goes to the park several times a week with his son Jordan, 11.

"It's really an aside from going home and sitting in front of the TV.

"Any opportunity to stop in for a few minutes, we do."

Miranda Guarnaccia, who lives just up the road, said: "This one's so popular.

"It's just a lot of socialising and kids interacting with other kids.

"My son learned how to ride his bike here."

Citizens panel member Nicola Stanistreet said the panel did not want to close

playgrounds, but change the way they were managed.

She said the recommendation put forward by the panel would mean that playgrounds should not be "replaced" as often as they were now.

Ms Stanistreet said that for safety reasons, playgrounds were replaced "much sooner" than other council assets and did not need to be replaced that often. And she said no playgrounds should be allowed to fall into such disrepair that they were unsafe.

To read the panel's full report and express your opinion on it, go online to [haveyoursaywollongong.com.au](http://haveyoursaywollongong.com.au) and follow the "securing our future" link.





Natural resource: Swimmers enjoy Austimer rock pools which face an uncertain future under proposals from the controversial citizens panel.

Picture: KIRK GILMOUR

# Citizen defends stance

KATE McILWAIN

A MEMBER of Wollongong City Council's citizens panel has come forward to explain the meaning behind some of the group's recommendations to cut services, raise revenue and make the council more efficient.

Bulli resident and panel member Nicola Stanistreet approached the *Mercury* yesterday to expand on some statements included in the panel's final report, after it was criticised for containing vague or ambiguous suggestions like "crematorium - exit".

She said consultants from the community engagement group Straight Talk, which facilitated the citizens panel, had typed out the final report.

Panel members had also not realised council staff would be unable to answer questions about each recommendation in more detail, she said.

"The reason that there's not a great deal of detail in the report is that we expected the council to provide that information," she said.

"I know that you can't say 'crematorium - exit' and expect people to know what that means, but we were kind of assuming the council would be available to explain these things."

The citizens panel forms a pivotal part of the council's wide-ranging financial sustainability review, which was announced in May to help meet a multimillion-dollar infrastructure backlog.

Made up of "randomly chosen" Wollongong residents who represented a broad range of demographics in the city, the group met four times during September and October, and was asked to suggest ways the council could find an extra \$21 million each year.

www.illawarramercury.com.au

## Explanations for panel recommendations

CITIZENS panel member Nicola Stanistreet explains some of the recommendations in the panel's report.

**Recommendation: Unanderra Library - close due to proximity to other services and level of utilisation**

**Explanation:** The visits here are by far the lowest of all Wollongong City Council libraries, and there are new and bigger services in nearby suburbs of Dapto and Warrawong. A \$200,000 annual saving would be made due to reduction in operating costs, but the building would not be sold because of the attached community centre.

**Recommendation: Crematorium - exit**

**Explanation:** The crematorium is nearing the end of its life, and would need to be almost completely demolished and replaced to remain at an acceptable standard. The panel suggests it is not replaced once it stops meeting the standard. The two main clients - Hanson and Cole and Parsons - have arranged to build their own crematoriums, and other LGAs don't have crematoriums as they are not considered to be core business.

**Recommendation: Car parking - extend metered parking ... [and] increase parking fees in city centre by 50 per cent.**

**Explanation:** The panel recommends

extending the areas covered by parking meters to include Wollongong's foreshore near Belmore Basin and Flagstaff Hill, but not extending the hours of metered parking. The 50 per cent rate increase is justified by a comparison of CBD parking rates in Newcastle and Sydney.

**Recommendation: GM & executive - reduce - efficiency**

**Explanation:** The council's general manager and executive staff are encouraged to be more efficient, and bonuses removed.

**Recommendation: Crown Street Facade - no further work beyond existing applications with current commitment.**

**Explanation:** The new Crown Street facade rejuvenation scheme approved this year by councillors should not go ahead at a cost of \$600,000 over two years, except where there has been a monetary commitment made to a specific business.

**Recommendation: Ocean rock pools - reduce these close to other aquatic facilities and run to fail**

**Explanation:** There are some pools which are not well used and in various states of disrepair, however the panel did not recommend which two or three pools should stop being maintained because this will need to be

investigated by the council.  
**Recommendation: a maximum 7 to 7.5 per cent rate rise over three years**

**Explanation:** The panel recommended a rate rise be introduced in 2.5 per cent lots (on top of the 3.4 per cent recommended by IPART), to total 7.5 per cent after three years. The panel considered this to be "affordable" in comparison to many other councils, including Shellharbour which will increase its rates by 9 per cent each year for three years. City centre businesses which already pay additional levies and heavy industries which are "doing it tough at the moment" should be exempt from an additional rise.

**Recommendation: Parks - divest in small parks - reduce number by 10 per cent based on utilisation, location**

**Explanation:** There are a number of small parks which are nothing more than patches of grass and not regularly used by residents, which need to be maintained and could be sold for profit and to save the ongoing costs.

**Recommendation: City Gallery - reduce - \$20K increase in revenue - could also review**

**Explanation:** Reduce costs in management and ask staff to work harder to get state or national travelling exhibitions that could be ticketed to raise revenue.



MS STANISTREET

“ We all love this city and that was why we were on the panel - we wanted to do what we could for it ”

PHOTO: KIRK GILMOUR



# your say

## Council staff deserve credit

I want to say thank you to Wollongong Council for the work their maintenance and pool staff do to help keep our public areas, pools and beaches in great condition for us all to enjoy.

Having just come back from Britain, where the local council and staff rarely exist or the work is outsourced, people commented on a sense of decline and lessening of commitment to keeping public areas maintained.

Well done to all the local workers dedicated to keeping a small part of this country beautiful.

LYN READ, Austimner

### Sack the lot and save

So in just a couple of months, after only four meetings, the citizens have determined a popular community plan that will cut all the right services, raise rates just the right amount and save the council budget \$10 million a year.

This begs the question, just what has

Lord Mayor Gordon Bradbery and the elected council being doing in their countless meetings these past two years?

Just imagine what else these mystery miracle-working citizens could achieve if they were in the job full-time?

I say let's get them back, sack the council, then Wollongong can save and be saved.

SHAUN PRINCE, Thirroul

### Youth dis-assembled

Almost every single working day this year the Mercury presses have rolled out the news that yet another group of Australians have lost their jobs and the work is more profitable by being shifted to an overseas location.

Now heartless politicians, with their minds fixed only on what they can get out of our nation's coffers and stuff everyone else, have the audacity to say that supporting one of our biggest

employers, Holden, is no longer in the taxpayers' interest and the time may have come to withdraw any further financial support for this Australian icon.

Global trading has ripped the very heart out of the Australian way of life and there can be no greater proof of this than seeing the lifeblood of our nation, our youth, struggling to get decent training and a secure job.

Too many important and long-term decisions are being made by wealthy politicians without ever being put to the Australian people, whose future way of life is being written off without ever having had a say in the matter.

Welcome to Australia, where you can experience life on the dis-assembly line.

DAVE COX, Corrimal

### First remove council

I think the citizens panel has started on the wrong foot, suggesting to slash this and sell that.

They should begin by getting rid of the people that got the council in this position in the first place.

WARREN FLEMING, Balgownie

### Vets outrage justified

Veterans are understandably outraged by the attempt by the Australian War Memorial to remove "Known Unto God" from the plinth at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.

Outraged because far too often, men in suits who never set foot on a battlefield think they have some God-given right not only to rewrite military history, as they are apt to do, but effect changes like this.

Worse - that the words they attempted to place on that plinth came from a Labor leader whose hypocrisy towards veterans was no more manifest than the way he allowed veterans' pensions and superannuation to decline under his watch.

DON TATE, Albion Park Rail

### Letters to the Editor

Email: letters@illawarramercury.com.au

Online: illawarramercury.com.au

Letters should be no more than 200 words and should be typed or clearly written.

All letters need an address and business hours phone number for verification.

By submitting your letter to us for publication you agree that we may edit the letter for legal, space or other reasonable reasons and that the letter may be published in the newspaper, on our website or in other media.

### From the web

#### Double whammy

So, parents will have to drive kids to another suburb to use a playground. Actually this could be a good business proposition for the council - install parking meters at all remaining playgrounds and deliver a classic double whammy!

Kagey

#### Downward spiral

Yeah, that's right, out back children's playgrounds. Next it will be libraries, rock pools, and crematoriums....oh wait...

Reality

#### Queensland jewels

I moved to Queensland six years ago and the park facilities here are amazing. Nearly every park has workout facilities, bike tracks for the kids with stop signs and crossings, excellent playground structures and wonderful barbecue facilities. They are one of the best things about living in Queensland with a young family.

Mel

#### Councillors hiding

We need frontline services maintained and increased, not cut, like this panel would like to see. Councillors are elected to make decisions and represent ratepayers. Why are they hiding behind this panel?

Magic

#### Better management

How does outsourcing staff save money? Why not better utilise staff or structure pay so it costs the same as outsourcing? If a private company can do the job cheaper, then how come the council can't do it?

ratepayer

#### Panel unnecessary

How much money was wasted on this panel? Silly me, I thought we got a representative panel after the election.

Still Baffled

#### Languages lacking

Almost all countries, even England, have compulsory foreign language courses that begin well before year 7. Why is Australia so elitist (narrow minded)?

MS

Swiss



### On the street

Q What do you think of the street art through Wollongong?



**Stuart Gibson, West Dapto**  
I like the way it's done but, I'm not sure the guy in the picture is someone you would want to live with.



**Shannon Hone, Albion Park**  
It's mad. I really like it.



**Naydn Stephenson, Albion Park**  
They should do more around Wollongong.



**Leo Vaassen, Wollongong**  
It's pretty well done, the more I look at it the more I really like it.

**ONLINE POLL**  
Should ocean pool facilities in Wollongong be cut?

**VOTE NOW**  
illawarramercury.com.au

#### PREVIOUS RESULTS

Should the number of playground facilities in Wollongong be cut?





# Report identifies 'values'

KATE MCILWAIN

WOLLONGONG City Council's general manager says his organisation faced a no-win situation when it chose to appoint a citizens panel to review its budget.

David Farmer spoke out in defence of the council's controversial consultation process yesterday, after it was criticised for producing vague, confusing and ambiguous recommendations like "youth services - revenue", "Customer service - reduce - apply an efficiency target"; and "crematorium - exit".

But Mr Farmer said the report, which was unveiled this week, was just "a conversation starter" intended to set "values and priorities" rather than outline specific budgetary measures.

"If you look at that report, I think you can see the themes quite clearly," he said.

"Yes you can pick apart

the specifics, but the themes are quite clear: leave alone the big highly-used assets, have a look at some of those assets that aren't as heavily used, and we want to make sure that rates only go up as a last resort."

He admitted he would have liked to see more detail in some of the recommendations but said he and other council staff were at pains to stay away from the citizens panel so they could not be accused of leading them in their decisions.

"No doubt I would have preferred to have more detail in the report and in the responses, but it is what it is," he said.

"It's work of those people, and there were people rolling around saying "This is going to be the work of evil council staff and these are just going to be puppets."

"If you stay away, then you don't necessarily get what you want to hear - and



Focus shifting vital: Wollongong City Council general manager David Farmer. Picture: CHRISTOPHER CHAN

if I was running this thing, the answers and form would be different, but I wasn't, and it's the community's work.

"And I would also point out this is the first time anyone has been brave enough to put something together that gets close to adding up to solving our problem."

The proposals developed from this round of community consultation would be on exhibition between December and February, and decisions arising after that would also be open for comment before they were incorporated into next year's annual plan.

No final decisions on service cuts would be made until June next year when the council approved its annual budget, he said.

However, he confirmed the council needed to make a decision by December 13 whether to notify the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal of its intent to apply for a rate rise above the roughly 3.4 per cent rise set by the tribunal.

Mr Farmer also said he wanted to shift the focus on the citizens panel debate from looking at problems with the process to the overall financial sustainability issue facing the council.

The council announced in May it needed to free up \$21 million a year to meet an infrastructure backlog and ensure its current assets - including roads, footpaths and stormwater drains - can be maintained.

Mr Farmer pointed out there were already several council projects which could not be funded, including Mount Keira Kiosk, the North Wollongong Surf Life Saving Club refurbishment, roadworks on Harry Graham Drive and Stanwell Park Beach kiosk.

"We have to make a fundamental strategic change in what we do... and unless we do, people will start to see things fail and services being withdrawn anyway, not by choice but because they will just happen," he said.

He warned the city faces a rate rise of more than 18 per cent, on top of any statewide increase, without cut backs and savings.



Clouded: A man uses the Wollongong Gentlemen's Pool at high tide. The ocean pool is one of nine under threat. Picture: ANDY ZAKELI

# Swimmer labels potential closure 'cruel'

KATE MCILWAIN

WOLLONGONG'S ocean pools are among the many council services that would be cut back if recommendations put forward by the citizens panel go ahead, but it remains unclear which of the nine coastal pools could be marked for demolition.

Stretching from Wollongong to Coalcliff, the tidal rock pools cost Wollongong City Council \$802,000 to clean and maintain each year, according to documents provided to the citizens panel.

This includes monthly cleaning in the summer swimming season, as well as maintenance of the pool infrastructure.

In its report, presented to the council earlier this week, the citizens panel made a recommendation that tidal pools close to other aquatic facilities should be "reduced" and "run to fail".

Council general manager David Farmer yesterday explained that "run to fail" meant the pools would not be repaired in the event of a leak or other structural damage, and would then be demolished to ensure there were no safety issues.

The panel said this would save an average of \$45,000 a year per pool, and a total of \$135,000 if two to three pools were closed.

However, there was no detail on which pools were considered to be "close" to other facilities, with citizens panel member Nicola Stanistreet saying the council would need to investigate which two or three pools could be let go.

Council staff were also unable to provide this information. "The assessment of rock pools and their need for maintenance or if they are allowed to run until they fail would be managed on a case by case

basis," a spokesman said. "Council would need to investigate how close pools should be to other aquatic resources prior to commenting further on this recommendation."

Based on a map provided on the council's Have Your Say website, tidal pools which are "close" to other facilities include the Gentlemen's pool in Wollongong - which is next to the Continental pool - and Austimmer tidal pool - which is close to the swimming pool in Thrurrou.

The Bulli and Woonona tidal pools are also close together, as are the ocean pools at Coledale and Wombarra.

Hearing of the panel's recommendation, one regular swimmer at the Wollongong Gentlemen's pool - who did not want to provide his name - said it would be "cruel" to get rid of the pool because it was used by a number of older people.

He also said numerous families swam and used the beach and rock platforms surrounding the pool on weekends.

Other information, which could be used to inform any closure of ocean pools, is a 2009 audit of council pools conducted by Geoff Nimnes Pong and Partners, made public in January this year.

It warned the existing pool structures at Bellambi, Coledale, Gentlemen's (between Continental and the North Beach Bathers' Pavilion) and Towradgi had deteriorated beyond repair and should be demolished.

It said these pools had "great potential legal risk for the council in terms of hazards due to cracking, tripping and general dangerous degradation" and said new pools should be constructed in the old positions if the public wanted them.

# Growing fears over citizens panel sway

KATE MCILWAIN

PUBLIC criticism of Wollongong City Council's citizens panel process continued to mount yesterday, with unions and community groups labelling it "alarming" and "shrouded in secrecy".

South Coast Labour Council secretary Arthur Rorris said the panel was "nothing more than a focus group", and should not have been given such a strong weighting in the council's community engagement process.

"Focus groups are just designed to give you an indication of what some people in the community feel," he said.

"But if the intention is to circumvent the democratic rights of all the other citizens in the city, or to give one group access to certain things and a role which is above that of other citizens, that's where you run into problems."

He said the panel process had "side-stepped democracy" because members were unaccountable to other residents.

Mr Rorris called on the council to start its financial sustainability review again, by holding a series of public meetings that did not exclude other residents from the process.

Wollongong's eight neighbourhood forums voiced similar concerns, submitting a joint resolution to the council asking that it hold public meetings in each of the city's three wards.

The forums also asked the council to allow a 28-day period for the public to respond due to the "vagueness" of many recommendations.

"The proposed cuts to services, closure of facilities, reduction in public parks/playgrounds, operational cuts and rate hike, as highlighted in the citizens panel report, has caused considerable alarm, confusion and questioning of the implications of the proposed measures," the forum members said in their request.

"As the deliberations... of the citizens panel were conducted in private, Wollongong City Council's neighbourhood forums representatives... request that the council holds a series of public meetings to explain its impacts."

Additionally, the United Services Union - which represents council staff - yesterday announced plans for a public rally against the panel's recommendations at Civic Plaza next Friday.

Members of community organisations, pensioner and superannuation associations and sporting clubs, as well as all elected councillors and the Lord Mayor, are invited to attend.



# Protesters make point at festival

KATE McILWAIN

NOT everyone was celebrating at Viva La Gong on Saturday, as a small group of protesters took to the streets to raise their concerns about Wollongong City Council's citizens panel.

About a dozen members of the Save Our Services residents group, which formed in May when the council first flagged plans to review its finances to address an infrastructure backlog, handed out leaflets to performers and festival goers.

Headlined with the words "Viva La Gone", the leaflets encouraged residents to contact councillors and urge them to stop "cuts to services, closure of facilities, cuts to operations, sale of parks and privatisation of services" put forward by the council-run citizens panel.

The advisory group handed down its recommendations last week, proposing a 7.5 per cent rate rise, cut backs to libraries, tidal pools, playgrounds and parks, the outsourcing of tourist parks and labour, as well as greater efficiencies within the council administration.

The panel also recommended raising CBD parking fees, heated pool charges and library fines.

Save Our Services spokesman Stephen Spencer said his group had targeted Viva La Gong because of a proposed \$50,000 cut to the festival's \$200,000 annual budget.

"We just want to draw attention to what the citizens panel is proposing, and alert them to some of the things that could happen and what they can do about it," Mr Spencer said.

Group member Tony Konjarski, from Lake Heights, said he was worried the proposed services changes would hit Wollongong's disadvantaged community, while former lifeguard John Cooper said he believed citizens panel members were being used to carry out the council's agenda to implement a rates rise.

But Liberal councillor Leigh Colacino - who also attended Viva La Gong - sought to



Viva La Gone: Stephen Spencer and Tony Konjarski hand out pamphlets about cuts.

allay some of these fears by emphasising that he and other councillors would have the final say over any decisions.

"My understanding of the panel is that it was there to assist, not to dictate," he said. "I, along with other councillors, am the voted-in representative for this city and that is what I will continue to do: consult with and represent my community."

He said he would not be following the panel's written direction that councillors should be "fully accountable and report back to the panel on the implementation of recommendations and savings, in particular recommendations that are not implemented".

"The councillors in no way need to justify our decisions to the panel, and it was arrogant of them to insist that we do," he said. "I'm quite disappointed that they put that statement in the report."

Cr Colacino said he was supportive of some of the panel's recommendations but would be unlikely to go along with all of them, including the proposal to cut Viva La Gong's budget.

"There are things there that my community would be very surprised if I was supportive of, and there are things there that I'm sure some of the community would recognise as things that can be addressed," he said.

"Viva La Gong, for example, is something I will fight to maintain."



Street party: The Viva La Gong parade makes its way through the city. Pictures: ADAM McLEAN

## Throng turns out for Viva La Gong

KATE McILWAIN

IT'S not every day you see Dutch milkmaids, Buddhist nuns, circus stiltwalkers and tough roller derby girls mingling together.

But, as a colourful crowd prepared for the Viva La Gong parade on Saturday morning, Wollongong's arts precinct played host to all these characters, who were joined by Chinese dragon puppets, Hawaiian-themed ukulele players and enthusiastic jazz musicians.

The parade kicked off at 11am, led by Papergirl bike riders who handed out artworks to spectators as they cycled through the city centre.

A brightly dressed

Macedonian cultural group was next in line, followed by exuberant African singers and Chinese dancers.

As the cavalcade made its way past the art gallery, up Crown Street Mall and through Globe Lane, curious shoppers and retail workers peered out of businesses to see what was causing such a commotion.

The Con Artists jazz group tooted their horns and banged their drums the loudest, as groups of children skipped alongside the procession clapping their hands.

Reaching its destination, MacCabe Park, the crowd dispersed as musicians, magicians, artists and roaming performers

prepared for the main celebrations on five stages.

Megan McKell, cultural services co-ordinator at Wollongong City Council, said 2500 people attended.

"We spoke to stallholders and they said they were much busier this year, and all of the different stages and La Petit Grand, they were at capacity all day," Ms McKell said.

"It was fantastic. It was really relaxed; people out there to have fun.

"We had a group down from Sydney and they said they walked in and it just felt so good, so welcoming and so inclusive."

ONLINE GALLERY illawarramercury.com.au



Splash of colour: Patrick and Delia Smith paint an umbrella at Viva La Gong.



Carnival swing: A dance group performs at Viva La Gong in MacCabe Park.

# Jockey Desiree Gill dies after Sunshine Coast race fall

QUEENSLAND jockey Desiree Gill has died from injuries suffered in a race fall on the Sunshine Coast.

Gill was taken to Nambour Hospital on Saturday night and died yesterday morning. She was 45.

"Desiree was widely admired and loved for her passion for the racing industry and in particular, her commitment to developing the next generation of jockeys," Racing Queensland said.

"Desiree enjoyed a distin-

guished riding career spanning 30 years which included a period of employment with Racing Queensland mentoring and educating apprentice jockeys."

Gill had won the South-East Queensland Country premiership

for the past two years and rode four winners at Bundaberg on Melbourne Cup day.

"I know everyone in the racing fraternity is saddened by this tragic loss and we pass on our deepest sympathies to Desiree's

husband Barry and the Gill family," Racing Queensland's chief executive Darren Condon said. Gill's death comes just a few months after Darwin's leading rider Simone Montgomerie died following a fall. AP

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 Air temp: 17 degrees  
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news 10

# Handful of replies to panel ideas

KATE McILWAIN

WOLLONGONG City Council's citizens panel report has ignited a heated debate about service cuts, fee hikes and a 7.5 per cent rate rise, but has so far failed to attract many official submissions.

With just one week to go before the end of community consultation on the controversial advisory group's recommendations, the council has received just 20 submissions and 46 surveys, as well as 13 posts on its Have Your Say website.

The citizens panel released its report last week, as part of the council's comprehensive financial services review which aims to free up \$21 million a year to meet an infrastructure backlog.

The report has been widely criticised for putting forward "vague" and "ambiguous" suggestions, as well as recommending wide-ranging cuts to libraries, tidal pools, playgrounds and parks, the outsourcing of tourist parks and labour, as well as greater efficiencies within the council administration.

Lord Mayor Gordon Bradbery

said it was vital more residents take up the chance to respond, and share their own ideas.

"I am not sold on everything the citizens panel has suggested and neither are the councillors - it's not the be all and end all, it's just a conversation starter, and I want everyone else to make their submissions so that their voices can be heard as well," he said.

"It's not enough just to criticise the citizens panel, they also need to generate some alternative perspectives."

Cr Bradbery said he recognised that it was "challenging and painful" for the city's residents to have to consider a rate rise or service cuts, but stressed it was an "unavoidable conversation".

"We have to have this conversation now, otherwise we'll be having it in dribs and drabs in the future when an asset fails or we see the city slowly deteriorating," he said.

Residents can write a letter, send an email, fill out a survey or participate in an online forum through the council's Have Your Say website by November 20 at [haveyoursaywollongong.com.au](http://haveyoursaywollongong.com.au)



# City mulls deep cuts, rates hike

By ANTONY FIELD

Wollongong residents have one more week to comment on a proposed 7.5 per cent rate rise and some of the most far-reaching cuts to council services in the city's history.

Controversy continues to rage after Wollongong City Council's citizens panel released its seven-page report on Wollongong City Council's financial sustainability last Wednesday.

The 34-person panel, randomly selected by market research firm Taverner to represent a cross-section of the Wollongong community, recommended reductions in council services to add more than \$21 million to the council's budget, including annual savings of \$4.35 million and increased fees of \$1.7 million. The plan includes a 7.5 per cent rate rise over three years.

The panel suggested a number of service cuts, including the closure of Lakeside Leisure Centre, Kanahooka, the closure of Unanderra Library, closure of some ocean rock pools, reduction of the pool season, and fewer parks and playgrounds.

Outsourcing was recommended for the council's tourist parks, Russell Vale Golf Course, roads and bridges and

cleaning of public toilets.

A gold-coin donation to enter community pools, higher sports field fees, CBD parking charges and cuts to council staff were also mooted.

The citizens panel, facilitated by independent firm Straight Talk, was kept at arm's length from the council. It met four times to put together its report.

Wollongong Lord Mayor Gordon Bradbery said the panel had its views on how to address financial sustainability and it was now up to residents to provide feedback, with the final decision left to councillors.

"It's not going to happen overnight," Councillor Bradbery said.

"The citizens panel was, I think, very courageous in what they've presented.

"There's some challenges in their recommendations. It's been very forensic. They've done a remarkable job."

Cr Bradbery said the council's resources were limited and assets were reaching their use-by date.

"This [process] should have been done years ago. It's scary the amount of work and replacement required in this city."

■ Continued on page 2



# 'Services cut, not deleted'

■ From page 1

Panel members Nicola Stanistreet and Andrew Prusek said the panel worked with council staff and had nothing but praise for them.

Mr Prusek said no questions were off the table and information requested came back promptly.

"Nothing was directed ... we weren't led in any way. The same information is available to the public," Ms Stanistreet said.

She said the panel represented the community and she believed residents would have come to the same conclusions.

"We had a high degree of consensus. We had everyone from HSC students to pensioners, equal amounts from each of the wards."

Mr Prusek said the panel was the voice of the silent majority.

"We considered groups that would be affected. We have not deleted any services, we've just looked at cutting back services or increasing efficiencies," he said.

"Shellharbour has a 40 per cent increase coming and other councils are putting in for 20 per cent. If nothing was done in Wollongong [cutting services] we'd be looking at 18 per cent," Mr Prusek said.

Public submissions on the report close at 5pm on November 20. Residents would get at least two more chances to have their say, with no final decisions until June 2014.

■ Submissions:  
haveyoursaywollongong.com.au



**Tough call:** Citizens panel members Nicola Stanistreet and Andrew Prusek front the media last week.  
Picture: KIRK GILMOUR

## Citizens panel 'rushed'

A Wollongong residents' group has criticised the citizens panel process, saying it "was a rushed job."

Save Our Services Wollongong convener Stephen Spencer said the panel was put under great time constraints and the community had little time to respond to cursory recommendations.

"There needs to be a proper, full review. We urged that an independent financial expert come in and look at council's finances so the community can be properly informed."

He said SOS Wollongong believed the lord mayor and general manager had a "deliberate agenda" to steer the

citizens panel to a particular set of recommendations.

"Service cuts should only be a last resort and we don't believe we've reached that point," Mr Spencer said.

Wollongong resident Carol Herben raised concerns about the panel's call for the council to exit Wollongong Crematorium at Unanderra.

"The crematorium is no different to any cemetery, as it holds our family's remains," she said.

"The council assured us that they would retain our sites in perpetuity. It seems that the council no longer wants to honour their agreement with us."



Illawarra Mercury, 16 November 2013, *Outrage at citizens panel proposals 'gutless' attack on workers*, p1 & 4.

Weekender Motoring Domain

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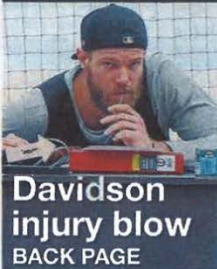


## The day our workers stood up to Pig Iron Bob

Chris Norris, Adam Palmer, former Illawarra Steelers captain John Cross and Tim Storer joined a group of volunteer actors yesterday working on a documentary titled Pig Iron Bob. It coincided with the 75th anniversary of the day wharfies refused to load pig iron headed for Japan during pre-war tensions, defying then attorney-general Robert Menzies. Picture: KIRK GILMOUR REPORT: P13



Jindal: the inside story P14-15



Davidson injury blow BACK PAGE

## Outrage at citizens panel proposals

# 'GUTLESS' ATTACK ON WORKERS

KATE McILWAIN

THE United Services Union launched a scathing attack on Wollongong City Council's citizens panel yesterday, labelling the process "gutless" and "botched" at a fiery rally in the CBD.

As hundreds of union members walked off the job, the city's pools, beach patrols and libraries ground to a halt while workers joined community members to protest at the council's contentious financial sustainability review.

Addressing a stop-work meeting ahead of the rally, union boss Graeme Kelly condemned the recommendations from the citizens panel.

"This is nothing more than a weak, lily-livered, gutless attempt to attack workers' conditions and the community of Wollongong behind 35 hapless people," he said.

REPORTS: PAGE 4



# Citizens panel backlash

KATE McILWAIN

THE backlash over Wollongong City Council's financial sustainability review continued yesterday, as workers and residents staged a protest against service cuts proposed by the citizens panel.

The United Services Union rally was held in Civic Plaza, across the road from the council administration building, and was attended in the most part by union members who had been at an earlier stop-work meeting.

They were joined by a handful of residents and community activists, making up a crowd of about 350 people.

USU industrial officer Greg Colledge said the demonstration was designed to give the community a voice, following contentious consultation methods the council has used as it strives to get its long-term budget under control.

The "randomly chosen" panel of 34 citizens handed down 65 suggestions - including cuts to libraries, tidal pools, playgrounds and parks, the outsourcing of tourist parks and labour and "greater efficiencies" within the council - which have sparked widespread confusion and outrage among many in the community.

Deputy Lord Mayor and Labor councillor Chris Connor addressed the crowd first, in an effort to reassure people no decisions had been made by councillors.

He said he and the other Labor councillors would represent workers' rights and fight for services.

"We are committed to jobs, we're committed to making sure that your awards and conditions are secure," Cr Connor said.

"We're also going to fight for services to make sure [they] are



Demonstration: South Coast Labour Council secretary Arthur Norris at the rally against the citizens panel recommendations. Pictures: ADAM McLEAN

equitably distributed throughout this community, because taking away services, in any way, strikes at the heart of equity."

Cr Connor criticised the citizens panel for only considering the best economic result, rather than how their plans would affect people, but also reminded the crowd they were simply ordinary residents who had put their hand up to "have a go".

Lord Mayor Gordon Bradbery also spoke, saying the rally was "exactly what we need" to allow councillors to hear a broad range of views.

He said he shared Cr Connor's

concerns, but also reminded the crowd the financial review was necessary to ensure the council could continue to deliver its current services and fix its assets.

"When I cannot open Mount Keira because we don't have the money, when we have beach vegetation and we can't see the beach and when we have situations where children in Coalcliff and Coledale cannot walk to school on a footpath at the side of the road, that is what we're on about," Cr Bradbery said.

The only other councillor spotted at the rally was independent Greg Petty.

Other speakers included Felix Bronneberg, from the Save Our Service group, South Coast Labour Council secretary Arthur Norris and Wollongong MP Noreen Hay.

General manager David Farmer, stood at the back of the crowd for most of the rally, and was heckled with cries of "Where's Farmer?" before he agreed to speak.

He repeated previous statements, saying the council was in a good position short-term but had to focus on its future finances to maintain its assets and services.

"We have to have this conversation with the community about what people value and what

changes we need to make to ensure... we can still deliver safe footpaths, drains that work, roads that don't damage people's vehicles and libraries we can use," Mr Farmer said.

"It's not an easy conversation because it challenges things that people hold dear... but as a community we have to face up to this issue."

Mr Farmer said the community would have almost nine months to provide feedback before any decisions were made.

**ONLINE GALLERY**  
[llawarramercury.com.au](http://llawarramercury.com.au)

## Botched plan attacks workers: USU



Observing: General manager David Farmer and Lord Mayor Gordon Bradbery at the Civic Plaza rally yesterday.

KATE McILWAIN and GLEN HUMPHRIES

WOLLONGONG'S public services ground to a halt yesterday morning, as hundreds of Wollongong City Council workers walked off the job over recommendations put forward by the controversial citizens panel.

Council administration said the "unauthorised" stop-work meeting affected all patrolled beaches, a number of pools as well as some libraries and com-

munity centres.

United Services Union members from the council's nursery, customer service centre and art gallery as well as hundreds of maintenance and road workers in their high-vis gear also took part in the industrial action.

At a heated meeting in Civic Plaza, members voted unanimously to "condemn the citizens panel recommendations surrounding the wages and conditions of [council] employees."

The also called on the council to "fully reject all the recommendations of the citizens panel" and condemned the actions of general manager David Farmer and senior staff involved in the consultation process.

USU general secretary Graeme Kelly was ruthless in his criticism of the council and the panel.

He said Mr Farmer and Lord Mayor Gordon Bradbery needed to accept they had "botched this whole thing".

"It's nothing more than a weak, lily-livered, gutless attempt to attack workers' conditions and the community of Wollongong behind 35 hapless people," he said.

"They want to hang their heads in shame and we want to send the message to them that it's not on and we're not copying it."

Mr Kelly warned the council had not seen the end of the union's campaign should it choose to proceed with the panel's suggestions.

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The tide may have turned: Wollongong Council may close up to three of its

nine ocean pools, including Coalcliff's rock pool. Photo: James Brickwood

## Council ready to wave

■ **Heath Gilmore**

For an east coast mayor, Gordon Bradbery is contemplating the unthinkable – allowing three ocean pools to be reclaimed by the sea.

NSW has about 100 ocean baths or tidal swimming pools.

Councillor Bradbery, the independent lord mayor of Wollongong, said the future of up to three of nine tidal pools had to be considered to secure the long-term finances of the council.

"It's like Solomon with the baby," Councillor Bradbery, a former NSW Police chaplain, said of the cost cuts. "The only problem is this baby is a big one."

At the beginning of November, a 34-strong community panel, randomly selected to represent a cross-section of the Wollongong

community, came back with its cost-cutting recommendations for the council.

The panel was set up after a NSW Department of Local Government review determined that the council only marginally exceeded benchmarks for financial sustainability. In short, Wollongong council's immediate finances were OK relative to the other councils in the state but its future uncertain, with facilities built from the 1960s to 1980s requiring a large capital outlay.

The community panel's recommendations began with a 7.5 per cent rate rise over three years. It also suggested the closure of Lakeside Leisure Centre, Kanahooka, and the closure of Unanderra Library. Outsourcing was recommended for the council's

## goodbye to ocean pools

tourist parks, Russell Vale Golf Course, roads and bridges, and the cleaning of public toilets.

A gold-coin donation to enter community pools, higher sports field fees, CBD parking charges and cuts to council staff were also mooted. And, most symbolically, tidal pools close to other aquatic facilities should be "reduced" and "run to fail".

The nine pools cost \$802,000 to clean and maintain each year, according to documents provided to the citizens panel. It was estimated \$135,000 would be saved annually if two to three pools closed.

On Tuesday, the Coalcliff community held a protest rally over the feared loss of its ocean pool and community hall, as well as a reduction in the number of hours for council-employed beach lifeguards.

One of the protesters, Katie Cooper-Wares, has a wheelchair-bound daughter Beth, 10, who has osteogenesis imperfecta, an extreme brittle bone disorder. Her daughter has broken 35 bones in her lifetime, but swims in the pool nearly every day in summer and sometimes in winter.

"It is the only safe place she can be physically free and feel equal with her friends," Ms Cooper-Wares said.

Jo Reed, a Coalcliff Community Action Group spokeswoman, said the closure of the pool would take away the community's heartbeat.

"I think there are other areas in the Illawarra that they can look at to reduce their costs," she said.

Public submissions on the recommendations close on Wednesday with the Illawarra Mercury



## Coalcliff residents angered by citizens panel's proposals



Politically active: Olivia Lindberg, 11, Kirra Davey, 12, and Tianna Massey, 10, at Coalcliff pool, protesting in response to an unpopular council proposal. Picture: CHRISTOPHER CHAN

# United in fighting cuts

KATE McILWAIN

NORTHERN suburbs residents banded together yesterday in an effort to "Save Coalcliff" from cuts proposed by Wollongong City Council's citizens panel.

About 70 residents - including people from Stanwell Park and even Corimal - rallied in Leeder Park yesterday afternoon to express anger over what they believe is an unfair attack on their tiny seaside suburb.

Among 65 recommendations to cut services, raise fees and make the council more efficient, the

citizens panel made three proposals that directly affect Coalcliff.

They said the beach season at Coalcliff and Scarborough should be cut from seven to three hours a day "due to level of visitation" for a saving of \$40,000, and suggested Coalcliff Hall should be demolished to save \$33,000.

Coalcliff's pool could also be affected by a proposal to "reduce" and "run to fail" two or three of the city's nine tidal ocean pools.

Save Coalcliff co-organiser Jo Reed got behind the campaign after she saw a poster advertising a community meeting about the

recommendations. Ms Reed said she was "blown away" to see three different plans affecting her small community and felt Coalcliff had been "deliberately victimised".

"I didn't understand why there were three things targeting us, while across the rest of the Illawarra there were whole suburbs being let off," she said.

"We don't have much here as it is, and when they're trying to take that away from you and increase your rates at the same time you just think 'Why!'"

Since then, Ms Reed has joined

with her neighbours to start a website, a Facebook page and hold yesterday's rally to raise awareness of the potential Coalcliff cuts, which would be "devastating".

She said her children - aged seven and 10 - enjoyed the rock pool. "The pool is kind of the hub of Coalcliff, particularly in summer it's just a lovely place to hang out with your kids because it's very safe," she said.

Ms Reed also said a plan to roll back lifeguard hours at Coalcliff Beach would be "risky" and dangerous for the community, espe-

cially if the recommendation to scrap the tidal pool was taken up.

"If we don't have the pool, then more people are going to want to go to the ocean, so the public will be exposed, and if they do go in when it's not patrolled and get caught in a rip or have fatigue, there's not even a lot of mobile phone reception within the area," she said.

Submissions on the citizens panel recommendations close at 5pm today. Residents can send an email, fill out a survey or participate in an online forum at [haveyoursaywollongong.com.au](http://haveyoursaywollongong.com.au).

## Crime spree accused remanded in custody

SHANNON TONKIN

A WOLLONGONG man has been denied bail over allegations he was behind a spate of crimes committed in the Illawarra over the past five days.

Shane Benjamin Morley is accused of starting his crime spree by breaking into a Corimal home last Thursday night and stealing the owner's Mitsubishi Lancer.

It is alleged Morley stole number plates from two other Lancers on Friday and Saturday, the first parked at Fairy Meadow and the second at Gwynneville.

Police allege Morley then broke into another house around 2.30am on Sunday morning, stealing a GPS unit, sunglasses and a wallet from a car that was parked inside a garage.

Morley allegedly tried to use one of the credit cards from the wallet to pay for fuel at a service station at Heathcote half an hour later. However, the transaction was declined.

The following day, a man reported the number plates of his Lancer had been stolen while the car was parked at the commuter car park next to Wollongong Railway Station.

A further theft of Lancer number plates reportedly took place that evening, from a house in Wollongong.

At 1.45am yesterday morning police arrested Morley at West Leagues Club at Unanderra on an outstanding warrant related to the break and enter offences.

During a police interview, Morley allegedly admitted to trying to use the credit card at Heathcote, and to driving around in the stolen car.

Arresting officers allegedly found five sets of number plates in the rear of the stolen car Morley had been driving.

A check identified them all to be stolen, police documents tendered to Wollongong Local Court said.

It is alleged Morley told police: "You knew I stole the number

plates last night. I knew I was going away for the warrant so I just did it".

Morley was charged with two aggravated break and enters, four counts of stealing and one count each of suspected stolen goods in custody, unlawfully possessing number plates, stealing a car, entering a vehicle without the consent of the owner, dishonestly obtaining financial advantage by deception and stopping in a disabled parking space.

He is also facing an unrelated charge of contravening an AVO. In court yesterday, Morley's lawyer, Angela Melouney, said her client would agree to abide by strict bail conditions if released.

She said he could report to police daily and wouldn't approach any prosecution witnesses or alleged victims in the matter.

However, Magistrate Susan McGowan refused bail, noting Morley had a poor record for obeying court orders.

## Man admits raping elderly woman in nursing home

SHANNON TONKIN

A HORSLEY man has pleaded guilty to twice raping an 82-year-old patient at Unanderra's Marco Polo nursing home late last year.

Daniel Thomas Mooney, 41, yesterday changed his plea during a formal arraignment in Wollongong District Court, having previously denied the charges against him for months.

However, Mooney told the court he was guilty of two counts of aggravated sexual assault, admitting to raping the elderly woman, who the court heard had a serious physical disability.

During previous hearings on the matter, the court was told Mooney entered the woman's

room on two separate occasions last year - September 21 and October 31 - and sexually assaulted her.

In the October incident, an employee rostered on to work with Mooney caught him in the victim's room, noting the woman was lying in the foetal position with her bottom level with the bed, while Mooney had his hands on her waist and his crotch almost touching her.

The court heard yesterday prosecutors and Mooney's defence team were still working on putting together an agreed fact sheet to be handed to the court during sentencing submissions.

The matter will return to court on December 16 for the beginning of the sentencing process.



# your say

## Costs block region's voice

I have been involved for 19 years in amateur theatre around the Illawarra and am surprised to learn that the Illawarra Performing Arts Centre is too expensive for local companies to hire.

In fact, it is more expensive than places such as the Opera Studio at the Opera House.

It states in the 2011 report (the most recent one on the IPAC website), that the vision is "to give a voice to the Illawarra region".

But, most recently, a local production I was involved in was bumped from the IPAC.

The replacement? A one-night-only show from a touring act from outside the region.

This just does not make sense financially or as a support for the region.

Why is IPAC prohibitively expensive? Why does it lose money on the productions it stages/brings into the complex?

**Ron Seymour, Horsley**

**Findings reflect badly**

Wollongong ratepayers are being snowed. The council and its staff have managed to divert all the anger and disappointment at the parlous state of the council's finances onto anybody and everybody but themselves.

That a panel of people who are essentially inexperienced in public administration has been able to highlight the obvious shortcomings in the council's planning and control is an indictment of those charged with managing community affairs.

Equally distressing is that the panel is being made the target of the wrath of those affected or potentially affected. Empty, negative statements and promises by the mayor and the general manager serve only to exacerbate rather than address the problems.

By their actions and words, they have demonstrated how little they have to offer in these circumstances beyond

empty rhetoric. Both came to office at the time when local government in the region was at its lowest ebb and there was an urgent need to restore confidence.

Their response to the situation which has developed on their watch must cause the community to wonder if we got it right.

**Peter Wolfe, Thirroul**

**Bragging claims empty**

As a former adviser to the Labor minister for roads, David Campbell, it is utterly laughable to see Ryan Park, member for Keira, bagging the current NSW government.

Ryan Park knows full well that, in his capacity, he and the minister did absolutely nothing for the road and transport networks in and around Wollongong.

It is easy to bag anyone but tougher to live up to your bragging of bringing

funding to Wollongong as member for Keira. Get some effort, like the member for Kiama, and do something.

**John Dorahy, Figtree**

**Wharfies not heroic**

The trade sanctions imposed on Japan in the late 1930s are widely accepted as a primary factor in pushing Japan into the air strike on Pearl Harbor.

The "heroic" wharfies lauded on the front page of the *Illawarra Mercury* 16/11 also refused to load ships supplying our troops on the Kokoda track, because their leader Stalin had a non-aggression pact with Adolf Hitler.

My dad remembers his battalion (not long back from Crete) fixing bayonets and forcing the commies, crims and shirkers (who comprised most of our waterside workers) to load their ship bound for Port Moresby.

These guys aren't heroes.

**Andrew Humphreys, Narrawallee**

**Letters to the Editor**

Email: letters@illawarramercury.com.au  
 Online: illawarramercury.com.au

Letters should be no more than 200 words and should be typed or clearly written. All letters need an address and business hours phone number for verification. By submitting your letter to us for publication you agree that we may edit the letter for legal, space or other reasonable reasons and that the letter may be published in the newspaper, on our website or in other media.

### From the web

**Concern backing**

Peter Cannon speaks the truth! I myself am close friends with a captain of a fire brigade and he has confirmed Peter Cannon's concerns. Conservationists add to the deaths and destruction of bushfires with their green tape and climate-change hoops they make firefighters jump through.

**Smokey the Bear**

**Paying for neglect**

Labor and the Greens had reduced NSW's hazard reduction burns to below 3 per cent (as low as 1 per cent in other areas) instead of the recommended 5 per cent. So instead of putting some money towards hazard reduction, we are paying for all the damage their neglect has caused.

**Alan**

**Claims don't add up**

Can you point out which green groups are against controlled hazard-reduction burns? Why would green groups want bushfires to be more prevalent - that destroys wildlife and trees.

**Nathan Lee**

**Denialist worry**

Come on, *Illawarra Mercury* and follow the stance of the increasing number of newspapers that no longer publish the ill-informed or downright dishonest comments that deny the reality of climate change. It is news that a representative of firefighters is a climate denialist, very concerning news.

**Gongite**

**Good for the goose**

Why do state and federal government departments have the right to build office blocks, police stations and hospitals etc without having to provide parking spaces to the same ratio as a private developer.

**Local thinker**

**Delays cost dearly**

It is apparent that the lengthy delays in obtaining development consent has cost [Gujarat NRE] dearly. It ran out of money. The green movement will not be satisfied until all mining and manufacturing industry is closed down.

**Alan**



### On the street

Would you travel to Sydney to watch the Dragons now the club has slashed the number of Wollongong games to four?



**Shayna Honey, West Wollongong**  
Probably not. If it's not close to public transport, I can't get there. I can't drive yet.

**Steve Bott, Albion Park**  
I wouldn't, it's got to be down here. I don't think enough games are played here. We lost our identity when the Steelers merged.

**Thomas Hetet, Berkeley**  
Yeah probably, if they're free tickets. You can get out of the house.

**Todd Burns, Farmborough Heights**  
No I wouldn't, it's too much hassle and the traffic is really heavy. I'm really annoyed at that, I like watching the games down here.

**ONLINE POLL**  
Should there be once-monthly markets at Thirroul Beach?

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### YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Are you happy travelling to Sydney to watch the Dragons play an NRL game?





# your say

## Library users brushed aside

I hope that the council does not proceed with the closure of Unanderra Library. I know that there are two libraries fairly close by, at Dapto and Warrawong, but that does not help the residents of Unanderra who haven't got a car.

There is, of course, the railway station where they could catch a train to other libraries, but once again, Unanderra residents have to do it hard by climbing the railway steps. For many older residents, this is not possible. And there is no lift to help them. It seems that Unanderra and its residents are easily brushed aside.

My wife and I have just moved here from Woonona. Council closed the Bulli Library but had the good grace, and the sense, to build the beautiful Thirroul Library. If Unanderra must be closed, then why not build another library?

You only need to see the crowds who pack into Woolworths at Unanderra every day to know that this is a thriving suburb with a growing population.

While Unanderra Library is old, it has all the services needed, plus very friendly staff who will order books in for borrowers if necessary. For many, a visit to the library is a social outing. They talk to the librarians and other borrowers. They read the papers, use the computers – they need their local library.

**Bill Condon, Cordeaux Heights**

### Pensions cut for boats

Well, Tony Abbott is now giving the Sri Lankan government a couple of patrol boats – after we spent \$2 million refurbishing them.

Seeing he lost the plot with the Indonesian government, "Promises Promises Tony" may as well try and get help from Sri Lanka to stop the flow from their shores.

But where will he get this money from?

Oh yes, the disability pensioners, that's right, he is cutting their benefits

and getting them back to work. Good one Tony, another lost promise.

**Lawrence Wren, Fairy Meadow**

### Player unprofessional

The recent nightclub incident involving an Australian Test rugby league player in England highlights that NRL players are not true professionals. How can a player perform at their best and represent their country in an acceptable way when they are out nightclubbing at 2am? Don't they realise loss of sleep and alcohol are key factors in reducing fitness, strength, skills and mental capacity? Not to mention being a target for locals to have a go at!

**Brian, Gwynneville**

### Union action no help

Wollongong council is losing money. So what does the union do to help ... they call a strike. What a joke. Wouldn't you think by now unions

would think outside the square and realise they have to contribute to the thinktank if they want to help their members ... not just insist we continue to lose money so they can keep their members employed.

**Brian Hastings, Wollongong**

### Bouquet for hospital

I know there is often a lot of negative press in relation to our healthcare system but I wanted to express my profound gratitude for the amazing care provided to my husband recently in the neurology unit of Wollongong Hospital after he had a brain haemorrhage.

The doctors and nursing staff were so hard working and dedicated and treated the patients with such humanity and dignity I was constantly amazed by them.

We are so lucky to live in a country where such care is provided.

**Julie Patterson, Gerringong**

### Letters to the Editor

Email: letters@illawarramercury.com.au  
Online: illawarramercury.com.au

Letters should be no more than 200 words and should be typed or clearly written. All letters need an address and business hours phone number for verification.

By submitting your letter to us for publication you agree that we may edit the letter for legal, space or other reasonable reasons and that the letter may be published in the newspaper, on our website or in other media.

### From the web

#### Stadium site wasted

The football and basketball stadium is built on a spectacular piece of beach frontage, away from major transport and car parking. This type of facility would be best built in an industrial area close to transport. The land could be better utilised as a hub for tourism rather than a facility used on limited occasions.

**Vision**

#### Game deserves fate

This is a great example of why AFL is gradually taking over in our region. That code actively encourages our young people to play the game and when we see such a snub by the Dragons and the spin attempted by Mr Doust, it isn't hard to understand why the code will gradually diminish down here. Just look at the attendances of A-League football around the country and you will see the future of sport in this country.

**Stephen**

#### Dragons in trouble

I think the cut in games in Wollongong is more about the club struggling financially and ANZ Stadium offering a more financially viable option. Same reason why the Tigers, Dogs and Souths all play out of ANZ. I love the Dragons playing out of Wollongong and this cut is extremely disappointing but it's becoming pretty obvious (asking the NRL for a cash advance) the club can't keep going the way it currently is.

**Loves the Dragons in Wollongong but**

#### Gong beats ANZ

If you put decent games on in Wollongong, and on a Saturday or Sunday afternoon, the crowds would be 15,000-plus per game. More than you would get at ANZ, for example, where there would be little if any atmosphere!

**Unhappy Steeler**

#### Keep Coalcliff pool

Coalcliff Pool is a great pool. I've been going there for years and it's absolutely ridiculous that this supposed "citizens panel" would propose any cuts to this or anything else at Coalcliff. Why don't they recommend the council increases its debt level?

**Alan Bond**



### On the street

Is it ever OK to snoop through your partner's things?



**Claire Colvin, Fairy Meadow**  
No, because you shouldn't have anything to hide.



**Ashley Zalunardo, Fairy Meadow**  
No, because you should have a trusting relationship and be honest with each other.



**Tanya Scales, Woonona**  
Absolutely not, but I've done it heaps of times.



**Andrew Wiseman, North Wollongong**  
No, you should be able to trust them, otherwise there's no point.

**ONLINE POLL**  
Do you spend too much money playing poker machines?

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### YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Should there be once-monthly markets at Thirroul Beach?





# your say

## Effort should be applauded

After attending the Regional Development Australia - Illawarra Leaders Summit last week, all I can say is wow!

What a fabulous effort to unite the business, academia and governmental departments together for one cause.

The FDA and all the attendees are to be congratulated.

I totally agree with Eddy De Gabriele's final comment on the highest priority: the Maldon-Dombarton rail line.

If Mount Ousley is closed for some reason like a landslide or suffers the fate of Mount Keira Road, our industries are disadvantaged without other options for moving products and materials in and out of the area.

As a previous owner of manufacturing plants, I must say that the Illawarra would not be a viable consideration for opening a new factory because they do not have a proper airport with air-freight services, and if the one artery in and out of the area were closed off to large trucks to move

my product and receive materials for manufacture, my business would suffer.

Until the infrastructure is greatly improved, I do not see how we can attract new industry to our area.

So, I ask you, how can we, as a community, help to move forward? How can you or I, as individuals, help?

P Klohs, Gwynneville

### Look after our own

Australia has just cause to spy. Indonesia has blatantly said they are people smuggling by admitting they allow people to come into their country to get to Australia and to buy boats to get to Australia.

Indonesia says they can do what they like in their country so what is their problem with Australia doing what it needs to keep our country safe?

We should also be deporting unsavoury Middle Eastern problem-makers and their families who are

blatantly disrespecting our way of life yet they leave their decrepit country and want to change ours.

It is about time Australia looks after its citizens.

Citizens meaning home-grown people and people who come and adopt our way of life.

Judith Harrington, Warilla

### Sad waste of money

I just read that the Dragons have signed a deal to play more games away from Wollongong and Kogarah.

Wollongong stadium looks better than a bowling green and I'm sure Kogarah is the same.

What a waste, after money was spent redeveloping the stadium and shops underneath.

What a slap in the face for the ground staff.

Go the Cutters. The Steelers are dead.

E O'Sullivan, Wollongong

### Outrageous talk

The latest comments by Lord Mayor Gordon Bradbery regarding the ocean reclaiming three or more rock pools are outrageous.

What pools does he have in mind? As pointed out by Mr Conacher in the Illawarra Mercury (November 19), many pools come under a heritage listing.

A simple Google of Wollongong Heritage Council reveals North Beach Precinct and Belmore Basin Heritage Conservation Area including the Gentlemen's, Ladies' and Nuns' Baths are heritage listed. The citizens panel is regarded as a voice of the people.

Like you Mr Bradbery, they are ill-informed and ignorant of the history surrounding not only Wollongong but the entire Illawarra region.

I am sure that other winter swim clubs will not be appreciative of these comments.

Mark Jamieson, Gwynneville

### Letters to the Editor

Email: letters@illawarramercury.com.au  
Online: illawarramercury.com.au

Letters should be no more than 200 words and should be typed or clearly written. All letters need an address and business hours phone number for verification.

By submitting your letter to us for publication you agree that we may edit the letter for legal, space or other reasonable reasons and that the letter may be published in the newspaper, on our website or in other media.

### From the web

#### Adding up losses

The amount lost by gamblers is approx \$46.2 million (\$28m+\$6m+\$9m+\$1.5m+\$1.7m) for the quarter, of which the government gets around \$8.5 million in taxes. With the population of 292,190, this equates to approximately \$158 per person. I am not defending the club industry but turnover is not what people have lost, it is the amount played. The profit is what has been lost.

Exaggerated

#### Tough to swallow

The funny thing is that clubs actually think they are not a problem or that saying 0.4 is only a couple of people. Cheap meals, nice! People lose their home so I get a schnitzel for \$9.

1969

#### Lobby similarities

The alcohol and clubs lobby in Australia reminds me of the gun lobby in America. Through the mass of destroyed lives, they claim it isn't their fault!

Albervin

#### Doomed to failure

The NBN was doomed because of overspending and the rollouts only happening where there is already good internet speeds.

Jim

#### Up with the times

My copper wire is over 50 years old, buried in an old Postmaster-General's pit two metres into the ground that fills with water when it rains. I'd like to have something new for the 21st century.

Alan Bond

#### Car safety increase

The government always tries to link the reduced road toll to the increase in speed cameras but no-one wants to suggest that the standard of safety features of cars has increased dramatically over recent years and this may also contribute to a lower toll.

PJ

#### Fair share of work

Casual teachers should be "attached" to three or four schools only. Then used in rotation in order to share the small amount of work fairly.

Anita



### On the street

Do you gamble often?



**Bev Ratcliffe, Figtree**  
No, I'm a Christian woman and I don't believe in gambling.



**Lynn Healey, Dapto**  
No, it doesn't do anything for me. I just don't enjoy it.



**Beryl Ball, Fernhill**  
I play Lotto every week with my three daughters, but that's it.



**Anna Vreman, Woonona**  
No, I don't have interest in it.

**ONLINE POLL**  
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### YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Do you spend too much money playing the poker machines?







**Wollongong Lord Mayor Gordon Bradbery explains the need for a review of council finances**

Over the past two years almost half of the councils across NSW have applied for or flagged that a rate rise is needed to secure the future of their infrastructure.

This illustrates Wollongong City Council is not alone in needing to increase the money we put into maintaining the large number of local roads, footpaths and other community facilities, many built between the 1950s and 1980s.

Wollongong has taken a different approach to increasing the money we put into maintaining our ageing roads, footpaths and buildings. Where most other councils' attention has focused on a rate rise, we're working with the community to look at options available to make savings. I want our community's involvement in developing the policy that will guide our approach.

What people need to understand is that if we don't change the way we're doing things we'll lose services anyway. And we won't have control over what we lose, or when we lose it. It may be a rock pool in a storm, or another section of road due to landslip.

This isn't an easy problem to solve. This challenge has been reflected in the lively debate in

the community in recent weeks. We've only got three levers to play with. These are adjusting services, efficiencies and revenue (ie rates).

I know we're not going to be able to make everyone happy. Any solution will involve a careful balancing act between those who don't want a rate rise, and those who might be willing to pay more to maintain services. There's also a conflict between those who believe Council needs to operate with fewer staff and those who see Council has a key role as a major employer.

Recently we put together a randomly selected panel of everyday citizens to come up with suggestions which we then put out for feedback. What is heartening is the high level of involvement with approximately 500 submissions received as part of this initial round of engagement and direction setting.

Wollongong is in a better position than many. Our finances were recently assessed by the state government as being 'moderate' and 'stable'. This means that while our short-term budget is in a good condition we aren't able to put enough money into maintaining our assets

(valued at \$2.3 billion).

Over the past five years, Council has been coming to grips with the long-term problem of maintaining our ageing infrastructure. Council has found over \$20 million of savings which it reinvested into infrastructure renewal. Council's internal capacity to fund renewals has increased 400 per cent since 2006. However, it's not enough. We're still losing significant assets faster than we can replace them. Mount Keira Road and the kiosk at the summit are examples of this.

I know there has been a lot of concern in the community over potential reductions or loss of Council-provided services. Understanding what the community values is key to developing a plan for the future. The work currently being developed by Council and the community on our long-term finances is important to secure future services for the next generation. Over the next seven months there will be more opportunities for you to have your say. I know it's a difficult process - if it was easy we'd have done it already.

# Panel response vigorous

KATE MCILLWAIN

HUNDREDS of emails, letters and online submissions have been lodged in response to Wollongong City Council's controversial citizens panel, despite concerns the two-week consultation period would not give residents enough time to comment.

The council received a total of 624 submissions, including 333 emails and letters and 291 online survey responses.

It was also sent three petitions and there were 52 comments made on the online discussion forum.

This information will now be collated by council staff before it is considered by councillors at the December 9 meeting.

The report will include a number of financial sustainability options for councillors to choose from, which will then go out for community feedback from mid-December to early 2014.

Although the official submission period ended on Wednesday, Labor councillor Ann Martin encouraged her constituents to continue raising their concerns

over the next few weeks.

"From my perspective, I'm going to be talking to more people and listening to what they have to say, as well as talking to my councillor colleagues of all colours," she said.

"I'm also testing my own views because I'm a little bit recalcitrant on some of the recommendations, I don't support a lot of them."

Cr Martin said it had been "fantastic" to see so many residents fired up over the citizens panel recommendations because it indicated their passion for certain services and council functions.

Liberal councillor Leigh Colacino said councillors had already met to review the submissions and were working through different options before the December 9 meeting.

He did not want to discuss any specific measures or panel recommendations before the meeting, but did indicate strong support for protecting ocean rock pools, beach patrols and seaside tourism attractions from cuts.

"For me, as a person on the

board of Destination Wollongong and as a councillor who has pushed the tourism potential of Wollongong from day one, I recognise those pools as a very iconic part of our tourism make-up and residential make-up, as is our whole beach system," he said.

"That is something we have to treasure and nurture, and that whole make-up, which includes the swimming pools and the safety of people who are at the beach, is recognised as being really important."

Independent councillor Vicki Curran said residents in her ward had mostly raised concerns about recommendations to slash community, cultural and youth services.

Cr Curran also said she wanted the council to employ an independent financial consultant to review its finances before any decisions were made, but was not hopeful her request would be acted on.

She encouraged residents to continue calling and emailing councillors even though the official council consultation period had closed.

## FROM THE WEB

### A sample of reader comments on the citizens panel recommendations:

If council goes ahead with the cuts of our essential services and increases rates as suggested by the community group/marketing group, whatever you want to call them, there will be an enormous backlash never seen before in Wollongong. Enough is enough. We will not tolerate this sort of mismanagement.

**Enough is enough**

For a start council could sell off huge tracts of parkland that are unused. That alone will create revenue and free up money by not having to mow huge areas of land that doesn't get used enough to justify the maintenance costs. Don't get rid of parks altogether,

but scale the larger ones down to manageable levels.

**Jim**

Leave council as it is. We need frontline services maintained and increased, not cut like this panel would like to see. The elected councillors are elected to make decisions and represent ratepayers in their wards. Why are they hiding behind this panel?

**Magic**

How does outsourcing staff save money? Why not better utilise staff or structure pay so it costs the same as outsourcing? If a private company can do the job cheaper and still make a profit off ratepayers, then how come council can't do it?

**ratepayer**

Personally, I like the idea of panels and discussions for different ideas.

**Goin north**

# Abuse cases 'could have financially ruined diocese'

IF the dozens of people who were abused at a Church of England home had sued successfully it would have been financial ruin for the NSW diocese of Grafton, a lawyer has told a national inquiry into child abuse.

Peter Roland, former lawyer for the diocese, is being grilled at the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse on why, in 2006 and 2007, traumatised survivors of the North

Coast Children's Home (NCCH) in Lismore were told the Church had no liability.

The commission has heard at one stage a letter to 41 victims mentioned a modest ex-gratia payment for "their inconvenience in these matters".

At the request of commission chair Justice Peter McClellan, documents showing how much money was spent by the diocese on lawyers were produced, showing

billings of \$27,000 and \$11,000.

One bill gave an estimated figure of \$62,000 if the case went to court.

The commission heard Mr Roland's firm had received a dossier of 450 documents detailing emotional, sexual and physical abuse of former residents at the home, but was instructed by the diocese that the Anglican Church had never been vested with care, control and management of the home.

Mr Roland maintained that to this day he still thought this was the position.

He said the diocese had decided "not to accept legal liability but would accept moral liability".

At the behest of Justice McClellan, the 1951 constitution of the NCCH was produced.

It showed that trustees were charged with providing a home in connection with the Church of England.

The rector of St Andrew's Church, which adjoined the home, was president and chair of the executive committee, two-thirds of the members were Church of England and the Grafton Bishop could appoint four people.

Mr Roland said: "My interpretation was that management and control was by an independent group."

Justice McClellan responded: "It is hard to sustain that now?"



**Advertiser** NEWS



Message: Karen Ryan (left) and Tennille Shelley apply some sunscreen to Jay Allen. Shannon Noll will perform at Port Kembla this Friday. Picture: CHRISTOPHER CHAN

## Singing for sun safety

By ANTONY FIELD

Jay Allen, Tennille Shelley and Karen Ryan know the terrible consequences of skin cancer.

Mr Allen, the community co-ordinator for Melanoma Institute Australia, was diagnosed with stage 3 melanoma in February 2008. He had a mole on his ankle which spread to his lymph nodes.

"That's what ignited my passion to give back and try and do whatever I can," the Tahmoor resident and ex-truck driver said.

"I'm lucky - I survived. I'll be six years cancer-free next February. I want to support

awareness and help raise funds for a cure."

Ms Shelley, of Kiama, and family friend Ms Ryan, of Mt Kembla, attend the Illawarra Melanoma Support Group in Warrawong.

Ms Shelley's older sister, Carrine Weston, a Windang mother of three, died from melanoma aged 40 in February 2012.

The sisters and Mr Allen formed the Illawarra support group in Port Kembla 2009.

"It was absolutely devastating [to lose my sister]. She was very ill for three years," Ms Shelley said.

"Look after your skin as well your kids'.

"Get your skin checked."

Singer Shannon Noll will perform live at Port Kembla Golf Club this Friday to support melanoma research and awareness. The support acts are Mick and Macca, Backtrax and Mick on Wheels.

"Shannon is doing it to help us out. He was touched by Carrine's story," Mr Allen said.

Tickets cost \$70. The concert starts at 6.30pm. All proceeds go to the Melanoma Institute Australia for research.

■ Tickets, information: 4274 1159 or at the golf club. Details: Visit [www.melanoma.org.au](http://www.melanoma.org.au)

## Residents slam report's findings

By ANTONY FIELD

A report recommending a 7.5 per cent rate rise and widespread service cuts in Wollongong has attracted 624 public submissions.

The controversial seven-page report was compiled by a 34-member citizens panel. It has generated protests and three petitions from residents.

Among the panel's recommendations are the closure of Unanderra Library and Lakeside Leisure Centre, the closure of some ocean rock

pools, a reduction in surf patrols and pool season, and an extension of metered parking.

Submissions on the report closed last Wednesday.

Save Our Services Wollongong's submission called on Wollongong City Council not to make any decision based on the panel's recommendations.

Group convenor Stephen Spencer described the report as fundamentally flawed and said it should be rejected.

He wants proper community consultation.

"Did the panel consult with the users of local community facilities, libraries, leisure centres, parks, playgrounds, sports fields, pools before recommending taking their facilities away from them or charging more for them?" Mr Spencer asked.

Councillors will discuss a report on the council's infrastructure challenge at a meeting on December 9.

They will provide another chance for public feedback from mid-December to early 2014.

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# your say

## Leisure centre in regular use

To consider closing the Lakeside Leisure Centre goes against all the things that local government should stand for.

The leisure centre has an excellent gymnasium, squash courts and tennis courts, as well as a popular physiotherapist business. There are in excess of 800 members, not to mention the many competition tennis and squash players who regularly use Lakeside.

Lord Mayor Bradbery, with all the talk in the news of how much money obesity-related health issues are costing the taxpayer, tell me how this decision will benefit your constituents.

**Mitchell Jones, OHS Support Co-ordinator NSW, WDS Mining**

### Sledging not justified

I don't mind a bit of good-natured sledging if it's amusing but some reported comments attributed to some of our Australian cricketers don't fall into that category.

As a person who has played and enjoyed various sports throughout my lifetime, I was taught to "win modestly and lose graciously". I still subscribe to this maxim.

The sledging cannot be justified on the grounds that "they do it too". I would much prefer to be able to take pride in our own team's behaviour than witness a race to the bottom.

**John Martin, Woonona**

### No members' benefits

As far as I'm concerned, the members are the most important part of the St George Illawarra club. No-one at games means no club.

I cannot see how the members can benefit from this new strategy. The whole idea of having games at local grounds is to bring the game to the people.

Now, with the extra travel, I think you'll find a lot of people dropping out, as it's a large enough cost to get to the venues

now without having to go further afield. When I was growing up, a home-ground advantage meant a start in any game. Did the Dragons hierarchy think of this or do they only think of the monetary gain? The opposition teams must be rubbing their hands playing a team twice at their own home ground. And if the team continues losing, you'll find again the numbers at games will fall off.

If Mr Doust is worried about the club, he can always reduce his salary to help. Did he, or did he not sign a multi-year agreement with WIN Stadium for six games a season?

**Dennis Russell, Oak Flats**

trailer for general rubbish and \$22 for green, and Whytes Gully waste depot, which charges \$32 per 100 kilograms for a ute/trailer of general rubbish and \$9.50 for green, I ask the question are our councils better off spending money on aerial surveillance and advertising or would that money be put to better use reducing fees so that more people will actually use these services?

**T. Pigner, Shellharbour**

### Nothing removed

There are two sides to this story. There are those disgraceful citizens who choose to pollute, but there is also the Wollongong City Council that has rarely removed illegally dumped rubbish.

There is a site south of Robertson's Lookout that has had illegally dumped cars there for years. Nothing has ever been removed.

Taking photos will not do anything.

**David Harmer, Keiraville**

### Letters to the Editor

Email: letters@illawarramercury.com.au  
Online: illawarramercury.com.au

Letters should be no more than 200 words and should be typed or clearly written. All letters need an address and business hours phone number for verification. By submitting your letter to us for publication you agree that we may edit the letter for legal, space or other reasonable reasons and that the letter may be published in the newspaper, on our website or in other media.

### From the web

#### Charges shameful

With tipping fees like that, you can't blame people for illegal dumping. Just because the fees are on par with some other councils doesn't make it justifiable. It's nothing more than shameful extortion.

**Michael**

#### Fees drive dumping

If they reduced the tip fees, and stopped closing tips, more people would happily pay the fees. Until they do, more and more rubbish will continue to be dumped.

**Mark M**

#### Outrageous price

I had an old lounge and half a 6x6 trailer of green waste. \$63. Go figure. They hit me with the business and commercial fee even though my kids were in the car with me. Some business!

**Craig**

#### Too long to wait

If school kids miss the morning southbound train to Bulli, the next train that stops isn't for another hour and half. If the parent works or is without a car, that's a long potentially dangerous time for a 12-13 year old to wait on a platform.

**Natasha**

#### Pupils miss out

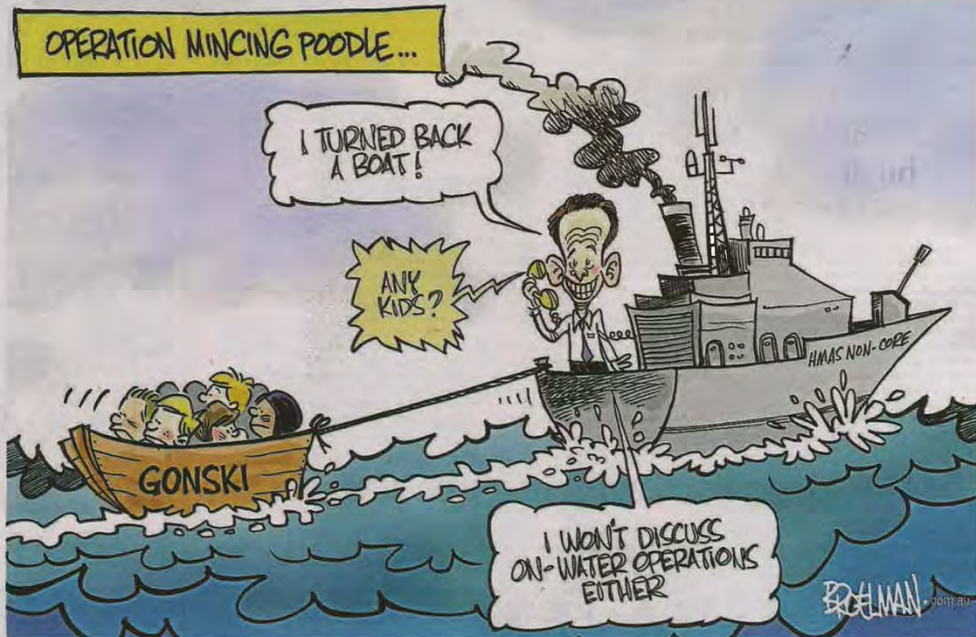
How on earth did a timetable that potentially puts school children at risk get approved? You have raised a very valid point, Natasha. More thought on how timetable changes may impact the community is certainly required, particularly if that change may impact on young children who rely on public transport!

**Bob**

#### Closure strategy

Hasn't anyone realised the devious logic of our state government? Because, if all northern suburb commuters now drive to Thirroul, for example - I've noticed the car parking has also become very congested at North Wollongong station - and don't use their local stations any more, then the government will have an excuse to close them!

**Stephen Spencer**



### On the street

#### What could revitalise Wollongong?



**Lou Padmore, Thirroul**  
Better shopping, and more festivals and events like food markets.



**John Bakonic, Wollongong**  
Open Stuart Park to more activities, like camping.



**Dorothy Bakonic, Wollongong**  
More restaurants along the beach.



**Elliot Smith, Wollongong**  
Fixing up the upper half of Crown Street. All the buildings are old and unused; there needs to be more activity up that end.

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Should the government stick with the Gonski school funding model?





# Council projects backlog

KATE McILWAIN

WOLLONGONG City Council completed just 2 per cent of its yearly goals in the first three months of the financial year.

According to the draft quarterly review statement for September, tabled at this week's meeting, the council was on track to deliver 87 per cent of its annual projects by the end of the year.

However, only 2 per cent of the 299 "deliverables" set down for 2012-13 had been completed in the first quarter. Deliverables include capital works projects, maintenance programs, community engagement, waste removal, festivals and staff performance measures.

Six per cent of projects were not yet scheduled to commence, 1 per cent had been deferred and 4 per

cent had been delayed, the review document said.

Liberal councillor Michelle Blicavs said she would like to see the council complete more than 2 per cent of its goals each quarter.

"I'd like to see 25 per cent completed at the end of the first quarter and by the end of December, I'd like to see 50 per cent completed," she told Monday's meeting.

"[But] our annual plan contains almost 300 deliverables, so this council actually has quite a large task ahead of it and 87 per cent of those are on track, which is very exciting."

Among the 14 goals listed as being delayed or deferred are the West Dapto Home Assistance program, which has been held up by legal issues, as well as the extension of Lake Illawarra cycleway.

## Statistics from June - September 2013

- Capital works budget spent - \$11.2 million of \$78.8 million
- Landfill gas combusted - 6947 cubic metres
- Visits to the Botanic Gardens - 90,802
- Tonnes of rubbish collected - 14.8 tonnes
- Licensed car parks occupied - 100 per cent
- Tourist cabins occupancy - 41 per cent
- Library e-loans - 10,457
- Sick leave days - 6.4 days per person per annum
- Pool visits - 70,165
- Visits at beaches - 34,970

The cancelled Gran Fondo cycling festival and the missing link of the Blue Mile - which failed to attract Regional Development Australia funding - were highlighted as being at "significant risk" of being achieved.

Despite these issues, councillors were positive when receiving the quarterly review.

Labor councillor David Brown said the document gave him a chance to "step back and see what we actually have achieved", while his counterpart, Ann Martin, said

it showed the public that councillors were "not the walking dead". Cr Martin said the quarterly results were particularly important in light of the council's financial sustainability review and citizens panel.

"I think there's a sense that all of a sudden we woke up in the morning and went 'Oh my god we've got to do X, Y, and Z' and that we've had no oversight, don't watch what's going on and have never seen a management plan in our life," she said.

"I just want to make the point that we are awake, we're reading our documents and...we're not the walking dead, as I think some people think we are."

Cr Chris Connor echoed these comments, saying the council was achieving its goals in many areas.



Exciting time: Five-year-old Keely Boyle graduates today from the Wollongong branch of The Shepherd Centre in Wollongong. Picture: ADAM McLEAN

## Ear implants help Keely communicate with confidence

KATE WALSH

KEELY Boyle's first action each morning is to put on her white and orange cochlear implants.

The five-year-old was diagnosed with Large Vestibular Aqueduct Syndrome, which causes progressive hearing loss, when she was 15 months old and over time became profoundly deaf.

She wore hearing aids until September last year, when she was fitted with the implants. Whereas hearing aids amplify sound,

cochlear implants bypass the damaged area to stimulate the hair cells on the cochlea, the hearing component of the inner ear.

Although it was a tough decision to make, her mother Kate said the changes she and her husband Stuart had noticed in Keely over the past year proved it was worth it.

"Her confidence is better because she can communicate more with other people."

"Her comprehension has increased and she has more access to sounds now that she has the

implants," Mrs Boyle said.

Today Keely joins nearly 30 other children in Sydney to graduate from The Shepherd Centre, an organisation that teaches deaf and hearing-impaired children to listen and speak.

She has been attending the Wollongong branch of the centre for more than three years, working with the centre's therapists.

Before her implant was fitted, Keely had auditory-verbal therapy with a centre therapist once a week, but this has since dropped

back to fortnightly.

Mrs Boyle said Keely wouldn't have made the progress she had without the centre's help.

"I don't think we would be where we are without The Shepherd Centre," she said.

Next year Keely will join her big sister Aaliyah at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School at Bulli, where she will receive itinerant support in the classroom.

"She's so excited, she's ready to be a big girl like everyone else," Mrs Boyle said.



Audience: Aung San Suu Kyi with PM Tony Abbott. Picture: REUTERS

## Suu Kyi aspires to be 'honest politician'

AUNG San Suu Kyi is a Nobel Peace Prize recipient who spent long years under house arrest in the name of democracy - but don't call her an icon.

"Let me assure you, I'm no saint. I look upon myself as a politician, not as an icon," the Myanmar opposition parliamentarian told an audience in Sydney yesterday.

The National League for Democracy leader told a Lowy Institute audience she knew those in her line of work did not always get a good rap.

"Politicians are politicians, but I do believe that there is such a thing as an honest politician and I aspire to that," she said.

Her plan for Myanmar: "Unity."

Myanmar has only recently allowed elections and has eased its brutal military regime.

But Ms Suu Kyi says it has a long way to go before it reaches democracy.

She says violence has no place in political negotiations, though she does "believe in confrontation - across the table".

## ALP calls for speed on rail bid

FEDERAL Labor frontbencher Anthony Albanese will ask Parliament to push ahead with plans for a high-speed rail network after slamming the government's lack of support for public transport.

The Grayndler MP strongly advocated a Brisbane to Melbourne line - via Sydney, with a Canberra branch - which Labor had budgeted at \$114 billion to be operational by 2065 and carry 84 million people a year.

But the Coalition has scrapped an advisory group commissioned to advise on the project.

"If we don't start planning now for the possibility of high-speed rail, it will never happen," Mr Albanese told an AusRAIL conference yesterday.

He plans to introduce a bill requiring the Commonwealth to immediately begin work on securing a high-speed rail corridor.

The bill would include the establishment of a high-speed rail authority made up of federal, state and industry stakeholders.

Infrastructure Minister Warren Truss addressed the same forum and instead committed the government to deliver a fast-tracked completion of the inland rail project, largely used for freight.

"This announcement builds on my commitment during the election campaign to provide federal funding of \$300 million to get the project back on track," Mr Truss said, adding that an implementation group would be created to ensure deadlines are met.

He said the Brisbane-Melbourne line, passing multiple regional centres, with coastal branches, would boost "national productivity by linking eastern production zones".

Mr Albanese said Australia's public transport system, including urban rail, has been shunned by the Coalition.

"The modern infrastructure agenda is already losing steam under the new government," he said. AAP



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**Rested Clarke is fighting fit**

SPORT



## Is it a bird, is it a plane ...

"The Other Superman"  
Paul Nunnari performs high above Crown Street Mall yesterday.  
REPORT: P6  
Picture: SYLVIA LIBER



# Three years of PAIN

## Rates, fees up, services cut

WOLLONGONG residents face a tough choice between a costly rate rise as high as 25 per cent or deep cuts to services and council jobs.

In four budget scenarios released yesterday, Wollongong City Council staff have come up with a combination of service cuts, efficiencies and rate rises to save the organisation \$21 million a year for the next 10 years.

At one extreme is a rate hike of 25.2 per cent over the next three years; at the other end a slash-and-burn plan to close pools, parks and playgrounds and cut up to a fifth of the council's staff.

The options emerged from a report by the council's much maligned citizens panel,

which was widely rejected by hundreds of community members.

Councillors will look at the options at their meeting on Monday night and will decide which ones will be put to the community for further feedback.

Lord Mayor Gordon Bradbery admitted yesterday he was in a lose-lose situation no matter which option was eventually adopted.

"I haven't got a hope of winning here, I will make that very clear, but this council has to be responsible," he said.

"Either we find some money from somewhere by cutting ... and making efficiencies, or we have a rate increase."

**MORE REPORTS: PAGE 4**

PHOTO: GUY



# No rate rise may lead to closures, cuts to jobs

KATE McILWAIN

WOLLONGONG residents could be hit with a rate rise of more than 25 per cent over the next three years, under one of four budget scenarios council staff disclosed yesterday.

In the latest step in Wollongong City Council's deeply unpopular financial sustainability review, staff have developed four proposed combinations of service cuts, efficiencies and rate rises to help the organisation free up an extra \$21 million a year.

Councillors will be asked which options to put on public exhibition at Monday's meeting, with staff recommending just three of the four be presented.

They said the fourth scenario - in which there is no rate rise above inflation - should not be considered.

In addition to rock pool and crematorium closures, parking fee hikes and outsourcing of council jobs suggested by the controversial citizens panel, staff said a budget without a rate rise would require much deeper service and job cuts

to save \$14 million a year.

Measures would include the sale of 20 per cent of playgrounds and parks, the closure of Berkeley and Dapto pools, and an end to many cultural programs. Additionally, the council would need to shed more than 20 per cent of its staff, the report said.

The other three options include rate increases of between 16 and 25 per cent over three years, with proposed service reductions and efficiency measures decreasing as rates go up.

Despite the citizens panel being downplayed by the council as "just a conversation starter", it has a prominent role in the staff report, with all panel recommendations adopted under the first scenario.

The second scenario features higher rates than the panel proposed, but only half the service cuts and a much lower rise in fees and charges.

In the third scenario, residents would pay an extra \$16.5 million to the council through a rate rise but there would only be \$1 million in service cuts.

At the launch of the report, Lord Mayor Gordon Bradbery admitted he was in a lose-lose situation no matter which option was eventually adopted.

"I haven't got a hope of winning here, I will make that very clear, but this council has to be responsible," he said.

"I don't want us living in McMansions and having lousy roads and I don't want us being able to drive ... wonderful cars around our city but to be falling down potholes.

"Either we find some money from somewhere by cutting it ... and making efficiencies or we have a rate increase."

Once councillors vote which scenarios should go on public exhibition, residents can have their say on each option from December 11 to February 5.

Cr Bradbery said councillors would then be forced to decide which scenario was "most acceptable", because the council needed to notify the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) of its rate rise plans by February 24.

## COUNCIL OPTIONS TO FIND \$21 MILLION

	EFFICIENCY MEASURES	SERVICE REDUCTIONS	REVENUE INCREASES Fees & Charges	Rates
<b>Scenario 1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$3.5m low impact measures which do not affect staff agreements and service delivery</li> <li>\$3.5m high impact measures - outsource tourist parks, review Russell Vale Golf Course, integrate management at key facilities, change Employee Enterprise Agreement</li> </ul> = \$7m	Includes sale of Lakeside Leisure Centre, crematorium furnace, 10% of playgrounds, parks and community centres and reduction in ocean rock pools, pool season, street sweeping, cadet and apprenticeship program, events funding, urban renewal program, discontinuation of the Crown Street Façade Program. \$1m gained from extending life of footpaths           = \$4m	Increase in fees and charges for car parking, heated pools, fitness trainers, sports fields, community pools = \$1.6m	2.5% for each year for 3 years over and above 2.3% rate cap = \$8.4m
<b>Scenario 2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>\$3.5m low impact measures</li> <li>\$1.5m higher impact - outsource tourist parks, review Russell Vale Golf Course, some operational activities, reduce back office resourcing, integrate management at key facilities</li> </ul> = \$5m	Includes sale of Lakeside Leisure Centre, 10% playgrounds, parks and community centres, withdrawal from operation of crematorium furnace, discontinue Crown Street Façade Program. \$1m gained from extending life of footpaths           = \$2.3m	Increase in fees and charges for leasing child care facilities, car parking, heated pools, fitness trainers = \$370k	4% for each year for 3 years over and above 2.3% rate cap = \$13.4m
<b>Scenario 3</b>	\$3.5m low impact measures = \$3.5m	\$1m gained from extending life of footpaths = \$1m	To be reviewed as part of annual plan each year. = \$0	5% for each year for three years over and above the 2.3% rate cap = \$16.5m
<b>Scenario 4</b> (Recommended not to proceed)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outsource management of tourist parks and Russell Vale Golf Course</li> <li>Significant reduction back office resourcing</li> <li>Integrate management at key facilities</li> <li>Reduction in staff</li> <li>Move towards a user pay model of delivery</li> </ul> = \$7m	Everything in scenario 1 plus: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rationalise 20% of playgrounds, parks and community facilities</li> <li>Further closure of services like Berkeley and Dapto pools, patrolled beach seasons, and libraries</li> <li>Cessation of programs and activities such as community and cultural development, environmental awareness, education and promotion</li> </ul> = \$14m	No fee increases = \$0	No rise above 2.3 per cent rate cap = \$0

## UP, UP AND AWAY

How your rates could rise over three years

	Annual	Base	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Total (%)	Total (\$)
<b>Current</b>	2.30%	\$1000	\$1023	\$1053.69	\$1085.30	8.5%	\$85.30
<b>Option 1</b>	4.80%	\$1000	\$1048	\$1105.64	\$1166.45	16.6%	\$166.45
<b>Option 2</b>	6.30%	\$1000	\$1063	\$1137.41	\$1217.03	21.7%	\$217.03
<b>Option 3</b>	7.30%	\$1000	\$1073	\$1158.84	\$1251.55	25.2%	\$251.55

"These scenarios represent broad brushstrokes, but we have to settle on one approximately because that's how we will flag to IPART where we're going," he said.

"There might be space for some tweaking, but these are the broad categories we will have to vote upon and we have to come to a decision [about rates] by the end of February."

Further decisions about service cuts and efficiency measures will be made during the council's yearly planning process, which has to be finalised by June 23.

## Residents object to slicing services

KATE McILWAIN

RESIDENTS have widely rejected Wollongong City Council's citizens panel recommendations, voicing "significant opposition" to proposed service cuts and a "general dissatisfaction" with the panel process.

According to a council report released yesterday, the vast majority of people who responded to the panel's contentious plan to cut \$21 million out of the council's budget said they disagreed with service cuts.

The panel's proposal to close three of the city's nine rock pools was deeply unpopular, with 360 residents voicing their opposition, while 185 people said there should be no cuts to patrol hours at Coalcliff and



New dawn: Swimmers take an early morning dip in the Austinmer rock pools. The city council's citizens panel has recommended closure of three of the nine pools. Picture: KIRK GILMOUR

Scarborough beaches. Fifty-one people opposed Coalcliff hall's demolition and 49 people rejected Unanderra Library's closure.

The only two recommendations that were supported by

most respondents were plans to "reduce" the general manager and council executive and cut back overall staffing levels.

The community was also reluctant to cop a rate rise or

pay more in fees, with 151 people disagreeing with the panel's suggested rate hike.

However, 24 people said they would prefer to pay higher rates to maintain service levels, the report said.

## Group opposing cuts plans rally

GLEN HUMPHRIES

A COMMUNITY group opposing service cuts suggested by the citizens panel will make its opposition heard on Monday night.

Save Our Services Wollongong convener Stephen Spencer said the group would hold a rally outside the council building at 5pm, before the councillors met to discuss the next stage involving the citizens panel.

Late yesterday Wollongong City Council released the four options that councillors will consider putting on public exhibition at the Monday meeting.

The protest rally had been organised before the group knew precisely what councillors would be discussing on Monday night, but Mr Spencer did not see this as pre-emptive.

"We're only six days away from the council meeting," Mr Spencer said.

"At this stage all we know for sure is what the citizens panel is recommending. Various council officers and the lord mayor have put a fairly significant degree of emphasis and importance on the citizens panel and their recommendations.

"Rather than sit on our hands and wait to see what council is looking at on Monday night, we've decided to hold a rally to let council know quite clearly what our views are."



# your say

## A true community advocate

IN response to the article "Bellambi stalwart bids farewell after 33 years" about Robyn Alderton.

I remember when the new multi-service facility was built and Robyn was – and has obviously remained – very dedicated to assisting the community.

I was able to be inspired by Robyn and I obtained volunteer work in Corimal at a youth support service. I was fortunate to have regular contact with the Bellambi Community Centre and Robyn where I could assist within my capacity servicing the community.

Robyn has been so vocal, dedicated and a true trouper through changes in local demographics, community shifts and funding. I log on to the *Illawarra Mercury* every day at work and I was inspired yet again to see Robyn.

Although she may retire from the role, I am sure – and locals who know her will agree – she will maintain being an active community advocate, friend and mentor. I wish her all the very best.

People like Robyn are the true backbone of communities as diverse as Bellambi.

**Kathy Zarins, (formerly Bowkett), Pialba**

### Dion's remembered

Congratulations to the Dion family for their 80 years of service to the Illawarra (Bus company rolls on, *Mercury*, December 2).

In the 1950s and '60s I lived in Fairy Meadow just down the road from Dion's Fairy Meadow depot and regularly travelled on their buses.

In my youth, I was told by old timers that during the Great Depression in the 1930s, if you did not have the fare, Dion's would let you ride for free.

When I rode in their Leyland Comets the "cash register" was a brown paper bag with the top edge folded back to strengthen it. It sat on the motor cover beside the driver and the coins jangled

as the motor vibrated, especially at idle. Their buses are more modern now but I have great memories of their old technology.

**Chris Cartledge, Wollongong**

### Wasting our time

I am very pleased to see Lord Mayor Gordon Bradbery write and tell the long-suffering ratepayers of Wollongong exactly what is going on with our rubbish-disposal problem.

We do all the paying and the state's Waste Disposal Authority collects more cash than they do rubbish from our environment. The last thing that this out-of-touch government department is interested in is rubbish.

Wollongong council should turn round and tell the whole lazy lot to take over the entire collection and management of our city's waste and let our council get on with more worthwhile civic duties.

**Dave Cox, Corimal**

### Costly job agencies

The agencies paid by the government to help the unemployed get jobs are a complete failure and a waste of money. Their success record is appalling and the cost of their services is exorbitant.

For instance, for an initial interview with a client, the government pays them between \$200 and \$400, and the same amount for future regular appointments. If they claim for placing a client in a job, they receive an initial payment of between \$300 and \$500.

After six weeks, it's \$600 to \$1500, after three months \$1100 to \$2200 and after six months \$1500 to \$6000, if the client is still employed.

Employees of the job network agencies are also paid bonuses on the amount received from the government.

The whole system is open to cheating. Centrelink should be the agency for the unemployed, as it used to be.

**Tony Foot, Unanderra**

### Letters to the Editor

Email: letters@illawarramercury.com.au  
Online: illawarramercury.com.au

Letters should be no more than 200 words and should be typed or clearly written. All letters need an address and business hours phone number for verification. By submitting your letter to us for publication you agree that we may edit the letter for legal, space or other reasonable reasons and that the letter may be published in the newspaper, on our website or in other media.

### From the web

#### Cut bloating first

There is no justification for increasing our rates. Ignore the protests, most probably do not even pay rates anyway. The council is a highly inefficient and bloated organisation that needs to take some pain. Only then can a rate rise be considered.

**greeny**

#### Waste outrageous

I look at the money wasted on the overpriced Bathers Pavilion renovation, at that beautiful steel balustrade that is already rusting away; I walk in the mall and wonder how on earth could all that have cost \$20 million, how many pockets my land rates have stuffed. And now I'll be asked to pay more for our land rates and parking!

**just another reader**

#### Call election now

As suspected, the citizens panel was just a smokescreen to hide the actual agenda. New council election now and put all managerial positions up for grabs. This mob haven't lost the plot – they never had a plot!

**coalcliff**

#### Absolutely no rise

This is just a disgrace. There should be NO rate rises at all. The council needs to cut staff numbers first!

**Abs23**

#### Lockers just vandals

Put in a hidden cam [at Sublime Point] and charge these [love lock] idiots with vandalism. Simple.

**John**

#### Top end get in first

Is anyone actually surprised that the top end of [Gujarat NRI] has been paid vast sums of money while the masses at the coal face remain unpaid?

**CJ Thirroul**

#### Plenty of warning

Everyone knows that manufacturing has been declining for decades. Why haven't people taken the initiative and retrained rather than wait around like sitting ducks?

**Di**



### On the street

Would you rather pay higher rates or have fewer council services?



**Natasha Jeffrey, Kiama**  
Higher council rates, because things like libraries and that are important.



**Aimee Bright, Dapto**  
Higher rates, because it just makes sense to me.



**Wendy Jeffrey, Kiama**  
Higher rates, because the services are important.



**Jordan Kolaczyk, Dapto**  
Higher rates. We just bought a place and you get two clean-ups and even that wasn't enough.

#### ONLINE POLL

Should there be a rate rise to help Wollongong City Council free up an extra \$21 million a year?

**VOTE NOW**  
illawarramercury.com.au

#### PREVIOUS RESULTS

Would you attach a love padlock to a fence at Sublime Point?





# Rates slug on the way

KATE McILWAIN

A HEFTY rate rise appears inevitable for Wollongong residents, with several councillors supporting hikes of between 16 and 25 per cent over three years.

In four budget scenarios put forward by Wollongong City Council staff this week, three include a rate rise as well as some variation to services and efficiency measures.

The fourth has no increase above the statewide rate peg, however staff recommended this not be considered further because it would cause too much pain in service cuts and require the council to shed 20 per cent of its employees.

The Mercury spoke to six councillors about the plans yesterday, with all but one saying they would support a rate rise.

The lone voice against any rise was Liberal councillor Bede Crasnich, who said he thought an extra \$21 million a year should be found through service cuts, asset privatisation, outsourcing and changes to the council's industrial agreements.

"I want all four options out there for the community to see,

## ONLINE REACTION

"I'd rather a rate rise of a few \$ per week than see the rock pools, library, museum, parks close."  
- vomitcomit

"An interesting set of options ... the lord mayor talks about maintenance to assets and that is perfectly understandable.

However, where is the mention of reducing capital expenditure which translated means 'less money for monuments'? How about reducing capital projects

until the financial situation improves? No pain for anyone, except maybe those highly qualified council officers."  
- FILT

"No rate increase is justified at the moment. My pensioner mother has to borrow money to pay her rates as it is, council needs to stop listening to the noisy minority."  
- greeny

"What was the point of the

community consultation? Doesn't look as if WCC has taken feedback on board."  
- conomum

"What has increased council's costs by \$20 million? The budget was adequate under the administrators, now a couple of years later costs have blown out. How about justifying where the additional money is being spent council?"  
- Joel

and I'm in favour of option four - which is \$14 million in service cuts and \$7 million in efficiencies," Cr Crasnich said.

"And I'm of the opinion there are more efficiencies we could make like ... leasing assets or having subcontractors instead of hiring people ourselves."

Cr Crasnich's fellow Liberal representative Leigh Colacino was more cautious, saying he was "thinking about" putting all four scenarios on exhibition and that nothing was off the table.

"I don't want a rate rise - I already pay an incredible amount [in rates] now - but if that's what is needed to help Wollongong secure a better financial position for the future I would be willing to do it," Cr Colacino said.

Likewise, Cr Michelle Blicavs said she thought the council's fourth scenario would be too hard, and that she was personally willing to pay a little more in rates.

Deputy Lord Mayor and Labor

councillor Chris Connor yesterday reiterated comments he made at a union rally three weeks ago, ruling out the fourth and first options because of deep cuts to services and threats to council jobs.

Cr Connor said he did not speak for all Labor councillors, but said he hoped to see some variation of options two and three being considered by councillors next February.

"The submissions the public have given us have overwhelm-

ingly said not to cut services, and for us Labor councillors it's really important not to see job losses," he said.

"No matter which way you go, I believe there is a need for some sort of a rate rise."

The Greens' Jill Merrin said she supported increased rates, but would like to see "tweaking" to all options to "minimise pain" for residents.

"Philosophically, I'm in favour of services for all people because it's a way of redistributing wealth to those in need, and that comes with a certain amount of taxes - or in this case rates," she said.

"These scenarios show from one extreme to the other, and that gives us an idea about the possibilities so we can get our heads around what is most important to keep and what we can give away."

On Tuesday, Lord Mayor Gordon Bradbury told the Mercury he was "heating in the direction" of scenario three, which has almost no service cuts but the largest rate rise.

However, he was not prepared to commit to any particular option before community consultation on the options the council takes before the public.

## Rock pools become most pressing issue

BEN LANGFORD

THE people of Wollongong have spoken, and their message to their council is clear: don't close our beloved rock pools.

By far the largest number of submissions to Wollongong City Council's financial sustainability review concerned rock pools, and the council acknowledged the strength of community support for what some believe is our area's best asset.

Stopping maintenance on some pools and allowing the ocean to reclaim them was one option recommended by the council's citizens panel, which tried to find ways to save money while minimising rate rises.

But with the initial consultation period now finished, rock pools drew 360 responses - almost double the second-placed issue.

The recommendation to reduce beach patrol times at Coalcliff/Scarborough was second with 185 submissions, followed by

the recommendation to demolish the Coalcliff hall (51) and close Unanderra library (49).

The figures show the success of the campaign from one of Wollongong's smallest suburbs - Coalcliff - to make sure their rock pool was not abandoned.

Coalcliff Community Association president Pat Goodchild said he was pleased at the reaction to the campaign he and his neighbours led. But he was concerned for suburbs without a strong, organised voice.

"I'm pleased in the sense that common sense has prevailed, but if we hadn't have jumped up and down, it probably wouldn't," he said.

"If other areas aren't as organised as Coalcliff ... they will lose some of their assets. Not because they deserve to lose them, but because they don't have a strong enough voice. All of the rock pools are iconic, and once they're gone, they're gone."

The council has yet to decide how it will combine



Campaign: Pat Goodchild at Coalcliff rock pool, which was closed yesterday for cleaning.

Picture: KIRK GILMOUR

feedback with the panel's recommendations. Next Monday's meeting will select options to be put to further consultation, but the "moderate" scenario

published does not involve the closure of rock pools.

Across the local government area, residents may need to put their money where their mouths

are - the report to councillors on Monday says there may be cause to pay more to support services, either through increased rates or fees. The report

says a "small number of submissions" said people would rather pay higher rates or fees to maintain service levels - in particular rock pools.



## \$300,000 for tourist centre lights despite budget crisis

BEN LANGFORD

HOW many local government bureaucrats does it take to change a lightbulb?

And how much will it cost? The answer to the second question, it seems, is \$300,000 - which is the cost of a project to install energy-efficient lighting at the Southern Gateway Centre at Bulli Tops.

Wollongong City Council has announced it will receive \$150,000 towards the project from

the federal government's Community Energy Efficiency Program. The council will contribute another \$150,000.

As for how many people it will take to do the job, the count would not be an easy one.

It would have to include the people who made the funding application, public servants in the Environment Department who considered and approved the applications, a council media officer who distributed a press release announcing the funding,

a departmental head to sign off on the wording, the Lord Mayor who commented in that press release, and hardworking staff for the grunt work changing the lights.

These are not just any lights. The project will include "the interior lighting, outdoor lighting, car park and road lighting".

And how long will this take? The council estimates the work will be complete by July 2014.

These are not uncontroversial lights, of course - the Southern

Gateway Centre's lights drew criticism in 2010 for a \$24,000 annual power bill, and the fact they were left on all night for what council said were security reasons. The lights were dimmed in response to complaints.

More than three years later, the energy efficiency solution has been found.

The centre has attracted mixed views since opening in 2009 at a cost of \$11 million, largely because visitors can easily pass it by before they realise what it is.



# your say

## Paying the price of gambling

**IN Gambling in Australia: Thrills, Spoils and Social Ills (2004)**, curators Charles Pickett, Jennifer Cornwall and Matthew Cornell, state:

"Like drugs and sexuality, gambling is both pervasive and potentially threatening to social welfare.

"Judged on expenditure per capita, Australians are the world's leading gamblers at \$15 billion per year (\$1000 per adult; \$1200 per adult in the state of NSW).

"Australia's losses exceed its household savings. In its 1999 study of Australia's gambling industry, the Productivity Commission estimated that Australia's 300,000 problem gamblers each lost an average of \$12,000 per year, with an emotional or financial impact on five other people.

"About 12 per cent of the revenue raised by state governments comes from lotteries and other gambling taxes."

"This information poses key questions: What is the 'real' cost of gambling,

not just to the lives of Australians but to the lives of others?"

What is the extent of the damage? And what is our legacy? How will we be remembered?

Jan Lindrum, Wollongong

### Coalition inviting dirt

Since the election of the Abbott government, the parade of poisonous, placard-waving custodians of morality have missed several brilliant opportunities to strut their stuff.

The conspicuous absence of these rent-a-crowd zealots was very disappointing considering the plethora of chances handed to them by this arrogant, secretive and deceitful line-up of Coalition frontbenchers.

The said protesters were responsible for some extremely imaginative slogans such as "Ditch the Witch", "Juliar" and many more equally as gross and offensive as the last.

Surely, with such creative minds, one could have been forgiven for expecting something of equal standard given the openings so kindly provided by Fyne and Morrison.

But then, members of the Coalition don't lie, they merely reassess the situation.

Denise Meredith, Kanahooka

### Bypass news welcome

It's so good to hear of progress with the Albion Park Rail bypass. It will be great when the congestion on the Princes Motorway is a thing of the past.

With the road corridor now confirmed, we're one step closer to the bypass becoming a reality.

It is so great to finally have a local member that can actually get something done. Gareth Ward has achieved more for the Illawarra in two years than Anna Watson and the Labor Party did in 16 years.

Keep up the good work, Gareth.

Arthur Deane, Albion Park Rail

### Good Evans, laugh on

Member for Heathcote Lee Evans definitely enjoys a joke, why else would he suggest the NSW government was the "victim of its own success" (*Mercury*, November 30) in relation to new rail timetables.

The facts are there are no more commuters than before timetables were altered. However, due to fewer stops and shortage of connecting services, passengers have been forced to drive to Thirroul and Waterfall, creating chaotic problems.

With traffic and parking in Thirroul at a premium, businesses and residents have been placed in an intolerable situation.

I am sure Illawarra commuters would forgive Mr Evans if he shared his next successful project elsewhere.

Bob Fulton, Darkes Forest

### Letters to the Editor

Email: letters@illawarramercury.com.au

Online: illawarramercury.com.au

Letters should be no more than 200 words and should be typed or clearly written.

All letters need an address and business hours phone number for verification.

By submitting your letter to us for publication you agree that we may edit the letter for legal, space or other reasonable reasons and that the letter may be published in the newspaper, on our website or in other media.

### From the web

#### Ratepayers cop it

So the councillors have decided to put the onus for managing the financial sustainability of our city back onto the silent, uncomplaining, majority. A few squeaky wheels mean that nothing will change, the Councillors are bound by their vested interests. No job cuts, no outsourcing, no efficiencies to be found. Just get the struggling ratepayer to fund the whole debacle. How disappointing.

Actonb

#### Spending real issue

What about pensioners who are struggling to pay their rates even with a present rate discount? Council must make do on the money they get from ratepayers with better budgeting on their funds. Where has all the money gone from over the years? That's what should be looked into.

Alan Bond

#### Not about popularity

No pussy-footing by the decision-makers (the executive and the councillors). Don't run a popularity contest in the media. Your function includes making such a decision. Make it and we will judge you at the next election. Just do it!

Brutus Veritas

#### Oust rate-hikers

This council has to go, please print which councillors vote to raise our rates so we can expel them at the next election. They have no compassion for pensioners and low-income families who struggle to survive while a wasteful and inefficient council rolls on.

greeny

#### No intention to serve

What hope has a normal everyday bloke got? Whoever is in power doesn't matter, the result is the same, to the point where the present state government is trying to push through its own version of dodgy planning laws so developers and miners can get around local councils and local concerns. It seems pretty obvious these people never had any intention to serve the people who elected them. They are there for themselves and for those that bankrolled them into office.

swampy



### On the street

Do you have an Advent calendar at home?



**Barry Swan, Balgownie**  
Yes I do. It helps me get myself organised.



**Hellen Morrison, Woonona**  
No, I don't. I haven't heard of them.



**Betty Welsby, Bulli**  
Yes, we do. It's a family thing. Our granddaughter likes the chocolates.



**Peita Hawkins, Bulli**  
Yes, my mum made it. It's about the spirit of Christmas.

#### ONLINE POLL

Do you approve of the projects to get money from the \$100 million infrastructure fund?

VOTE NOW  
illawarramercury.com.au

#### Yesterday's results

Should there be a rate rise to help Wollongong City Council free up extra \$21 million a year?





# Gloves off as pair take fight to union

KATE McILWAIN

PROVOCATIVE comments from two Wollongong Liberal councillors have drawn fire from the union that represents council workers, with a warning it is prepared to fight to protect jobs.

As the council considers service cuts and a rate rise to boost its annual budget, councillors Bede Crasnich and Michelle Blicavs have hit out at Wollongong City Council employees' conditions.

They said workers' hours should be longer, sick leave and holidays should be cut and jobs should be outsourced to cheaper workers, instead of imposing a rate rise.

Cr Crasnich waved a red flag at the United Services Union (USU), saying members were a "vocal minority" and that the council "did not need to worry" about the union.

"Vocal minorities like the union movement are very good at making themselves look like they represent the majority of people," he said.

"We need to not worry about things like the union movement, we need to worry about rate-payers and about getting the best service for the lowest cost possible."

Cr Crasnich also indicated he believed staff lacked efficiency. "I'm more in favour of leasing out work as opposed to hiring people ourselves," he said.

"We talk about efficiency, but I have seen all too often driving through town... you have seven council workers doing maintenance or construction and two are on their mobiles, or having a cigarette and one is working - people in Wollongong are constantly saying this to me, so we need more efficiency in these departments."



Rally: SCLC secretary Arthur Norris addresses a council worker protest last month. Picture: ADAM McLEAN

Yesterday USU southern region organiser Paul Wesley said he did not know why the councillors tried to pick a fight. "The USU never intended to make this fight a slanging match," he said.

"But if these comments end up being the view of council as a whole (then) we will have no other option but to return to the IR (industrial relations) climate that existed at Wollongong council in the '70s and '80s.

"I don't know why these comments have come out the way they have. They seem to be nothing other than an attempt to provoke some sort of response."

Mr Wesley challenged the

claim that the USU was a "vocal minority", saying the union had almost 1000 members of the 1674 staff at Wollongong City Council.

"I don't know what either of these councillors do for a job or in fact whether they do work. But how would they feel if someone came into their workplace, looked at them and said 'I don't think you're doing your job, you should get paid less, and we'll get someone else to do it cheaper?'"

"Because I know the council workers aren't going to be very happy when they read those sorts of comments."

Mr Wesley said those who drove past a work crew would rarely know if they were council

workers or other contractors.

Cr Blicavs was more tempered in her comments. She said she was in favour of "smaller" changes such as introducing forced redundancies.

According to conditions outlined in the council's enterprise agreement, staff work 35 hours a week, have five weeks' holidays a year and cannot be made redundant even if their role is no longer needed.

"I want people to work 38 hours a week instead of 35," Cr Blicavs said.

"Four weeks' annual leave is what the rest of us have - so why are we paying an extra week for our employees?"

## West Dapto roads get big slice of Port Kembla windfall

KATE McILWAIN

WOLLONGONG City Council scored almost a third of the NSW government's \$100 million Port Kembla lease fund, receiving more than \$30 million for West Dapto roads, the Grand Pacific Walk and an upgrade to tourist facilities at Bald Hill.

However, Lord Mayor Gordon Bradbery warned that the council still needed more money to meet its long-term infrastructure needs and said controversial plans to raise rates and review services would continue despite yesterday's windfall.

Cr Bradbery welcomed the state funding, saying he was "always grateful" to receive money for council projects from the government.

However, he said this didn't change the council's need to find an extra \$21 million a year to ensure it can replace existing infrastructure, such as storm-water drains, footpaths, and the kiosk and road at Mount Keira lookout.

Additionally, Cr Bradbery said his organisation would be required to come up with more of its own funds to get the three new projects off the ground.

"This money is welcome, but it doesn't detract from our financial sustainability review.

"I know \$30 million might sound like a lot of money, but in terms of infrastructure it doesn't go far.

"We will have to try to borrow or bring forward the money to fund the rest of these projects, so we're not off the hook."

For instance, \$22.5 million allocated to link the Princes Highway to West Dapto via Fowlers Road was the biggest grant provided through the fund, but \$22.3 million more is needed before construction can start.

Cr Bradbery said the council would now apply for a Local Infrastructure Renewal Scheme loan - which includes an interest rate subsidy - and would also try to bring forward West Dapto developers' contributions to fund the remaining amount.

"As soon as we get the design work done and the money finalised... then we'll get under way as quickly as possible," he said.

"I'd like to see it start within 12 to 18 months, because, as we know, this is urgently needed."

Tenders for the road design, funded by a \$600,000 state government grant, close next week.

## Bega killer jailed for schoolgirl's murder

TRIPLE child killer Leslie Camilleri has been jailed for 28 years for murdering Melbourne schoolgirl Prue Bird in 1992.

Victorian Supreme Court Justice Elizabeth Curtain said the killing was a "serious and grave" example of the crime of murder.

"You were involved with others in the abduction of a defenceless 13-year-old girl from the sanctuary of her home in circumstances that must have been terrifying for her,"

Justice Curtain told Camilleri yesterday. "Your conduct bespeaks criminality of a very high order and is demonstrative of a cruel and callous regard for the sanctity of human life.

"You present as a real and serious danger to the community, particularly young girls."

Camilleri is already serving two life sentences without the prospect of parole for the murders of Bega schoolgirls Lauren Barry

and Nichole Collins in 1997.

Justice Curtain said she was satisfied Camilleri acted with one or two other men in abducting Prue from her Glenroy home and murdering her in February 1992.

Prue's mother, Jenny Bird, said she was pleased with Justice Curtain's conclusion that Camilleri did not act alone.

"I haven't been satisfied from the day I reported Prue missing with the police, I'm still not satis-

fied today, but this was the best I was hoping for - that it was ruled that he didn't act alone," she said outside court.

Ms Bird said she had not given up hope that Justice Curtain's determination that others were involved could one day see the investigation reopened.

Prue's body has never been found. Camilleri, 43, confessed last December to murdering Prue. AAP

### Review needs time

COMMUNICATIONS Minister Malcolm Turnbull will release a redacted version of the National Broadband Network strategic review as early as next week but not in time to comply with an order from the Senate.

Australian Greens senator Scott Ludlam has put forward a motion calling for Mr Turnbull to table the document to the Senate before noon on Monday, December 9.

However, the Coalition has advised it will withhold the document until after the deadline.

"The government needs a little more time... to ensure that the information cannot advance the commercial interests of other parties over NBN Co," it said. AAP

### Jail population rises

MORE prisoners are doing time in Australian jails than ever, official data shows.

The number of inmates in Australian jails hit a record 30,775 in 2013, up 5 per cent from 2012, Australian Bureau of Statistics data released yesterday shows.

The nation's rate of imprisonment is also up, at 170 prisoners for every 100,000 adults, from 157 for every 100,000 adults in 2003.

The Northern Territory has the highest imprisonment rate this year, with 321 adults in prison for every 100,000 adults. AAP

### Santa on radar

THE competition between Microsoft and Google is stretching to the North Pole as the internet search rivals vie to be top Santa tracker this Christmas.

Google has launched a google.com/santatracker website with reindeer games, elf antics and updates on beloved gift-giver Kris Kringle for the Christmas countdown.

Meanwhile, Microsoft has teamed with North American Aerospace Defence to create a Santa tracker powered by the organisation's global radar system and technology such as Bing Maps and Windows software. AAP-RTV

### Greens call for ban

THE Australian Greens have called on Prime Minister Tony Abbott to "muster the courage" to ban all new Coles and Woolworths supermarkets.

They also want the big supermarket chains banned from investing in agricultural land, and for the struggling Australian Competition and Consumer Commission's funding to be doubled.

Mr Abbott has written to the states and territories outlining his plan for the first independent review into national competition policy in 20 years.

But Greens Senator Peter Whish-Wilson said the last thing Australia needs is another "talk-fest" with no results, and that the needs of farmers and small businesses should be addressed. AAP

### Boat name sought

POLICE are seeking to identify two boats linked to a fire that destroyed three luxury cruisers at a marina in Sydney's inner-west.

Witnesses told police they heard a loud explosion at Cabrita Road wharf before 3am on Tuesday and saw a small vessel with an outboard motor leaving the area.

A couple and their three children escaped unharmed but one man was hospitalised with chest pain after battling fire with a hose.

One vessel may have been stolen from Sydney Harbour, possibly Parramatta River. AAP



# Councillor sorry for remarks about staff

DOMINIC GEIGER

WOLLONGONG councillor Bede Crasnich has moved to clarify remarks made about council employees in yesterday's *Illawarra Mercury*, saying he was sorry if workers were offended.

On Wednesday, Cr Crasnich said residents had approached him concerned about the amount of work council employees were doing.

"We talk about efficiency, but I have seen all too often driving through town or in the northern suburbs, you have seven council workers doing maintenance or construction and two are on their mobiles, or having a cigarette and one is working," he said at the time.

The comments provoked outrage, with union officials calling on Cr Crasnich to apologise.

Yesterday, Cr Crasnich said he stood by the remarks but he was sorry if he had "made people feel as though they don't work hard for a living".

"I was not talking about all council staff or everyone in that building, I was talking about sections of our workforce which can be made more efficient," he said.

"I apologise to anyone who has taken that the wrong way but I have ratepayers to look out for."

Cr Crasnich renewed his attack



My opinion: Councillor Bede Crasnich's comments have sparked outrage among unions.

on the United Services Union, telling it to "calm down".

"This is Australia, not North Korea. I'm allowed to have opinions they may not agree with," he said.

Cr Crasnich said there was an argument for leasing some Wollongong City Council assets to private companies and outsourcing work in order to save money.

United Services Union southern region organiser Paul Wesley said workers had been upset by Cr Crasnich's comments.

"I can assure Cr Crasnich that

every one of them is passionate about their job," Mr Wesley said.

"Resorting to offensive, outdated stereotypes about 'lazy council workers' isn't the kind of behaviour an elected councillor should be engaging in."

Meantime, Ian Robertson, the secretary of the union representing local government health, building and planning professionals, launched an attack on Cr Michelle Blicavs.

Yesterday, Cr Blicavs was reported calling for council employees to work 38 hours a week instead of

the 35 specified in the council's enterprise agreement.

Mr Robertson accused Cr Blicavs of "putting the boot into" council employees.

"Thirty-five hours a week is the standard working week in the public sector," he said.

However, Cr Blicavs said council employees' enterprise agreement "offered significantly better conditions than other councils".

"The state award is being reviewed and I'm suggesting the next agreement, we consider lining up with that award," she said.

## High-tech hub comes to Illawarra

GLEN HUMPHRIES

PROTECTED by security fencing, guards and retinal scanners, a Unanderra facility provides back-up for all the data the NSW government needs to continue functioning.

Built by data centre company Metronode - part of the NextGen Group - the Unanderra facility works as a back-up to the main data storage centre in Silverwater.

Metronode general manager Malcolm Roe said the security was necessary as the data included people's personal information.

"You can imagine that over time the state will migrate all records - licence records, superannuation records and more, into these facilities," Mr Roe said.

"That's why security is a very important operational criteria around the facility."

The NSW government has consolidated about 130 centres down to two, making the Unanderra facility the only one outside Sydney.

"For us it's an attractive location to provide disaster recovery from Sydney," he said. "So we're away from Sydney should something happen to the computer system up there."

"It's also very attractive for our federal government colleagues who are looking for disaster recovery option for Canberra."

Mr Roe said the facility represented an investment of \$125 mil-



Official visit: Touring the Unanderra centre that provides back-up for NSW government information are Finance Minister Andrew Constance, NextGen chief executive Peter McGrath, Metronode general manager Malcolm Roe, Wollongong Lord Mayor Gordon Bradbery and Kiama MP Gareth Ward. PICTURE: GREG TOTMAN

lion in the region and the facility had already been of benefit.

"During construction we engaged nearly 950 individual staff on this site," Mr Roe said.

"During the operations phase hundreds of people are involved in maintaining the computer systems and the applications."

NSW Finance Minister Andrew Constance visited the centre for its official opening yesterday.

He said the decision to base the facility in the Illawarra was driven in part by its high-tech base.

"If you look at the Illawarra region it's one of the fastest growing in the state," Mr Constance said.

"There are 5200 people who work in ICT in the Illawarra region today. That's only going to further expand.

"After yesterday with the announcement of iAccelerate at the University of Wollongong, through the funding from the port lease, we will continue to see the ICT sector expand.

"It makes sense to have facilities such as this in regional areas of NSW. From a cost perspective from the state government, it makes sense to have two facilities not 130."

## Pet owner not allowed animals for two decades

DOMINIC GEIGER

A MOUNT Warrigal woman has been banned from owning animals for 20 years after being found guilty of aggravated animal cruelty.

Vicki Lee Edwards pleaded guilty in Wollongong Magistrates Court on Thursday to one charge of aggravated animal cruelty against a female Staffordshire crossbreed dog in her care.

The court heard that on August 15, an RSPCA NSW inspector attended a property in Mount Warrigal in response to a complaint about a dog.

Upon arrival, the inspector observed the dog lying stretched out against the rear fence, with a large amount of pus and blood oozing from a lump on the bridge of its nose, between its eyes.

The dog was also emaciated and was taken away for veterinary treatment.

On August 23, the inspector returned to the property and interviewed Ms Edwards, who said she had been reluctant to take the dog to a vet as she feared being told the animal required euthanasia.

She also said she felt the dog wasn't suffering.

The seized dog was later euthanased as it was deemed too cruel to keep her alive due to the severity of her medical conditions.

On Thursday, Ms Edwards was convicted on one charge of aggravated animal cruelty, resulting in a \$5000 fine, plus \$458 in court costs. She was placed on a two-year good behaviour bond.

She was also ordered to report to Wollongong police within seven days for fingerprinting and was banned from owning, purchasing, acquiring or caring for any animal for 20 years.

## Lengthy jail for drunken murder

A DRUNKEN man who murdered a frail, elderly NSW farmer in his home in a vicious, cowardly and unprovoked attack has been jailed for at least 14½ years.

Mark Jamie Kaye, 33, was drunkenly trying to hitch a lift in the town of Crookwell, near Goulburn, when he entered the home of 84-year-old Charles Weir in January 2011, the Supreme Court in Sydney heard yesterday.

Kaye, who suffers bipolar disorder, then assaulted the old man, who suffered from a heart condition and emphysema, stabbing him in the neck as he lay helpless on the ground.

Kaye stole \$70 and Mr Weir's favourite walking cane before he fled through paddocks.

Mr Weir was discovered by his son the next morning lying in a pool of blood on the kitchen floor.

Kaye's fingerprints were later found on a blade in Mr Weir's house.

Kaye pleaded guilty to murdering the old man, whom he had never previously met, on the grounds that his actions significantly contributed to Mr Weir's death.

The court heard none of Mr Weir's injuries, including the superficial neck wounds, would have been fatal had they been inflicted on a younger, healthy man.

"The injuries inflicted by [Kaye] overlaid the frailty of [Mr Weir]," Justice Derek Price said.

But Justice Price said he did not believe Kaye's evidence in the sentence hearing that Mr Weir struck him first with his walking cane and that he did not realise Mr Weir was an old man.



# your say

## Please do your job, council

It is about time the council got a backbone and did what they have been elected for. Never mind putting any options on public exhibition regarding the financial responsibilities of council. The public will not want any options. They just want you to do your job.

Also, regarding the so-called love locks. This is vandalism of our environment and graffiti, the same as paint tagging on buildings. Do not spend ratepayers' money hiring a locksmith to give them back to these vandals. Treat them the same as paint graffiti.

Remove them with bolt cutters and throw them in the bin, or charge the people responsible with vandalism. For goodness sake, get some courage and do your job.

Gerald Cundell, Mangerton

### Council fiscally inept

As a business, Wollongong City Council has a lot to answer for. For far too long

the council has been top heavy with middle management and overstaffing. Whenever they have a budget blowout their answer is to slug the ratepayers again instead of addressing the problem of poor financial planning.

Why should ratepayers have to continually foot the bill for poor management decisions? It is extremely doubtful if the current council could run a successful chook raffle.

Terry Coltman, Farmborough Heights

### Shift-work warning

Cancer warning for shift workers was a headline that all employers, union leaders, government and workers would be wise to heed.

Researchers are likening deaths from cancer in the workplace to the road toll; more frightening is that overnight shift work is on a par with diesel fumes and

insecticides as a factor. Shift work is linked to ovarian and prostate cancer, immune system failures, interrupted circadian rhythms and interrupted production of hormones. Frightening news especially when in the Illawarra, 10 and 12-hour night shifts with exposure to diesel fumes are common.

Unions appear uninterested as workers may lose their jobs. Government will not act unless there is a push from society. Workers on the job are prisoners of their assets, no movement there.

One workplace death is one too many, all players are obliged to find a workable solution. One Wittenoom is enough; shift work, diesel fumes, what a toxic mix.

Trevor Mott, Keiraville

### Ferry good idea

It was interesting to hear that the Caledonia Sky cruise ship recently docked at Port Kembla harbour to refuel.

Can we hope that this is a sign of things to come? With continued development, Port Kembla would be a great little stopover for ocean-travelling tourists.

It would also be really fabulous to see The Spirit of Tasmania ferry service as part of that future development.

Its previous Sydney Harbour trial no doubt failed to succeed because of the close proximity to Sydney airport.

People from the Shoalhaven and the Illawarra don't have the luxury of easy access to an airport. A ferry service from Port Kembla would be an answer to that problem.

At Port Kembla, as well as bus services, the train station is at the doorstep of the outer harbour and parking facilities are abundant.

I'm sure that Tasmanians would also love to travel to the Illawarra region and its warmer weather in winter, so with reciprocal tourism and job creation, it would be a win-win venture.

Cheryl Lightfoot, Warrawang

### Letters to the Editor

Email: letters@illawarramercury.com.au  
Online: illawarramercury.com.au

Letters should be no more than 200 words and should be typed or clearly written. All letters need an address and business hours phone number for verification.

By submitting your letter to us for publication you agree that we may edit the letter for legal, space or other reasonable reasons and that the letter may be published in the newspaper, on our website or in other media.

### From the web

#### Get what you pay for

I have no problem with reducing the workforce at Wollongong City Council as long as people realise that the level of service must reduce equally and having in mind the amount we already pay in rates that is not a good option.

Happyoldfart

#### Acting after heroes

Who voted for these two councillors? They are only making a bad situation a lot harder to resolve. We know that the Liberals hate workers. These councillors are acting just like their heroes in Canberra. If the workers go on strike or take any action over these silly remarks, then it will be squarely on the heads of these Lib councillors.

Neil of Berkeley

#### Staff all passionate

Council has 1674 staff, most of whom are local residents, and I can assure Cr Crasnick that every one of them is passionate about the job they do and the services they provide to the local area.

smart phones everywhere

#### Sales to fund houses

I'm all for public housing, but it is not sustainable to have people paying \$100 a week rent living in \$700,000 houses in Woonona and Bulli. Free up some of the money to build more cheaper public housing in Dapto, Berkeley etc to build up the housing stock. Liberals will probably pocket the money though to improve the budget bottom line.

Bobby

#### Tenants selfish

These [public housing tenants] are just selfish. They would rather keep their four-bedroom house rather than let multiple families with kids escape hell holes like Piccadilly. The sale of these old fibro houses will fund the construction of three villas.

Jeol

#### Call-up for musician

Wow! Went onto the website alextohinmusic.com and listened to Last Call ... well done, hope he continues to help put Wollongong on the map!

Newfy



### On the street



Has the sledging in the Ashes series gone too far?



John Collett, Haywards Bay

Sledging is part of the game, but it should be kept on the field ... it is not a good look for children.



Paola Scaramuzzi, Mangerton

They should play fair. It doesn't make sense to be always saying bad things about each other.



David Bidduhal, Thirroul

It is part and parcel of the game. Both sides do it, but it should stay on the field.



Colin Garstang, Walney Island, Lancashire

No, the Brits are playing like crap ... and I'm a Brit.

### ONLINE POLL

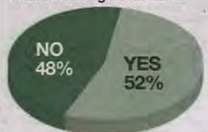
Is enough being done to impose smoking restrictions in Crown Street Mall?

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### PREVIOUS RESULTS

Should the government provide assistance to Holden to encourage them to keep manufacturing in Australia?





Rock pools set to stay at shire beaches | St George & Sutherland Shire Leader




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# ST GEORGE & SUTHERLAND SHIRE Leader

Monday December 9, 2013

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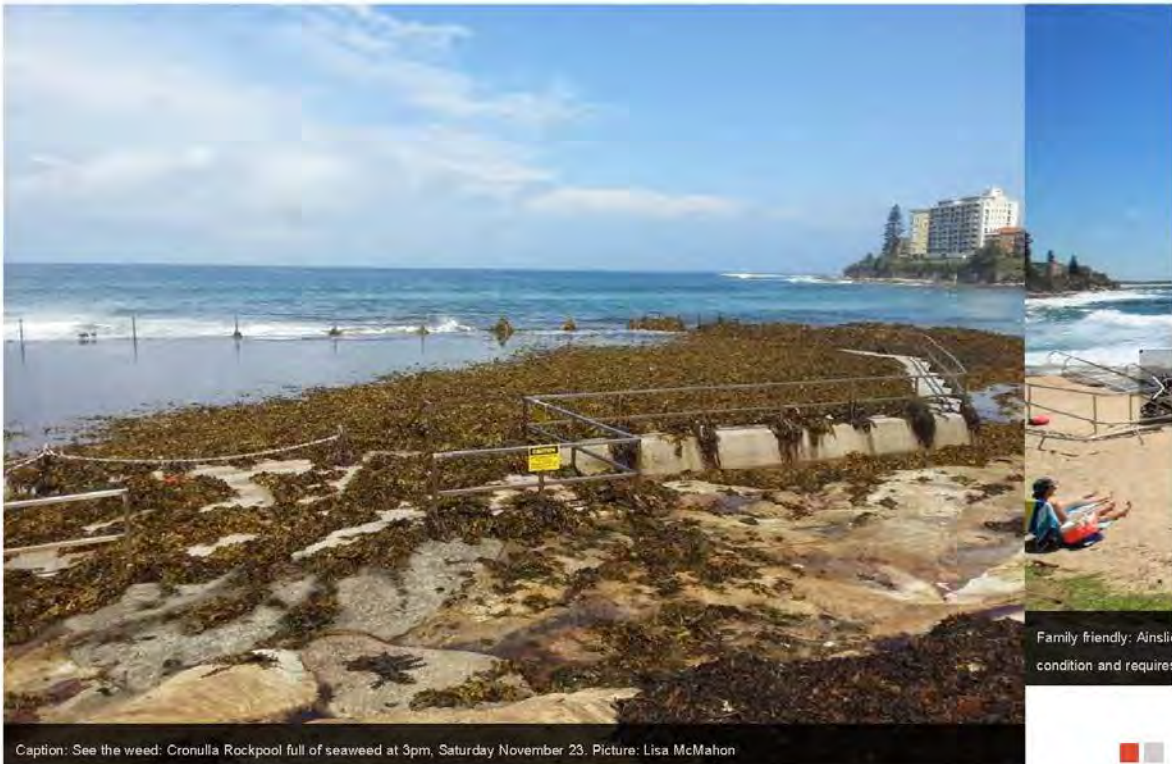
What's on the box  
this morninn?

 Larger /  Smaller  Night Mode

News | Local News

## Rock pools set to stay at shire beaches

By Murray Trembath Dec. 7, 2013, 7 a.m.



Caption: See the weed: Cronulla Rockpool full of seaweed at 3pm, Saturday November 23. Picture: Lisa McMahon

Family friendly: Ainslie  
condition and requires

CRONULLA'S four ocean rock pools are here to stay as far as Sutherland Shire Council is concerned.

While down the coast, Wollongong Council is looking at closing three of its nine tidal pools because of the financial drain of maintaining them, no such thoughts are being entertained in the shire.

"Council is not considering closing any of the [Cronulla] pools," a Sutherland Shire Council



spokeswoman said.

The Wollongong proposal was among measures recommended last month by a community panel tasked with coming up with cost-cutting ideas to secure the long-term finances of the council.

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Not surprisingly, some residents were not happy with the idea and public submissions are being examined.

Sutherland Shire Council's spokeswoman said the cost of maintaining pools at Shelly and Oak parks, as well as the smaller pool at Cronulla, were "minimal, as they are subject to tidal flushing, which keeps them clear of weed and sand".

"Council spends between \$5000 to \$10,000 each year on pre-season preparation, which primarily involves removal of oysters and marine growth," she said.

"Slightly more was spent this year to repair leaks in the Shelly and Oak park pools."

The spokeswoman said the larger pool at Cronulla was more costly to maintain.

"This pool is susceptible to occasionally filling with sand, depending on prevailing swells and conditions," she said.

"When this occurs, it has to be emptied and the sand removed.

"Council spends approximately \$25,000 annually on this pool and this year spent another \$6000 covering the steps into the pool with a recycled plastic product to improve safety."

The spokeswoman said the regular maintenance on all pools included the removal of oyster and algal growth and repairs to chains, pool walls and steps as needed.

#### REPORT PENDING

A report on the large pool at Cronulla, which was closed for a week at the end of last month after it filled with sand and seaweed, is being prepared by council officers.

A spokeswoman said the report was "expected to make several recommendations for mitigating the sand ingress and other suggestions for improvements to the pool".

The spokeswoman said the pools at Shelly and Oak parks, and the small pool at Cronulla, were in good structural condition.

"Several studies over the years have failed to locate major leaks," she said.

"However, a leak in the Oak Park pool at low tide has been identified, which is thought to be through the sandy base of the pool.

"It would not be possible to stop this leak without major reconstruction."

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## Residents say no to budget proposals

KATE MOLLWAIN

ABOUT 100 residents rallied outside Wollongong City Council's Burelli Street headquarters last night, calling on councillors to scrap all budget options put forward in the financial sustainability review.

Organised by residents' group Save Our Services, the gathering demanded the retention of services, which could face the chop under two of the options endorsed by councillors last night.

This included users of Unanderra Library, Lakeside Leisure Centre and the city's ocean pools.

They were joined by United Services Union members and council workers, and waved signs saying, "Flush out management not pools", "Keep 'terra library open" and "Don't blame workers".

Rally organiser Stephen Spencer said he hoped the strong showing would urge councillors to spend longer consulting the community before they made up their minds about how to save \$21 million a year.

Mr Spencer and the Save Our Services group have been vocal in their criticism of the council's "citizens panel" and said the administration needed to "go back to the drawing board" instead of asking the community for feedback on three "restrictive" options.

"We don't want the council to restrict itself or the community to just those options, we want them to put everything back on the



Protest rally: Concerned ratepayers and workers outside council offices on Burelli Street last night. Picture: ANDY ZAKELI

**You can't divide this city between the workers and ratepayers, because the workers live in this city and are ratepayers too**

Arthur Morris

table and do a more detailed analysis of the council's financial situation," Mr Spencer said.

"We believe these options are channelling the process down to an inevitable conclusion, which is that there will be a rate rise and services will be cut."

Speaking to the crowd, South Coast Labour

Council secretary Arthur Morris hit out at councillors who suggested reducing jobs and workers' conditions should be part of the budget cuts.

"You can't divide this city between the workers and ratepayers, because the workers live in this city and are ratepayers too," Mr Morris said.

"We will fight this battle as one community."

# Vote brings rate hike, cuts closer

KATE MOLLWAIN

WOLLONGONG councillors took the first official step towards raising rates at last night's meeting, endorsing budget scenarios that will deliver rate hikes of 16 to 25 per cent over three years.

Tasked with deciding which budget options to put on public exhibition as part of Wollongong City Council's ongoing financial sustainability review, the councillors voted 12-1 to support three scenarios, all of which include a combination of service reductions, efficiency measures and a rate rise.

Cr Greg Petty voted against the motion because he said the council needed an independent budget analysis.

The council will now notify the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) that it plans to apply for a special rate variation for the 2014-15 financial year.

In front of a packed public gallery – and faced with vocal criticism from residents and union members on the floor – councillors outlined their reasons for supporting the three budget options, with Labor councillor David Brown summing it up by saying "doing nothing is not an option".

However, most councillors said there would be plenty of room for tweaking the proposed scenarios and urged residents to be vocal in their praise or criticism for them over the next few months.

"Pick one or pick them all to pieces... but get on your iPhone, computer or write a letter and tell us what you think," Cr Leigh Colacino said.

Greens councillors Jill Merrin and George Takacs said they would not decide on any changes until after the next period of consultation, which begins tomorrow. Chris Connor said residents needed to

stop criticising the process and start putting forward specific suggestions for which services they valued, while other councillors praised the controversial citizens panel process, saying it had helped to energise the community.

"This is the first time we have actually had our community engaged, enraged and emotive and that was the aim of the citizens panel," Cr Vicki Curran said.

Last week, a staff report recommended only three of four options outlined should be open to community comment, because the fourth would require deep service cuts, widespread job losses and go against the community's wishes.

Under the first scenario, the council would adopt all recommendations made by the citizens panel, which include \$4 million in service cuts, \$7 million in efficiency measures and a cumulative rate rise of about 16 per cent over three years.

The second scenario features a rate rise of about 20 per cent over three years, but only half the service cuts and a much lower rise in fees and charges, while the third has just \$1 million in service cuts but a 25 per cent rate rise.

So far, 14 other NSW councils have lodged plans to raise rates above the statewide cap for the next financial year, according to the IPART website, while 43 of the state's 152 councils – including Shellharbour and Kiama – successfully applied for a rate rise in the past two years.

Wollongong residents can have their say on each of the three endorsed budget scenarios until February 5 and the council then has until February 24 to formalise its rate rise plans with IPART.

Further decisions about efficiencies and service reductions will be made in the normal yearly planning process, which has to be finalised by June 23.

## Parents' nightmare comes true in horror car crash

FROM PAGE 1

"My message to other parents is don't let your kids out of your sight," he said.

"Don't let them jump into cars with people who say they're their friends."

Yesterday's *Illawarra Mercury* reported the 14-year-old girl was the driver's stepister; however, the girl's father said this was

incorrect, and the two were not related in any way.

The driver was yesterday refused bail for a second time in Wollongong Magistrate's Court.

On Saturday morning, the court heard Primmer had been sentenced two weeks earlier over a police pursuit and driving without ever obtaining a licence.

He had been banned from driving, the court heard.

The girl's father questioned why more hadn't been done to stop Primmer getting back behind the wheel of a car given the seriousness of his previous crimes.

"If the system worked properly he would be in jail and my daughter would not be in the predicament she is now," he said.

Stephen Page, who was at home when he heard the crash nearby, was among the first to come to the

teenage girl's aid. The girl's father praised Mr Page, who is also a member of the Rural Fire Service, saying he had stayed with his daughter while paramedics worked to free her.

"He sat there and held my daughter's neck and head in one place while they were cutting her out of the car," he said.

"[My daughter] had taken the full impact of the pole on her side

of the vehicle," the father said. "She was knocked unconscious at the site."

The *Mercury* also received an anonymous phone call praising the man for his "heroic" actions.

The girl's father has asked for any family wanting to learn about his daughter's condition to contact him or the girl's mother directly, as the hospital is not authorised to give out information.

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**Low tides:** 9:15am, 9:56pm  
**Wollongong:** East to south-easterly swell of 1.5 to 2 metres in the morning, increasing to 2.5 metres from E/NE, with winds about 15-25 km/h from west early before switching to S/SE in afternoon.

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# your say

## Western leaders' lip service

While Nelson Mandela spent 27 years in prison, South Africa received abundant support from the West in the way of military and commercial aid.

The African governments of various regimes, through racism against non-whites and restrictions against trade unionism, made a great investment climate for multinational companies.

The non-whites were in no way benefiting from the wage pittance they were receiving, or the conditions they were living in.

Don't pay attention to the leaders of the Western countries now paying lip service to Mr Mandela's memory, as it was only the fact that president de Klerk knew a new South Africa was on the horizon that change occurred.

John Mcquire, Dapto

who recognise his greatness mourn. Should we do so or celebrate the vision that showed us how we should live.

He changed the world.

Thanks, Nelson.

Martin Loxton, Woonona

### Famous words

Desmond Tutu once said of Nelson Mandela that his 27 years in prison had not embittered him, but it had ennobled him.

I found it sad, that on the day of this great man's passing, our PM borrowed the very same sentence, word for word, while on a radio show.

John Pronk, Wollongong

### Conservative solution

The stalking horse that was the citizens' panel, it would seem, has not only set the scene for a move by Wollongong City

councillors to sock ratepayers but has also excited the interest of the "usual suspects" of the anti-union brigade.

In recent days, we have seen them airing the standard conservative solution to any industrial-linked budget crisis - a considerable downsizing of the workforce at the enterprise involved.

This is supplemented by a requirement of those retained in employment to increase their workload to compensate for the downsizing exercise. Follow these measures up with a reduction in income and conditions of employment for those retained at the enterprise and you have the basis of the conservative solution.

History shows our "usual suspects" remain ever ready to push this barrow despite its lack of logic and conscience.

Barry Swan, Balgownie

### Unfair bus service

Higher rates and lower services says Gordon and his mates in council. It begs

the question, do they all reside in the area two kilometres north and west of Burell Street, the free bus area.

As a ratepayer and contributor, I have never nor will I ever catch this service. Instead, I drive to the Gong, pay for parking or walk long distances to shop because I am a southern dweller within the Wollongong council area. Hardly seems fair!

Anne Godfrey, Port Kembla

### Qantas woes

The writing has been on the wall for years. Expensive pricing, late departures, late arrivals and dreadful service. I worked overseas for 10 years and all the crew avoided Qantas if we could.

You've got a foreigner running the show? What's wrong with an Australian manager? Job cuts, overseas (dangerous) maintenance. They started cutting their own throats years ago.

Wayne Simpson, Corralim

### Man with a vision

Tonight, I cry. The greatest human being of our time has passed away and those

### From the web

#### Deer need culling

Anyone who frequents anywhere on our escarpment will realise that the deer population is a real problem. I would see somewhere between 60-80 deer a day and the damage they do to the vegetation is catastrophic.

Sure, professional, paid hunters are what everyone would like but no-one wants to pay for. The fact is that a properly licensed and regulated recreational hunter can be just as, if not more, competent than a professional hunter.

Steve

#### Shoot them on sight

Deer should be shot on sight and any good shooter knows not to shoot in the direction of built-up residential areas. If the state will not cull feral animals, then people with firearms must do their duty by their country.

thaddeus

#### Keep us informed

I realise these TV tower updates have to be done sometime but a little more info regarding outages and returning would have been helpful.

Chris

#### Taking pride in area

Shellharbour council seems to value its part of the lake. Reddall Reserve is proof of this. Cross the lake into the Wollongong LGA and you see no real effort to beautify and develop the area. Wollongong council is totally enamoured by the Blue Mile and Crown Street Mall.

Adam

#### Gong laughing stock

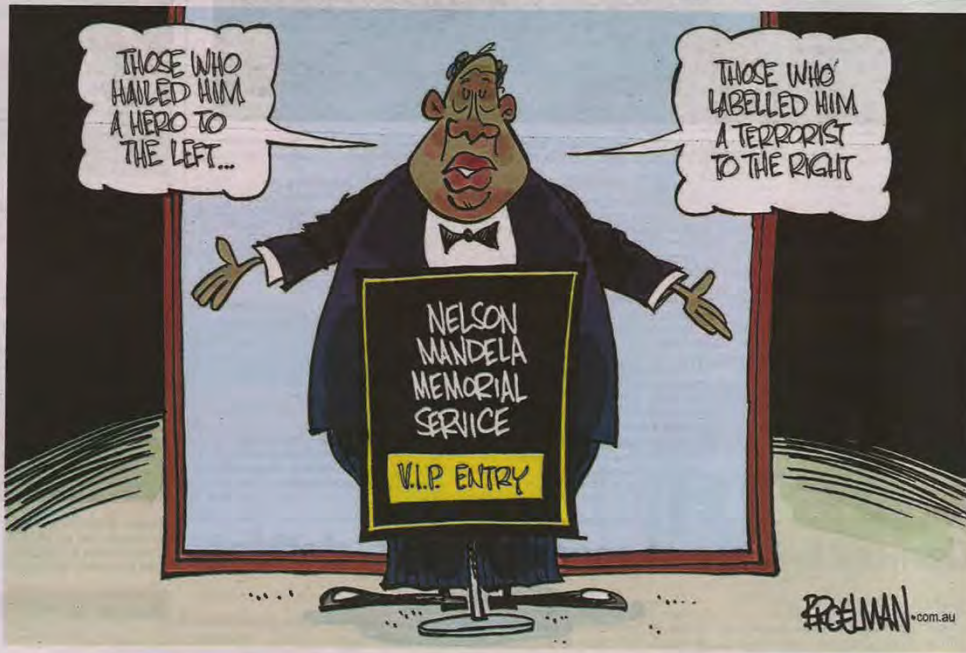
We are a laughing stock to Newcastle. They got everything - sporting teams, grants left right and centre, new development proposals, efficient transport, while our Wollongong council worries about the rock pools.

Wollong gone

#### Rail freight way to go

When will NSW get the fact that rail freight is the future. Trains carry more freight with less fuel and a lot safer. Our local roads are flooded with trucks and cars because there is no rail alternative. Wake up, Barry and stop building roads.

Grant



### On the street

When did you put up your Christmas tree?



**Sarah Noble, Woonona**  
On Sunday the first of December with my two sons. I let them do all the decorating.



**Amber Pluta, Jervis Bay**  
Only two or three days ago. We did the decorating as a family. Baby helped, pulled it down mostly.



**Aaron Smith, North Wollongong**  
Mum did that last week. Don't have one in my house.



**Lauren Corradini, Kiama**  
On the first of December. My mum and I did the decorating.

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**Advertiser** NEWS



**High-tech:** Wollongong Hospital director cancer services Anthony Arnold, Heathcote MP Lee Evans, Health Minister Jillian Skinner, Kiama MP Gareth Ward and Senator Concetta Fierravanti-Wells check out the new linear accelerator. Picture: ROBERT PEET

## Tumours tackled faster

A new era in cancer care has begun at Wollongong Hospital with the official opening of the \$14 million expansion to the Illawarra Cancer Care Centre.

The expanded centre and the new \$38.4 million cancer care centre in Nowra were opened by NSW Health Minister Jillian Skinner on November 29.

Liberal state and federal politicians Gareth Ward, Lee Evans and Concetta Fierravanti-Wells all attended, much to the chagrin of their Labor counterparts, who pointed out it was previous ALP state and federal governments

that had provided most of the funding for the two centres.

The expansion at Wollongong includes a new linear accelerator, a radiotherapy bunker to house it, an increase from 11 to 17 chemotherapy treatment places, and co-located ambulance services in the outpatient clinic and consultation areas, with greater access to oncology, radiotherapy and allied health and support services.

The linear accelerator is one of only three of its kind in the country and is more effective – a tumour that used to require 30 radiotherapy treatments will now need only

three. Treatment times will also be drastically reduced.

Mrs Skinner said it was a big day for the people of the Illawarra and the government had made it clear that it wanted more patients accessing care, especially cancer care, closer to home.

“Cancer centres such as this one are absolutely essential to supporting patients and their loved ones on the road to recovery,” she said.

Work continues on the \$86 million Illawarra Elective Surgical Services Centre, which will feature 60 new surgical beds and a new 24-bed intensive care unit.

## Rate rises, service cuts on cards

By ANTONY FIELD

Wollongong residents will soon face the prospect of far higher rates or moderate rate increases and cuts to services.

City councillors were due to meet as the *Advertiser* went to print on Monday night to choose which measures it would place on public exhibition to free up \$21 million.

Council staff have suggested three scenarios which all achieve the \$21 million savings benchmark. These are based on the citizens panel's

controversial review of the council's financial sustainability.

Scenario 1 includes an annual 4.8 per cent rise over three years (16.6 per cent), high-impact efficiency measures such as outsourcing tourist parks and reviewing Russell Vale Golf Course, service cuts such as closing Lakeside Leisure Centre and selling off the land, closing Unanderra Library, reducing rock pools and street sweeping, a 10 per cent reduction in parks, the closure of cremations opera-

tions and higher fees for parking, heated pools and sports fields.

Scenario 2 involves a 6.3 per cent annual rate rise (21.7 per cent), fewer efficiency measures, the sale or outsourcing of Lakeside, fewer parks, playgrounds and community centres, and higher child care, parking and heated pool fees.

Scenario 3 is based mostly on a 7.3 per cent annual rate rise (25.2 per cent). It has few efficiency measures and no service cuts.



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

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# Crasnich stands ground

KATE McILWAIN

WOLLONGONG Liberal councillor Bede Crasnich continued his attack on the United Services Union yesterday, after he faced abusive hecklers at Monday night's council meeting.

Though members of the public gallery were vocal during all the councillors' speeches in the hour-long discussion about the financial services review, union members in attendance reserved their greatest criticism for Crasnich.

The youngest councillor drew the ire of the union and council workers last week when he suggested that staff lacked efficiency. He also said he believed work

should be outsourced to cheaper workers, and union members were a "vocal minority" about whom the council "did not need to worry".

As Crasnich spoke at the meeting and said he was not in favour of any rate rise, just one person in the audience began clapping.

"See how popular you are, you got one clap," a man in the public gallery yelled.

"You're a one-termer anyway, mate, you'll be gone next election."

Lord Mayor Gordon Bradbery called the crowd to order many times, but the heckling continued.

"I want the views of all residents in this city, even ones that may not

be in this room, to be heard ... and the last thing I'd want to do is offend anybody," Crasnich said, before the room erupted into laughter and shouting.

"You already have," the man in the gallery shouted.

"Why don't you apologise to the council workers, mate. You want to get rid of them, don't you? Why don't you apologise for what you said to them?"

Crasnich called the *Mercury* to say he would "not back down" after the union's behaviour.

"I was contemplating shutting up about the whole thing, but after [Monday night] I'm not going to do that," he said yesterday.

He said he stood by his previous

comments and labelled the USU the "last bastion of old-style unionism" and said he thought it was "fighting for relevance".

"They know their time and relevance is coming to an end ... this is their death rattle," he said.

When told of Crasnich's additional comments, USU regional organiser Paul Wesley said he would no longer engage with the councillor's "personal vendetta".

"We're perplexed as to why Crasnich, against the good advice of his own colleagues, continues his tirade," Mr Wesley said.

"We note and echo the sentiment that was presented at the council meeting by most councillors, that they are extremely

thankful for the dedication and support that has been given to them over the years by the very passionate and considerate council staff."

Other Liberal councillors have said they do not support Crasnich's views, with Cr John Dorahy admitting at Monday's meeting that he had admonished his colleague for previous statements.

"While I congratulated him for having gumption to express his views, I also lambasted him for making these comments in this way," Cr Dorahy said yesterday.

"I'm disappointed Bede is continuing along this line, because there are other ways to get your point across," he said.



## Everest trip to help kids in Nepal with education

Leader: Brian King, who is leading the expedition for the Himalayan Education Charity Foundation, which supports children. Picture: SYLVIA LIBER

KATE WALSH

A GROUP of Illawarra adventurers will be doing more than taking in the gorgeous scenery when they head to Mount Everest's base camp next March.

Their trip will raise money for the Himalayan Education Charity Foundation (HECF), an organisation that helps keep children who live near the mountains in school.

In Lukla, where the charity originated and where the trek begins, students are often pulled out of school so they can work to help their family financially. The HECF helps break the cycle of students not attending school by

paying for school fees and supplies and assisting families with financial difficulties.

The trip has been organised by Brian King, an experienced Illawarra climber who has already tackled Mount McKinley in North America and Aconcagua in South America.

He will, at this stage, be joined by 11 others, most of whom have little experience with such trips. There are eight spots left on the trek.

The journey has attracted a number of Illawarra educators, with primary and secondary teachers and university lecturers making up half the group.

"They've related to the fact the

HECF is mostly devoted to breaking the cycle of non-education in the area and trying to get the kids educated so they can return that education back into the local area," Mr King said.

The group will stop at schools along the Everest trail as they make their way to the camp to meet the students, and are planning to donate second-hand books, laptops and other supplies to the schools. The proceeds from the trip go directly to the charity.

Mr King said the trek wasn't overly challenging, likening the 18-day adventure to climbing the Illawarra escarpment.

For more information on the charity visit [www.hecf.org.np](http://www.hecf.org.np).



Peak peek: The view of Mount Everest from base camp. Picture: AP

## Questions raised by water profits

SYDNEY Water has defended its performance after its annual report showed its profit rising in the face of growing complaints and household bills.

The NSW opposition says the utility's \$415 million profit in 2012-13 comes at the expense of households that were promised cost of living relief under the O'Farrell government.

The annual report shows the profit came after higher water sales and service charges.

It also shows an 11 per cent increase in complaints over the past two years, mostly concerning billing and meter reading.

Over the past three years, 459 Sydney Water staff lost their jobs, according to opposition water spokesman Walt Secord.

Only one of them was in corporate services, with senior jobs increasing from 267 to 290 in the past year, he pointed out.

Mr Secord argued the government should direct the profit to families struggling to pay their bills.

Sydney Water managing director Kevin Young said the job cuts came with growing reliance on outsourcing to cut costs.

"More than 80 per cent of Sydney Water's total operating and capital costs are sourced externally, which drives efficiencies through competitive tendering and sourcing," he said.

Sydney Water, as a state-owned corporation, is required to operate as an efficient business, he said.

Its prices were independently set by IPART, Mr Young said, adding customer satisfaction with "overall quality of service" was at its highest in five years.

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mercury news 19

# Call for action on councillor over remarks

KATE McILWAIN

THE South Coast Labour Council has called on state and federal government leaders to distance themselves from a councillor who made disparaging comments about Wollongong City Council workers and their union.

Following an ongoing spat between Bede Crasnich and the United Services Union, labour council secretary Arthur Rorris yesterday weighed in to express his concern about the councillor's comments.

The conflict began last week when Cr Crasnich suggested council staff lacked efficiency and said jobs should be outsourced to cheaper workers.

He also said union members were a "vocal minority" about whom the council "did not need to worry".

Despite vocal criticism from the USU at Monday night's council meeting, Cr Crasnich has refused to back down from his views.

Mr Rorris said the union movement was concerned Cr Crasnich's opinions - as



BEDE CRASNICH

well as similar views expressed by Cr Michelle Blicavs - foreshadowed an "ideological war against workers" that could be carried out by the state and federal governments.

"We're now calling on Barry O'Farrell and Tony Abbott to publicly condemn and disassociate the Liberal Party from these comments," Mr Rorris said.

"If this is Liberal Party policy, to cut pay and extend working hours, then all public servants in the state and federal sphere, including

and everyone else should know what they're in for.

"People are entitled to know if this is just the rant of a couple of Liberal apparatchiks who want to sound important and create a news story, or the policy of the Liberal Party."

Asked whether Cr Crasnich's view did represent wider Liberal Party policies, state Kiama MP Gareth Ward said he would not be a commentator about Wollongong council matters. However, he did criticise the union for "sidelining someone with a different view".

"Bede has been pretty poorly treated for having an opinion," Mr Ward said.

"I would have thought people on both sides of the political divide would respect that people are entitled to their views without all this unnecessary bullying and thuggery."

"The union knows the views that Bede has expressed are not necessarily the views of the rest of the council and that there's no chance those changes are going to be made."

## Gay couple hope for right decision

MANY couples suffer from pre-wedding jitters but Annette Cairnduff and Kylie Gwynne have a different reason to be nervous.

They are getting hitched on the eve of a High Court ruling on the ACT's gay marriage laws that may limit their marital bliss to less than 24 hours.

Ms Cairnduff and her partner of 11 years were due to wed in a Canberra garden yesterday afternoon.

The court's decision, due to be handed down at midday today, won't change

the Sydney couple's committed relationship.

"We've been packing dishwashers, organising children off to school for a really long time," she said.

Ahead of their wedding the couple joined a trio of senators who have taken a pledge to work together to help achieve marriage equality.

Liberal Sue Boyce, Labor's Louise Pratt and Sarah Hanson-Young from the Greens have formed a cross-party working group on the issue.

Senator Boyce is retiring from politics in July next

year and hopes that a conscience vote on the issue is held before she leaves.

The Coalition party room had yet to consider granting its members a conscience vote, she said.

Senator Pratt, who has a transgender partner, wants to give people hope that there are parliamentarians committed to pushing for national marriage equality laws.

Senator Hanson-Young said it was important politicians worked together.

"No one party can deliver the numbers." AAP

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Mandela:  
the final  
farewell



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Movember  
men exposed  
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PAGE 9

Hawks surge  
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PAGE 19

Media

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## A time to shine

Charize, Chevelle and Amira Lau soak up  
the atmosphere of Shellharbour's Carols  
by Candlelight at Reddall Reserve.  
REPORT: Page 6

Picture: ADAM McLEAN

# RATES ON THE RISE

## Council flags three years of hefty increases

KATE McILWAIN

WOLLONGONG City Council is one of 36 NSW councils to notify the state regulator of its intent to apply for a rate rise next year.

This means more than half the state's 152 councils have applied

to up their rates since 2012, after 43 councils increased their rates in the past two years.

In a letter to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal on December 12, Wollongong council's general manager David Farmer flagged an increase of

between 5 and 8 per cent for three years to help find an extra \$21 million a year.

Cumulatively, these proposed rate increases would total between 16 and 25 per cent.

Mr Farmer noted the council had already found about \$20 mil-

lion in annual savings through "operational improvements" but said more was needed to maintain assets valued at \$4 million.

"[The] council continues to operate in deficit, and requires a further \$21 million per annum improvement over a three to five-

year period to fully fund depreciation and achieve a small operating surplus."

He said the proposed rate increase would raise between \$8.4 million and \$16.5 million.

CONTINUED PAGE 2





Celebrities: Famous faces included Stedman Graham, Oprah Winfrey and Richard Branson. Picture: REUTERS



Emotional: Nelson Mandela's coffin draped in South African national flag. Picture: REUTERS



Captivated: Villagers watch the funeral service on big screens. Picture: GETTY IMAGES

# Villagers take back seat

WITH their village invaded by presidents, foreign dignitaries and celebrities, many of Qunu's residents opted to view the state funeral of their most famous son from their homes.

"I am happy watching this on television. My eyes are bad. I can see it better this way," said Dickson Gangatele, 73.

In the 10 days since Mr Mandela's death was announced on December 5, his boyhood home has been a hive of round-the-clock activity as funeral organisers rushed to build a venue for the 4500 people who wanted to attend.

Qunu's rural tranquillity has been interrupted by the constant thumping whirr of military helicopters and convoys bringing in troops as the village was placed under a security clamp-down.

Long-time resident Mr Gangatele was sitting with his 27-year-old daughter Weziwe, as the sounds of a 21-gun salute signalled the arrival of Mr Mandela's flag-draped casket carried on a gun carriage.

"I am happy. He had been suffering for so long in hospital," an emotional Mr Gangatele said. "He is free now."



Moving: The funeral service taking place in Mr Mandela's ancestral home in in Qunu. Picture: REUTERS

While the formal section of the state funeral was broadcast live to the world, the burial was closed to the public on the wishes of the Mandela family.

"I'd like to watch, but they say we are not al-

lowed. It's only the family," said Nolinda Ruba, who was preparing food for villagers for after the funeral.

Traditionally, funerals are open to anybody, but the South African government had limited guests at

the public part of the ceremony, citing security concerns and space constraints.

Outside the gates of the guarded Mandela family estate, Nomvula Luphondo, 44, lingered in the hope of a

final glimpse of her hero.

"Maybe they'll let me in," said Ms Luphondo, 44, who spent the night on the back of an open pick-up truck outside the gates.

"It would be nice to say goodbye, but we'll probably

have to go to the public viewing area," she said, wearing the jersey of South Africa's national rugby team, the Springboks.

Several hundred people gathered to watch the large screen at the nearby Nelson Mandela Museum, including Pascal Moloi, 52, who made the long drive from Johannesburg.

"We're in a position where we could have been accredited ... but we always said that we're not going to sit with the VIPs," Mr Moloi said. "We wanted to be here amongst the people who live here."

Ndumiso Jaca, 49, rode his motorbike down from Pretoria, the seat of government, "only stopping for small breaks" in between.

"It will not be the same again," said Mr Jaca, who had a large African National Congress (ANC) flag pinned to the back of his motorcycle.

But the former commander in the now-disbanded military wing of the ANC, called Umkhonto we Sizwe (Spear of the Nation), which Mr Mandela set up in the fight against apartheid, also told AFP he was disappointed he was not among those lucky enough to be inside. AFP

## Wollongong council seeks 8 per cent rate rise for \$21m boost

FROM PAGE 1

"The council would bridge the balance with a mix of efficiency targets, changes to service levels and, potentially, additional fees and charges," he said.

Wollongong's financial review follows a government-led overhaul of local government finances

designed to ensure councils remain financially viable in future.

In April, the NSW Treasury Corporation assessed all state councils, finding Wollongong to be in a moderate financial position.

A quarter of the state's council were found to be in a "weak" or "very weak" position, and more than half were projected to end up

in a very weak state if nothing was done to improve their finances.

In comparison to Wollongong's planned increase, the similarly-sized Newcastle City Council has requested a one-off increase of 1.1 per cent on top of next year's 2.3 per cent rate peg.

However, despite modest rate rise plans this year, Newcastle

council also flagged future plans to apply for higher rate increases in the 2015-16 financial year.

In Liverpool, the council has outlined three rate scenarios, which could see rates increase up to 11.5 per cent a year on top of the statewide rise.

Rockdale City Council is asking for a 6 per cent rate increase for

four years, while Ku-ring-gai Council wants a permanent 5 per cent annual rate rise.

Councils have until February 24 to finalise applications with IPART.

Wollongong residents can have their say on three budget scenarios until February 5 at [haveyoursaywollongong.com.au](http://haveyoursaywollongong.com.au).

**MERCURY**

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# your say

## Caring about our rock pools

Wollongong City Council has a duty of care when considering the future of "all" rock pools in the Illawarra. After poor planning, mismanagement of ratepayer dollars and some very bad decision making (the council are in need of \$21 million to "square the ledger").

Correct me if I'm wrong but did we not just waste \$20 million on the removal of the birdcage etc when it was not needed nor wanted by the ratepayers? As well it must have been obvious then that it would blow the budget.

To even consider letting go any of our historic and valuable rock pools is an abominable disgrace. The physical and mental welfare of our citizens is or should be our number one priority, especially considering the poor health of people in general. The provision of parks, walking tracks, bike tracks, exercise machines and pools is of the utmost importance and makes a huge contribution to our wellbeing.

Many of these ocean pools are highly valued and used every day by various organisations and private individuals. Raising the rates and taking away our rock pools is not an option.

You cannot and must not pass the buck on this one so please for all concerned go back the drawing board.  
**Tony Stoddart, Balgownie**

### Small acts of kindness

I would like to thank Sue and the team at the Green Frog Cafe for the act of kindness that is rarely seen these days.

I was purchasing breakfast on Wednesday and asked if I could have change of a \$10 note, explaining that I frequently donate a fiver to a number of the homeless from time to time.

Sue told me that another patron had left a small sum of money to be used for this very thing; she had her team make a coffee and a sandwich that I could deliver along with my fiver. Now it may

not seem much but it is the small acts of kindness that count the most.

I delivered the goods discreetly with a quiet Merry Christmas and went on my way. Thank you Sue and the team at the Green Frog, your act of kindness really brightened my day.

**Joan Matthews, Narellan**

### Railway shortcomings

I thought that I had heard just about every possible silly excuse from a railway spokesperson, but the reason given for why a four-car train was overcrowded in peak-hour was because of a police operation is totally ridiculous.

I may not be the brightest light on the Christmas tree, but I know when the fairy at the top is loading crap into the Christmas stocking.

The real reason that the South Coast Line is running mainly four-car trains is that the platforms at many stations are too short to take a full eight-car set and

that the railways are scared that when the guard opens the doors, passengers will step out and fall to the ground.

Bob Cooper is absolutely right about continued overcrowding on services, the only way to change railway managers' mentality is to sack the whole useless lot of them and put someone in charge who knows what a train is and what a stranded passenger is.

The Minister for Transport would be a great start.  
**Dave Cox, Corrimal**

### Throw away the key

I was horrified, disgusted, and sick in the stomach when I read the story in Friday's paper about that sick bastard who was trading child porn. Can someone please tell me how this grub is still walking our streets? How could anyone do this sort of thing? They need to be locked up immediately and for a very long time.  
**Shane McCraig, Primbey**

### Letters to the Editor

Email: letters@illawarramercury.com.au  
Online: illawarramercury.com.au

Letters should be no more than 200 words and should be typed or clearly written. All letters need an address and business hours phone number for verification.

By submitting your letter to us for publication you agree that we may edit the letter for legal, space or other reasonable reasons and that the letter may be published in the newspaper, on our website or in other media.

### From the web

#### Rates of attrition

So Newcastle asks for a 1.1 per cent rate rise while we get sluggish with an 8 per cent rise. Can we switch councils or bring back the administrators please.  
**greeny**

#### Funded by the feds

That's because the NSW Liberal govt has given Newcastle \$340 million to revitalise its CBD. We have no such money given to Wollongong council to revitalise our CBD, it all has to come out of our rates. Blame Barry O'Farrell.  
**roily**

#### Call to cut the flow

Time for ratepayers to get organised and insist that council management not treat us as a herd of passive cash-cows to be milked to bail them out of their inability to manage properly.  
**Bruce de Coledale**

#### Facade of prosperity

On one hand the council want to raise rates by 8 per cent, then waste \$1 million of our money on painting a private property just to make it look good. And they justify this by saying it's been done in Newcastle. Pathetic.  
**Ratepayer**

#### Booze now no better

What can you say about mixed messages on alcohol abuse? We have stories of extreme violence by alcohol-affected people every day and yet here we promote what has turned out to be the biggest binge drinking event in the region. A piss-up dressed up in a charity event, just because you wear reindeer ears doesn't make it right.  
**Greg**

#### Devoid of decoration

Bully for those that put up Xmas lights but just take a look at Crown Street Mall - a damned disgrace, desolate, just like a precinct in a communist country. Not even a bit of tinsel, very sad.  
**john hors**

#### Merry holiday to all

So we've come to the point in a Christian country where we can't say Happy Christmas, or we might offend the non-believers. What a sorry state of affairs.  
**sam gaucci**

AUSTRALIA DOES A COMPLETE WITHDRAWAL FROM AFGHANISTAN...



ENGLAND DOES A COMPLETE WITHDRAWAL FROM THE ASHES...



### On the street

Is the fencing around the new gum trees in the mall a good idea?



**Ashlea Braz, Woonona**  
It probably is, but it looks ugly.



**Tony Puttock, Wollongong**  
I'd say so. They really should have put it around them when they were first put in to stop the brain-deads vandalising them.



**Mia Heycott, Wollongong**  
Yes, to stop the public from hurting them.



**Arthur Kirkland, Jamberoo**  
No, it doesn't look good. The whole mall doesn't look good.

**ONLINE POLL**  
Have you bought outdoor Christmas lights for your house this year?

**VOTE NOW**  
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### YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Do you feel safe going out in the Illawarra at night?





# your say

## Council passes buck on rises

Wollongong council has learnt from the book *Animal Farm* and the NSW state government on how to put the price up or tell you there is no money for services.

In the book *Animal Farm* the pigs run and take everything, but they use a pig called Squealer to tell the bad news or take things off the other animals. This way the pigs can't be blamed for anything.

The NSW state government came up with IPART (Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal). This tribunal put the price of electricity up 26 per cent in one go. They also continually put up the price of water, gas etc. This way the state politicians can't be blamed for putting prices up - it was IPART's fault, not us and they are independent, you know.

Now we have Wollongong council following suit.

They get a group of 30 people who tell us we must pay more rates and get no services. The council can't be blamed because they didn't come up with this,

someone else did and they are independent, you know. Beautiful.

Ray Jaeger, Coledale

### NSW clearly ageist

When a person in NSW reaches 85 years they are required to have a driving test if they want to continue holding a licence.

This is direct discrimination towards the elderly and against the Age Discrimination Act (2004), which states age discrimination is when a person is treated less favourably than another person in a similar situation because of age.

All have to be medically fit to drive so there is no discrimination there, so if elderly persons are medically fit they should be allowed to drive.

In Tasmania, they have already stopped testing drivers over 85. We should challenge this law.

Tony Foot, Unanderra

### Mandela was no saint

In response to the article by Johannes Myburgh, "Hero's farewell for Madiba" (*Mercury*, Wednesday December 11), we need to put some balance and perspective into the life of the late Nelson Mandela.

Clearly, Mr Mandela had much to consider while in jail. After being released and eventually becoming leader of South Africa he preached reconciliation and forgiveness, for which he should be congratulated, honoured and respected.

But, Mr Mandela should not be put forward by the left of politics as some Christ-like saint. It should be noted Nelson Mandela was a full-on card-carrying member of the Communist Party and led an extremely violent Marxist organisation that terrorised the local "white" population.

I understand Nelson Mandela was opposing the unjust apartheid system in the treatment of local black South

Africans. The problem was not opposing the system, but how he went about it.

The memorial service was a disgrace in its open celebration of tyrants, dictators and terrorists.

Adrian Devlin, Fairy Meadow

### Wollongong exorbitant

Why would anyone in their right mind want to shop in Wollongong? Our most well-off city is now among the most expensive places to buy anything, with most people choosing to travel south to Warragong or Shellharbour shopping centres, or north to Miranda Fair.

The new GPT retail centre will be up and running soon and this will be the ultimate test in consumer confidence.

If Wollongong City Council had half a brain, they would suspend parking meter operations until after the January sales in a genuine attempt to encourage shoppers back to our city.

Dave Cox, Corrmal

### Letters to the Editor

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### From the web

#### Drug test offenders

Why don't the police do drug tests on people arrested for violence? Steroids, ice, hash are much more likely to be implicated than alcohol.

Query

#### Motivated by money

Nightclubs and other licensed venues don't want restrictions to operating hours because it's all about them and how much money they'll lose! They couldn't care less about the impact of drunk, drugged-out patrons leaving their goldmines and inflicting pain and suffering on innocent victims!

Basil

#### Too much energy

One issue that seems to be missed is the consumption of energy drinks. When someone is intoxicated from alcohol, they become drowsy. When they consume, for example, 10 energy drinks with a double shot of vodka, they are not only drunk, but also highly alert. Why not trial no energy drink sales and no double shots?

B Thomas

#### Restrictions futile

How is a 1am lock-out and 3am close going to fix problems that occur at 9pm (Daniel Christie assault) and 10pm (Thomas Kelly assault)? Both perpetrators came straight out of central casting - amped-up gym junkies with neck tattoos, Henley T-shirts and troubled childhoods.

TT McSnee

#### Parking option

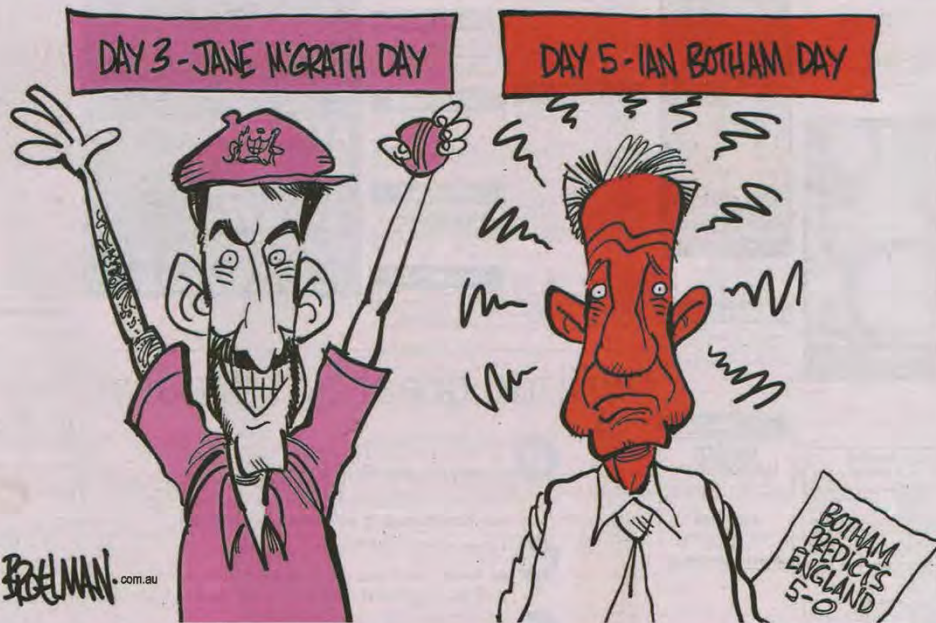
Building more parking at Thirroul will create problems for commuters and locals during construction. A better solution would be to take back some land from the Corrmal coke works when it closes.

The Plod

#### Logical progression

If the plan was to make the commute to and from Sydney faster, it was inevitable that stations like Thirroul would be made into larger interchanges. Shame this wasn't better identified and more parking accommodated by the council earlier, in time for the changes.

Commuter



### On the street

What's the best way to keep children entertained during the summer holidays?



Patricia Ellem, Wollongong  
Taking them to the movies.



Luke Doherty, Wollongong  
Sports and free activities. The Big Fat Smile had activities and crafts for them in the mall.



Stan Crinis, North Wollongong  
The ice-skating was really good. There needs to be more activities in the mall.



Lynne McCulloch, Forbes  
The beach.

ONLINE POLL  
Would you mind paying a \$6 fee to visit your GP?

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### PREVIOUS RESULTS

Do you know how to perform CPR?





Barriers  
for job  
seekers  
PAGE 3



Aussie  
spirit  
on show  
GOOD LIFE



We must  
bounce on  
Davidson  
SPORT



Media

# ILLAWARRA MERCURY

SINCE 1855

Thursday, January 9, 2014

\$1.40 (incl GST)



## Seaside jewel

One of the proposals before the Wollongong City Council is to close some rock pools, which has sparked community outcry. Today the Illawarra Mercury begins a series which highlights each pool's attractions, its history and talks to people like Beau Edwards and Marita Van Dermoys who use them.

■ We start with Coledale on page 9

Picture: CHRISTOPHER CHAN

# Samurai sword used in attack: court told 'I've chopped his hand off'

EMMA SPILLETT

A LAKE Heights man nearly severed another man's arm with a samurai sword over an \$800 drug debt, warning him the "Russians" would take out his bloodline if

the debt was not paid, a court has heard.

Bryan David Pearson is accused of slashing the man's arm with the sword, leaving him with a deep cut that penetrated the bone, before he chased him, waving the weapon and threatening to kill his family.

The 55-year-old, who appeared by video link in Wollongong Local Court yesterday, had known the alleged victim for several years and had been chasing him over the unpaid drug money.

On December 23 last year, Pearson went

to the man's Berkeley home and allegedly threatened his mother, warning her that the "Russians" were going to kill her family.

■ CONTINUED PAGE 2

TODAY Cloudy 20°

TOMORROW Partly cloudy 24°

DETAILS - P18 TV - P27

illawarramercury.com.au





Beloved: The Coledale ocean pool is well-used by locals and visitors in all seasons. Picture: CHRISTOPHER CHAN

# Pool almost 100 and still going strong

KATE WALSH

WHEN the tide is high, it's easy to overlook the Coledale ocean pool. Carved deep into the rock between the pebbly shore and the wide ocean, it could be mistaken as part of the natural landscape.

That is until you walk a little closer, and notice swimming caps rhythmically bobbing up and down the length of the pool, and groups of young girls in multicoloured rash vests perched on the edge before practising their perfect dives.

Like all the Illawarra's ocean pools, it is beloved by locals and visitors alike. When the Wollongong citizens panel recommended two or three pools be "reduced" or "run to fall" to cut costs for Wollongong City Council, the outcry was swift and



strong. No-one wanted the pools to close, with the council sent 360 responses in relation to the suggestion.

Built by volunteers in 1915, the Coledale rock pool has been the swimming spot of choice for many for almost a century.

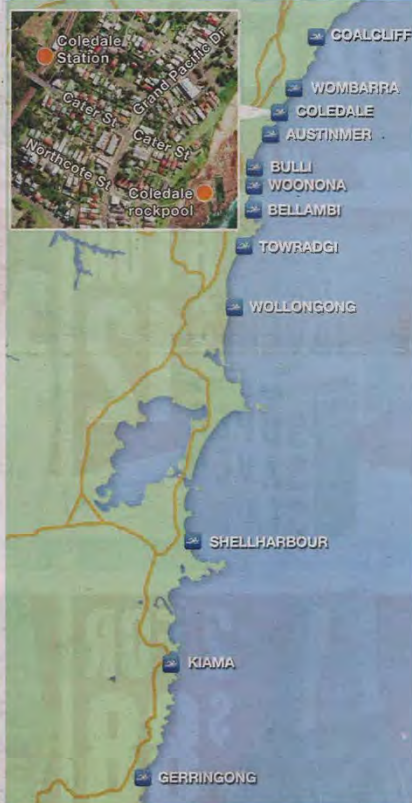
Some visitors just want to cool off in the shallows, others are more serious about their strokes and continue to swim on frigid winter mornings, steadily tallying lap after lap.

Then there are those who choose not to jump in, preferring to simply sit on the bench and gaze out at the ocean.

It was even the site of an innovative artwork when Illawarra artist Lizzie Buckmaster Dove installed temporary sculptures along the nearby rock platform at the start of last year, creating cosmic lunar circles with the aqua-speckled concrete left over from the rock pool's last relining.

For osteopath Beau Edwards, the salty stretch of water is the perfect place to combine keeping fit and relaxing.

## ROCK POOLS



Armed with goggles and stripes of flesh-coloured zinc on his nose and lips to ward off the sun, he hits the pool as often as he can in the summer, swimming up and down for about half an hour at least five days of the week.

He said the pool was not only a great spot, but provided an easy way for people to stay active.

"I send people there for rehabilitation exercises," Mr Edwards said.

"If [the ocean pools] were to close, it would put a lot of pressure on the other pools. It's a good way for people to exercise."

His aunt Alice Mear is also a regular visitor when the weather is fine.

At 89, her summer swims have almost become ritualistic over the past 30 years.

She knows many nearby residents who walk down the asphalt driveway at the end of Northcote Street to the pool each day.

"I love the fresh water coming in when it's a bit rough, but it's still quite safe," she said.

"It really is lovely."

■ The series on the Illawarra's rock pools continues in Saturday's Mercury.

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news 6

# Poll draws low response

KATE McILWAIN

THE furore over Wollongong City Council's financial review appears to have waned during the holiday season, with just 90 people completing a poll about options for service cuts and rate rises.

The survey is part of the latest round of community consultation over the controversial review, through which the council hopes to find an extra \$21 million in its annual budget.

Residents have been asked to

## Significant rate rise option wins favour

chose between three budget scenarios, which each have different combinations of rate rises, service cuts, fee hikes and efficiencies.

Despite the low participation so far, a clear trend has emerged showing half the respondents would prefer the council to adopt the third budget scenario.

The scenario reads: "More significant rate rise, efficiencies with

low impact on services and staff".

Twenty-nine per cent of the respondents have selected the second option of "limited service cuts, moderate fee and rate rise, efficiencies including some outsourcing".

Only 21 per cent have opted for the first scenario, which would include the "citizen's panel recommendations including service

cuts and outsourcing, moderate fee rise, [and a] small rate rise".

In a previous feedback round, where residents were asked to comment on suggestions put forward by a citizens focus group, the council received a total of 624 submissions.

This included 333 emails and letters and 291 online survey responses. There were also three

petitions and 52 comments on an online discussion forum.

Residents can have their say on the budget options by completing the quick poll, filling in a submission form, or sending an email.

They can also write a letter to the council's general manager.

All feedback must be received by the council by 5pm on Wednesday, February 5.

To find out more about the review and complete the survey, visit the website [www.haveyour-saywollongong.com.au](http://www.haveyour-saywollongong.com.au)



## Icy reception for Canadian visiting home

WOLLONGONG'S Paul Cuthbertson has experienced firsthand the full force of the freak "polar vortex" sweeping the US and Canada.

The Canadian expat, who has lived in the Illawarra for five years, has been visiting family in his home country since Christmas Day, arriving just in time to feel the brunt of the extreme cold.

He sent the *Mercury* some incredible snaps of the chilly weather, including shots of a lake steaming due to the cold.

"It was so cold the other day that [our beer froze] within a few minutes," he said.

"My parents were without power for six days from the ice storm and it was restored three hours before I arrived."

He said the weather had slowly started to warm up - just in time for his return to Australia today.

Blanket of white: Snow glistens as far as the eye can see in every direction in these images from Canada, which is in the grip of an extreme deep freeze. Pictures: PAUL CUTHBERTSON



## Company hit with big fine

TELSTRA has been hit with a \$510,000 fine for failing to connect new landline customers on time.

Under federal law, the telecommunications giant is required to connect new urban customers within two days, provided their property has an existing, working telephone line.

The Australian Communications and Media Authority yesterday said Telstra had successfully connected 88.6 per cent of new connections within that time frame during the 2012/13 financial year, which was below ACMA's 90 per cent benchmark.

ACMA chairman Chris Chapman said the \$510,000 fine took into account that the 2012/13 financial year was marked by several extreme weather events and Telstra had since made a "significant effort" to improve its performance.

A Telstra spokesman said damage to the network from a string of natural disasters had impacted on the telco's ability to connect new customers during 2012/13.

"Last [financial] year, we faced unprecedented damage to our network from natural disasters," he said.

"We fixed more than one million faults for our customers and a number of events, such as the Queensland floods, Tasmanian fires and Warrambool Exchange fire, placed great strain on our network and resources across the country."

He said Telstra accepted the ACMA's finding and apologised to affected customers.

## Drunk drivers caught in blitz

ALMOST 3500 drivers were caught drink-driving on Australian and New Zealand roads during the Christmas holidays.

The Australia New Zealand Policing Advisory Agency (ANZPAA) yesterday released data on its holiday road safety operation, Operation Crossroads, which showed 3473 drink-driving offences were committed by drivers in the two countries.

More than one million road users were tested for alcohol during the 12-day operation and nearly 5700 drivers were screened for drugs, with 546 positive results.

The agency also reported 7845 licence offences, 62,251 traffic infringement notices and 36,287 speeding charges.

New Zealand and Australian police also impounded 1853 cars in the holiday period.

The operation targeted drink-and drug-driving, speeding, fatigue, distraction and motorists not wearing seatbelts.

ANZPAA is the agency that serves police commissioners in Australia and New Zealand.



# Swimmers band together to protect seaside treasure



Valued: When it was suggested that some rock pools be allowed to crumble back into the sea, the loudest voices of protest came from Coalcliff.

Picture: CHRISTOPHER CHAN

## Bold vision carved gem

BEN LANGFORD

CUT from shelves of rock and fed by the world's most beautiful ocean, they are a gift we and our children get to enjoy – thanks to the hard work put in a century ago.

Some of us even pause for a moment after slipping into one of the pools, look around at the escarpment, taste the clean water, and admit we cannot believe our luck.

Is it luck that some visionary thought to put in the hard work so many years ago, digging them out with picks, "borrowing" equipment for the task, taking a few risks for their community, and for future generations?

Could it be luck that they are dotted up and down our coastline, allowing us to peer out at the sea or up at the bush, as we please?

And is it just luck that they were made so well, with the sea walls just the right height to let in the occasional wave and wash the pool clean? Probably not.

And in the case of Coalcliff's beloved pool, certainly not.

It may have been luck that the right crew of miners and surf club members were around in the years just after World War 1.

But it was not luck that they were game enough to decide to take on the job, and resourceful enough to locate some explosives to



assist in the task, plus an old storm drain borrowed from nearby. And it can't be luck that the authorities did not stop them digging.

That's the kind of people we were in the early part of last century, making the most of life between the escarpment and the sea, enjoying a life in paradise, once the day's work in the coal mine was done.

Now, of course, we are somewhat different people. And if the pools were not already there, what would be the chances of such perfect facilities being built these days?

Would the land have already been sold into private hands?

In the age of economic rationalism and "budget emergencies", development applications and the law of negligence and duty of care, would any local body build them just so people can have fun?

Would people be told they don't need a pool, as they can go to the nearest major centre and use the



The rock that the waters need to get changed under. In this photo, taken in 1921, a group, including David Star sits atop the boulder, on the left.



Coalcliff pool on the day of its 1926 opening. Bull Shire Councilor Albert Maclean performed the honours, and his daughter had the first dip in the cold water.

A clipping from the Mercury in 1986 shows the site when first opened in 1921 and when further construction was completed in 1926.

pool there?

Would the council's risk managers be convinced that it's OK for people to swim in a pool where waves could wash them out on a rough day?

And what if they knew teenagers would one day cling to the rails at the sea end of the pool, yelling with glee as the waves crash into

them, flinging themselves into the whitewash as it crowds the pool? And they would do it even if a sign said don't?

Of course, the pools would have to be built and budgeted by government – at least one level of it, and probably two. And when a toilet block can cost \$760,000 (Townradg) and a

car park can cost \$32 million (Heathcote MP Lee Evans' estimate for a 150-space commuter car park), we see how the cost of digging out a rock pool could be more than we might have guessed, once governments get involved.

At Coalcliff, the locals have been happy to do it themselves.

When the idea that some rock pools could be allowed to crumble back into the sea as part of a proposal to save money for Wollongong City Council, the loudest voices of protest came from Coalcliff.

That idea appears to have been dumped, but the message from Coalcliff today is clear – our pool isn't going anywhere. And if the council stops, we will maintain it ourselves if we have to.

They have done it before, when first building, then expanding and taking care of the pool in the first half of last century.

Jennifer Dalmer is 67 and she has been coming to Coalcliff since she was born – and perhaps beforehand, as her parents regularly visited their holiday shack on the hill where the surf club is now.

She said the original women's dressing shed used to be the space under a rock overhang, with a hessian curtain rigged up and "Only Ladies" splashed in white paint.

"The ritual was when we came down here on holi-

days, you'd go down for a swim before breakfast. And, basically, we still do the same thing.

"We get up, we live just opposite the park, all I have to do is walk out the door, across the park and we're at the pool."

And she doesn't mind it when the sea is a bit rough.

"It's rather challenging and fun – it's like doing an ocean swim but in a little bit of safety," she said.

"You just have to make sure you don't get close to the western wall or you'll get washed out. I've floated over it – it wasn't too bad."

With her husband Jim, a life member of the Coalcliff surf club, the pool is an integral part of their lives.

"It doesn't really get cold until about September or so. It stays the same temperature. Some mornings it's down around 15 or 16. The trick is to keep swimming – if you leave it, it's hard to get back in the water."

"I don't swim all year round. My husband swims all year round, but he cheats – he wears a wettie."

But being close to Sydney, it gets busy over the Christmas period.

"If we go down and look at the pool and there are, say, six or seven people in it, we say 'who has opened the gates, and let people into our Coalcliff?'"

Catch the next instalment of our rock pool series in Monday's Mercury.



<p><b>Catholics gather in Gong</b> PAGE 3</p>	<p><b>Youths aim to overcome rejection</b> PAGE 5</p>	<p><b>100 Jobs in 100 Days</b> JANUARY 2014 - JANUARY 2015</p>	<p><b>Stosur heads surge</b> SPORT</p>
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# ILLAWARRA MERCURY

SINCE 1855      Tuesday, January 14, 2014      \$1.40 (incl GST)



**Summer splash**  
The perfect summer weather had holidaymakers turning backflips at Wollongong City Beach yesterday. The good news is there's more on the way with temperatures along the Illawarra coast forecast to reach the mid to high 20s over the next few days. But while you're enjoying a dip in the ocean, spare a thought for those living in the state's west, where temperatures of 40 or more are expected this week.  
Picture: KIRK GILMOUR  
■ HEATWAVE ON THE WAY: PAGE 4

# LAND VALUES FLATLINE

WOLLONGONG LGA	
2010	2013
\$20.51 billion	\$20.49 billion

STAGNATING land values in Wollongong are unlikely to bring rate relief for the city's property owners.

The NSW Valuer-General yesterday revealed the total value of 67,457 properties in the local government area had dropped slightly from \$20.51 billion in 2010 to about \$20.49 billion as at July 1 last year.

However, Wollongong City Council general manager David Farmer warned this would have no effect on the council plans to raise rates by up to 25 per cent over the next three years.

"This re-evaluation only determines how you carve up the total amount of income the council collects," he said.

"We still need to either increase our overall income or decrease our costs through the financial sustainability review, and that is what we're debating at the moment."

The latest land value figures also reveal residential, commercial and light industrial land values have remained steady over the three-year period, while the value of heavy industrial land, commercial properties in the northern CBD, as well as waterfront homes, have dropped slightly.

Illawarra Real Estate Institute chairman Trevor Molenaar said property owners need not worry about the decrease in land values.

"Right now, the market is going really well and has increased by leaps and bounds," he said.

■ FULL STORY - PAGE 4



# No rates reprieve as land values fall

KATE McILWAIN

WOLLONGONG'S total land value has virtually flattened, dropping by \$20 million over the past three years, according to NSW Valuer-General Philip Western.

But property owners hoping the slight decrease might lead to some future rate relief appear to be out of luck, with Wollongong City Council saying it still plans to raise rates by up to 25 per cent.

Mr Western yesterday revealed the total value of 67,457 properties in the local government area had dropped from \$20.51 billion in 2010 to about \$20.49 billion as at July 1 last year.

Councils use these valuations, which are calculated by the NSW government on a three-year cycle and are based on relevant land and property sales data, as a guide for setting ordinary rates.

Yesterday, the council's general manager, David Farmer, said the slow growth would not change plans to implement a rate rise through the controversial financial sustainability review.

The council is considering rate rises of between 16 and 25 per cent over the next three years, as well as some service cuts and efficiencies, as part of the review. Mr Farmer said the

change in overall land values did not affect the total amount of revenue the council collected.

"It doesn't make a difference to our total income, it just determines the share of that total that land owners pay," he said.

"We still need to either increase our overall income or decrease our costs through the financial sustainability review and that is what we're debating at the moment."

He also said this year's figures from the Valuer-General were unlikely to affect many property owners in the Wollongong LGA because the overall decrease represented a

0.01 per cent shift since 2010.

"From our calculations, this is unlikely to have much of an effect on most people's rates," he said. "However, there are always individual cases and there will be winners and losers in this - but not many."

Mr Western said his valuation program in Wollongong had been extensive, analysing 775 residential, 50 commercial, 32 industrial and 83 rural sales.

"Slight increases and decreases have been evident in some residential areas, which is a reflection of localised market conditions as opposed to the broader market in general," Mr

## 2013 LAND VALUES, WOLLONGONG

SUBURB	VALUE	SIZE	VALUE PER SQM
Murrawal Road, Stanwell Park	\$540,000	740sqm	\$730
Keira St, Wollongong	\$500,000	458sqm	\$1,092
Soudan Street, Thirroul	\$400,000	645sqm	\$620
Whiting Crescent, Corrimal	\$280,000	556sqm	\$504
Mark Street, Figtree	\$235,000	556sqm	\$423
Sassafras Avenue, Windang	\$220,000	607sqm	\$362
Rogers Avenue, Kanahooka	\$190,000	556sqm	\$342

Western said. "Prestige and waterfront property has generally shown a moderate decrease in land value."

He said commercial and light-industrial land values remained steady, with the value of some commercial properties in the north of the CBD showing slight decreases.

Demand for heavy industrial property slowed and rural residential land values remained steady with the exception of properties within the Kembla Grange Equestrian Estate, which increased moderately.

Despite the drop in land values, Illawarra Real Estate Institute chairman Trevor Molenaar said the

city's real estate market was booming.

"It does surprise me that the land values have gone down, but I know they do take a blanket approach when it comes to valuing areas," he said.

"Right now, the market is going really well and has increased by leaps and bounds."

He also emphasised the land values issued by the state government were not indicative of a property's overall value but rather "a line in the sand" for councils to use to set rates.

Land owners will receive their individual land valuation notices in the mail soon.

## Illawarra to escape as west bakes

MOST OF NSW will experience heatwave conditions this week with the state's west to sweat through temperatures of 40 degrees or more.

Fire danger warnings were bumped to "high" or "very high" as a new heatwave forecast by the Bureau of Meteorology warned most of the state would be hit by a heatwave this week.

The Illawarra will escape the full brunt but inland NSW is set to be blasted with a "severe heatwave" until at least Friday.

"When high maximum temperatures and above average minimum temperatures are sustained over a number of days, there is a build-up of 'excess' heat," said Alasdair Hainsworth, the Bureau of Meteorology's assistant director for weather services.

"The current event shows large areas of southern Australia will reach severe to extreme heatwave conditions."

An extremely hot air mass over western and inland Australia began moving across the south-east yesterday, the bureau said.

The SES urges people to keep fluids levels up and stay in regular contact with elderly relatives, friends and neighbours.



Cooling off: Whether wetting a line or enjoying a swim, the Illawarra coast will be the place to escape the heatwave.

Picture: KIRK GILMOUR

## Few drinks help calm Cate's nerves at Globe awards

PETER MITCHELL

CATE BLANCHETT won the Golden Globe, was named one of the best dressed and is on track to win another Oscar.

It was a great night for the Australian actress, who admitted knocking back a few vodkas while waiting to hear if she was going to win the dramatic actress Globe for her performance as a fallen New York socialite in Woody Allen's *Blue Jasmine*.

Blanchett was not the

A-Lister enjoying the night with a few drinks.

The Golden Globes have a history of weird and wonderful speeches and Sunday's ceremony lived up to expectations.

"A few vodkas under my belt and here we are," Blanchett, who now has three Golden Globes, told the star-studded crowd inside the Beverly Hilton Hotel.

While Blanchett was the short-priced favourite to win, many of the other major

categories didn't follow the script with Matthew McConaughey for *Dallas Buyers Club* upsetting the dramatic actor race with a win ahead of Chiwetel Ejiofor (*12 Years a Slave*), Idris Elba (*Mandela: Long Walk to Freedom*), Tom Hanks (*Captain Phillips*) and Robert Redford (*All is Lost*).

The *Dallas Buyers Club* also had another big win with Jared Leto, who plays a transsexual prostitute with AIDS, claiming the supporting actor Globe.

Leonardo DiCaprio, for *The Wolf of Wall Street*, upset another Oscar frontrunner, *American Hustle*'s Christian Bale, when he won the Globe's best actor in a comedy/musical category.

The best drama was won by *12 Years a Slave*, confirming the film's favouritism for the best picture Oscar, while Alfonso Cuarón, as expected, took the directing Globe for *Gravity*.

*American Hustle* won the best musical/comedy Globe, giving it momentum and a

chance to cause an upset over *12 Years a Slave* at the Academy Awards.

In the TV categories, *Breaking Bad* cleaned up with the best drama series and Bryan Cranston pocketed the lead dramatic actor prize.

The new comedy *Brooklyn Nine-Nine* upset *Modern Family*, *The Big Bang Theory* and *Girls* for the best comedy series and its star Andy Samberg was the surprise winner of the best comedy actor award.

AAP



Winner: Cate Blanchett holds her best actress award. Picture: GETTY IMAGES



# Daily dip part of relaxed life on the coast



Cool: Natalie and Samarah Winter (centre) enjoy the iconic Bellambi rock pool. Picture: SYLVIA LIBER

ANGELA THOMPSON

ON very hot days at Bellambi rock pool, the swimmers don't disperse with the day's light. They stay until after dark, when the blackness adds a new kind of magic to the delicious sensation of swimming in a protected little rectangle of moving, salty sea.

Swimmers mostly come from the local neighbourhood to this unfussy community melting pot, where everyone is as welcome as the tide.

Bellambi mums Amber Court and Courtney Dugan sit on the blue-painted steps to supervise their children in the water. They have struck up many conversations from this perch. "There's always someone down here to talk to," Mrs Court said. "Everyone sort of looks after each other's kids."

"The best thing of all is it's free." Mrs Court wouldn't pay the \$2.80 for each of her five children to swim at the region's conventional lane pools, but at



Bellambi there are no turnstiles or gates.

In school holidays, the Courts walk the short distance from their Pembroke Mews home down to the pool's edge about 11am. They go home for lunch, and often return to the water in the afternoon.

Sometimes, they'll visit three times a day.

The family was there when a school of whitebait recently washed into the smaller pool - filling it suddenly with thousands

of glimmering little silver figures. Neighbourhood kids came to marvel at the spectacle and the entrepreneurial ones scooped up great buckets of them to sell as bait to the local fish shop.

It was for children that talk of a Bellambi rock pool began in the late 1950s.

A community meeting at Corrimal High School in September 1958 heard that fewer than half of the 3500 children from schools between Bulli Pass and Fairy Meadow could swim, because there weren't the facilities for teaching.

A committee formed, and proposed building rock pools at Bellambi and Towradgi, to be fed twice a day by the tide, and to be used for swimming classes.

According to the *South Coast Times* report on the meeting: "It was stated that children north of Bulli Pass may learn to swim at Thirroul and Austimmer, but that the congestion in the two pools in those places creates unhygienic conditions on a summer day."

Construction of the Bellambi

## ROCK POOLS



pool began in January, 1964. Drilling and blasting of the rock bed was carried out by a construction company, at cost price.

Work could only be done at low tide, and residual water had to be pumped out before concrete could be poured on top of the natural rock bed.

The project came at a cost of \$35,000, including \$20,000 from Wollongong Council, \$7700 from the Joint Coal Board and the balance from the Towradgi-Bellambi Pool Committee, whose members also contributed hundreds of hours worth of voluntary labour.

It opened on September 24, 1966 - two years and nine months after work began - at a ceremony marred by a heavy rainstorm.

In the early 1980s the Bellambi Residents Action Group

campaigning over the state of the pool, described by spokeswoman Lyn Condran as "disgusting".

"There are dead fish, dead birds and bags of rubbish, including broken bottles, in it," she told the *Mercury*. Over time, movement caused large cracks in the concrete slabs, and the pool was closed for several years for the first stage of a \$400,000 repair project, reopening in 2010.

The pool is home to the Bellambi Bluebottles winter swimming club, whose all-male membership swims every Sunday in the cooler months.

Committed members who are away on a swim day are asked to provide photographic proof that they swam in an alternative pool that day, prompting at least one holidaymaker to submerge himself in a street fountain.

## Library seeks ocean pool history

BENJAMIN LONG

WHETHER they are early-morning lap swimmers, families with children, or office workers taking a lunchtime dip, Wollongong's residents are deeply attached to the city's ocean pools.

Of all the money-saving proposals put forward by Wollongong City Council's citizens panel, the suggestion that some of the tidal pools be "run to fail" drew the most negative responses.

The *Mercury's* series on these "salt water sanctuaries" has drawn a strong response from

www.illawarramercury.com.au

readers, with many sharing memories of their favourite pool.

Now the council library is calling on *Mercury* readers to pass on their knowledge of the ocean pools' history. A council spokeswoman said while many of the pools were built in the early 20th century, often by local community groups, the council didn't assume care of them until 1947.

"Because council didn't build the majority of pools, our records on their history are quite sparse," she said.

"The local studies section of our

library would welcome any information from the community about the history of our ocean pools."

Anyone with historical knowledge of any of the pools is encouraged to call 4227 7414, email localhistory@wollongong.nsw.gov.au or visit the local studies section of the Central Library on Burelli Street.

Wollongong City Council looks after nine ocean pools: Coalcliff, Wombarra, Coledale, Austimmer, Bulli, Woonona, Bellambi, Towradgi and Gentleman's Pool, Wollongong.





**Advertiser** NEWS

# Public voices concern about large rate hike

By AGRON LATIFI

As the reality of rate rises and service cuts loom large in people's minds, more and more Wollongong residents are sharing their views.

Last December Wollongong councillors endorsed budget options to go on public exhibition that will deliver rate hikes of 16 to 25 per cent over three years.

They voted 12-1 to support three scenarios, all of which include a combination of service reductions, efficiency measures and a rate rise.

Last Monday, Wollongong City Council had received just over 150 responses and submissions. Four days later that number had jumped to 279.

This figure is expected to more than double before the February 5 deadline as people

consider the three options tabled by council to raise \$21 million annually to help fund service delivery.

Under the first scenario, the council would adopt all recommendations made by the citizens panel, including \$4 million in service cuts, \$7 million in efficiency measures and a rate rise of 16.6 per cent over three years.

The second scenario features a rate rise of 21.7 per cent over three years, but only half the service cuts and a lower rise in fees and charges, while the third has just \$1 million in service cuts but a 25.2 per cent rate rise.

Wollongong Lord Mayor Gordon Bradbery said it was encouraging to see so many people were having their say on the three options to help secure the city's future.

"It is important for people to know that no decision has been made, so this consultation period is a vital time for the community to tell council what they think and what is important to them," Cr Bradbery said.

Save Our Services Wollongong convener Stephen Spencer said the council must put the community first.

"The reality is that the community remains very angry that council has spent, and is continuing to spend, millions of dollars on such grand projects as the Wollongong Mall, while it tells the community that it is going to have to cut services," he said. Residents can make a submission until February 5.

Submissions: [haveyoursaywollongong.com.au](http://haveyoursaywollongong.com.au)

## PET scanner arrives in Gong

From page 1

his help to buy the equipment for Wollongong Hospital. The ultrasound was later purchased with funds raised by the Cancer Carers and the government.

"Between us and Mr Ward we had the [scanner] petition going and by the time they launched the petition, we had more than 10,000 signatures. It was a great response from the people of Wollongong, it [the scanner] has been needed for a long, long time down here."

Illawarra Cancer Carers are encouraging people to attend their PET scanner celebration dinner on January 31 at City Beach Function Centre.

Head of nuclear medicine at Wollongong Hospital, Professor Barry Ellison, will be the guest speaker and Professor Clingan will also speak.

Tickets cost \$75 and include canapes, three-course meal, drinks and live entertainment by Scott Radburn and Jedd Weston.

Mr Wilson said the scanner would save arduous trips to Sydney for very sick people



At last: Illawarra Cancer Carers members Wendy Gray, Leslie Adie, Keith Wilson, Maria Wilson and Kathy Moss celebrated the arrival of the PET scanner. Picture: ADAM McLEAN

and would serve people all along the South Coast.

Healthcare Imaging Services national business development manager for nuclear medicine and PET Matt Ayers said the private/public partnership was a "remarkable and fabulous opportunity" for the people of the region.

"The PET scanner we've purchased is a very complex piece of machinery... and has

the highest [specifications] of its kind in Australia," Mr Ayers said.

"We've spent over \$2.5 million on the PET scanner and the fit-out for the room will be in the vicinity of \$1 million so it's a major financial commitment."

Dinner bookings: 4228 3188 or email [sales@citybeachfunctions.com.au](mailto:sales@citybeachfunctions.com.au)



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# your say

## New election our best hope

While we languish with Phony Abbott's "fix", known widely as "fraudband" with a maximum speed of 50Mbps, England has reached the phenomenal speed of 1.4 terabits a second (in a test).

So basically England has internet speeds close to 30,000 times faster than ours could ever be (even if it was a test).

Tony says we can compete on a global market with this? What about South Korea which plans to spend \$1.7 billion on a new 5G network?

So you want internet speeds that compare to the rest of the world or that ease us able to compete globally?

Best hope for an election fast!  
**Michael Jones, Bellambi**

### A real non-issue

In response to the front page article on breastfeeding at Port Kembla Pool, I would like to comment as I was there at the time of the incident. I heard the conversation between the senior

lifeguard and the man who contacted the Mercury. At all times, the lifeguard was professional and courteous. However, I cannot say that about the complainant.

I have never had an issue breastfeeding my child at the pool or anywhere else in public.

I support the lifeguard's request to the lady in question to move away from the pool steps as it is dangerous, impedes access to other users of the pool, was dangerous for her baby and really, what's the problem with moving a few feet away from the pool edge?

I am disappointed that the Mercury gave this any space in its paper let alone the front page.  
**Emma Corfield, Farnborough Heights**

### Just the science

The sun's activity has plummeted to a century low, baffling scientists and possibly heralding a new mini ice age (Daily Telegraph, January 20).

Not a Fairfax or ABC newsworthy item of course, but trust me, it's news. Enough to send a shiver down the spine of any global warming advocate out there with all their collated data and final reports stating the planet is about to head in the opposite direction and fry us.

The "science is in" isn't it?

I don't want to see an about-turn on this, guys ... let's stay credible.  
**Chas Dean, Mt Keira**

### Council blues bite

A lot has been reported about the financial difficulties in which Wollongong City Council finds itself.

We have a citizens review panel and a huge amount of media reporting on the diabolical state the council is in.

I watched a television advertisement regarding the plight of the council and requesting public help and suggestions.

The only conclusion I can come to is that the general manager and the lord

mayor should resign immediately. If they do not resign they should be forced out and replaced by people who can carry out these vital roles.

It is not the public's job to do their job. How much more ratepayers' money are they going to waste trying to get out of this disgusting mess?

**Frank Tecza, Dapto**

### An ugly welcome

So the Illawarra Folk Festival has been and gone, and thousands have been attracted to our wonderful city again.

What a shame they were welcomed by a poorly maintained road, lack of footpaths and aged facilities at Bulli Showground. This venue is well past its use-by date.

Surely a city ranked the 10th largest in Australia can have better facilities for outdoor events than this? Lack of money or lack of vision?  
**Mike Traynor, Bellambi**

### Letters to the Editor

Email: letters@illawarramercury.com.au

Online: illawarramercury.com.au

Letters should be no more than 200 words and should be typed or clearly written.

All letters need an address and business hours phone number for verification. By submitting your letter to us for publication you agree that we may edit the letter for legal, space or other reasonable reasons and that the letter may be published in the newspaper, on our website or in other media.

### From the web

#### Look after everyone

Wollongong council needs to lead to Thirroul and Austinmer. Same old illegal camping and parking, the usual council response, let's only look after the golden mile. Council, get off your butt and look after the entire city!  
**Wollongongwolf**

#### Big drama for what

What thousands of dollars in anger Sunday wages [at Stuart Park]? How was that a worthwhile exercise? All a big drama over camping, which hurts no-one and the official car park on the grass did more damage than tents ever have.  
**Joel**

#### Worry-free then

In my 20s, my friends and I used to jump in the blow hole. No-one ever thought anything of it until the immigrant family was swept out to sea and drowned.  
**DavidXYZ**

#### Faking responsibility

Humans have been around for thousands of years being curious and stupid. Do you think a fence and sign will stop people from doing stupid things. Let grown-ups be responsible for their own actions.  
**jay**

#### Jobless placements

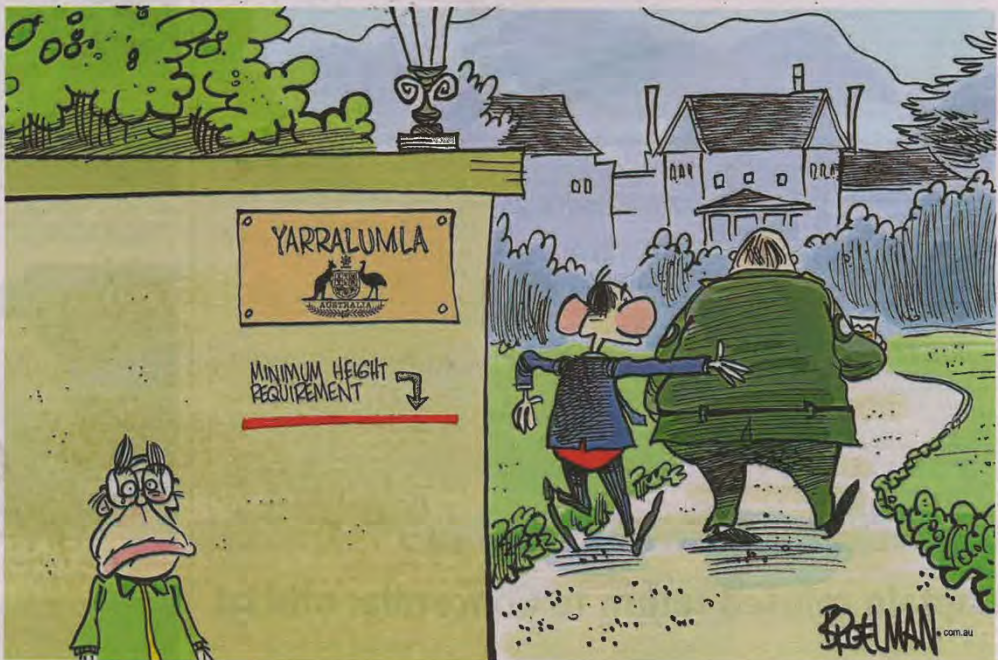
think the best solution would be to put [long-term unemployed] in work placement in council jobs, pay them the min wage and give them experience they can use to get a job. For the people that do really well, put them in a longer-term position and flush out some overpaid council workers who stand around doing nothing.  
**jeff**

#### Well done, Gina

Well deserved Gina [Mammone]. We at the NSW SES know what a great job you have done establishing this vital part of our organisation and all the support you and your team have given to our people around the state.  
**Proud to be part of the SES**

#### Sunrise nightmare

Imagine being stuck on a ship with the Sunrise mob. A living hell!  
**Steve**



### On the street

Who do you think deserves to be Australia's next Governor-General?



**Bridie Allen, Gerringong**  
Me.



**Anthony Hourigan, Kiama**  
I think Peter Cosgrove is the right choice.



**Sheelah Boleyn, North Wollongong**  
Quentin Bryce has been wonderful. I wish she could continue.



**Dianne Lindsley, Wollongong**  
I would like another female. That would be lovely.

**ONLINE POLL**  
Are you happy your children are heading back to school?  
**VOTE NOW**  
illawarramercury.com.au

### YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

Do you agree with the government's work for the dolo plan?





# Final moments recalled

BREE FULLER

A WOLLONGONG man who died after being restrained by police complained to them he couldn't breathe in the moments before his death, an inquest has heard.

Fat Morena told the two police officers pinning him to the ground "Get off me, I can't breathe" just minutes before he was handcuffed and found to have stopped breathing.

Giving evidence in Sutherland

## Suspect said he couldn't breathe: inquest

Coroner's Court, Senior Constable Brian Rice acknowledged he was kneeling on Mr Morena's back when the 34-year-old complained he couldn't breathe, but said he had "nothing more than 20 per cent" of his body weight on him at the time.

He, along with Senior Constable Robert Simpson, had restrained

the 114-kilogram man after what Sen Const Rice described as the "most violent altercation" in his nine years' police service.

The court heard Mr Morena was subject to several "knee strikes" and a punch to the left side of his head as the officers tried to subdue him.

However the pair denied they

were heavy-handed.

Barrister representing the Morena family Douglas Marr challenged Sen Const Simpson's account that Mr Morena went "berserk" when the two plain clothes officers confronted him in the car park of a Bulli unit block. "Did you and Senior Constable Rice ... open the door, drag him

from his vehicle and throw him up against the wall?"

"No," Sen Const Simpson replied.

Both officers gave evidence Mr Morena seemed "very strong" and did not appear to register any pain during the lengthy altercation.

Earlier the inquest heard Mr Morena was a mid-level methamphetamine dealer who was high on ice at the time of his death.

The inquest continues today.

## Ear clinics target learning barrier

LISA WACHSMUTH

IF children can't hear, they can't learn, which is why a series of Koori Kids Health Days will target a common ear infection.

The prevalence of otitis media - or middle ear infection - is high among Aboriginal children and often begins in the first weeks of life.

Illawarra Shoalhaven Medicare Local's (ISML) Journey to Health team hopes the sessions will raise awareness of the condition, and other childhood health problems, among parents and carers of Aboriginal children.

ISML Closing the Gap liaison officer Clare Williams said otitis media often went undetected, resulting in recurring ear disease.

Otitis refers to all forms of inflammation and infections of the inner ear.

"Most kids get it at some stage though Koori kids tend to get it at a much younger age, it tends to last longer and is more likely to reoccur during their childhood.

"Each time it can cause scarring of the ear which can lead to hearing loss, which then can lead to problems learning at school."

The health sessions will provide information to parents on the warning signs, risk factors and problems caused, while free health screening and kids' activities would also be available.

The Koori Kids Health Days will be held this Saturday from 9am to noon at Green Bean Cafe, Corrimal; on February 15 at Berkeley Community Centre, and February 22 at Nowra's Cullunghutti Aboriginal Child and Family Health Centre. For more information, call 4220 7888.



Looking for signs: Journey to Health chronic care co-ordinator Carolynne Leon checks Ty Wicks, 3, for a common ear infection that will be the focus of upcoming health sessions. Picture: GREG TOTMAN

## Costello sole choice for Future Fund

PETER Costello was the federal cabinet's sole choice to take over the role of chairman of the \$97 billion Future Fund, Finance Minister Mathias Cormann says.

The former Liberal federal treasurer was confirmed in the role yesterday, having been the acting chairman since January 11, following the resignation of David Gonski to become chairman of ANZ Bank.

Mr Costello, who was responsible for the establishment of the fund in 2006, was appointed to the fund's board in 2009 by the former Labor government following his decision to retire from politics.

Senator Cormann said the cabinet had decided to appoint an existing director of the board, rather than spreading the search wider.

"There was no shortlist beyond Peter Costello," the minister said in Canberra.

"He was judged by us to be the most appropriate choice."

Mr Costello was the nation's longest-serving treasurer (1996-2007) and set up the fund to cover future public-servant liabilities.

A portfolio update on Monday found the fund posted significant growth of 17.2 per cent to \$96.56 billion in 2013.

Since it was established with government contributions of \$60.5 billion, the fund has made a return of 6.9 per cent a year, just shy of its long-term target of 7.2 per cent a year.

Senator Cormann and Treasurer Joe Hockey also announced the appointment of John Poynton as a fund board member to the Future Fund.

He brings to the role more than 40 years of experience in the financial services industry.

He is chairman of Azure Capital and a director of Crown Perth, and previously served as a director of the Export Finance and Insurance Corporation.

"Mr Poynton is an outstanding professional with very high standing in his field of expertise," Mr Hockey and Senator Cormann said in a statement.

Mr Costello and Mr Poynton have been appointed to their positions for five years. AAP

## Residents favour rates hike as submissions close

KATE McILWAIN

WOLLONGONG residents have just a few more hours to have their say in the latest round of consultation over the council's controversial financial sustainability review.

The deadline for submitting responses to help councillors to

decide how high to raise rates and which services to cut is 5pm today.

Already, more than 200 people have completed a Wollongong City Council poll canvassing views on three budget scenarios which each have different combinations of rate rises, service cuts, fee hikes and efficiencies.

As of late yesterday, option

three was the clear leader with 45 per cent of respondents selecting it as their preferred option.

The scenario proposes a "more significant rate rise (and) efficiencies with low impact on services and staff", and would mean rates go up about 25 per cent over the next three years.

Option one - which has significant

service cuts and efficiencies and a 16 per cent rate rise - was the next most popular scenario with 29 per cent of votes, while the middle ground second scenario gained 27 per cent of votes.

In addition to the survey, residents can submit letters, emails and online submissions until the end of the day.

Councillors will then debate which rate option to choose at the February 17 council meeting.

The council has encouraged all residents to make a submission before submissions close.

Visit the council website at <http://www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/projects/financial-sustainability> to make a submission.



## **MEDIA MENTIONS – TV and RADIO**

**Location: Wollongong Station: WAVE FM**

**Program:** 06:00 News **Producer:** Mr Rob Gooda

**Aired On:** 24/05/2013 6:01:38 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

David Farmer, General Manager, Wollongong City Council says some of Wollongong's public assets may have to be sold off as the Council tries to control spiralling costs. Farmer says assets are being neglected due to lack of money and include the kiosk at Mount Keira and the Berkeley Community Centre.

**Duration:** 0 mins 50 secs

**Interviewee:** David Farmer, General Manager, Wollongong City Council

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** 06:30 News **Producer:**

**Aired On:** 24/05/2013 6:32:59 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

Wollongong City Council has warned it will no longer be able to meet all its infrastructure commitments going into the future. Projects it says it cannot fund at the moment include roads in the Dapto area, the Bald Hill master plan, Mount Keira cafe and refurbishment of the Thirroul Beach pavilion.

**Duration:** 0 mins 50 secs

**Interviewee:** David Farmer, General Manager, Wollongong City Council

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** Mornings **Producer:** Ms Jennifer Courtney

**Aired On:** 24/05/2013 8:49:04 AM **Compere:** Nick Rheinberger

Rheinberger plays an interview by Nick McLaren, ABC Reporter, speaking to David Farmer, Wollongong Council, about the council's finance situation. Farmer says they are in a sound short term position but in the long term they are not able to replace their assets as they fall due. He says that the NSW Government is very clear that councils must model how they will bridge the gap to become financially sustainable. He says that a huge rate increase to bridge the gap is not fair to the community, but they instead need to examine their assets and how they are delivered. Farmer also comments that a country council model is currently on the agenda, however an Independent Local Government Review Panel is not recommending a merger of Wollongong and Shellharbour Council.

**Duration:** 4 mins 46 secs

**Interviewee:** David Farmer, Wollongong Council

**Location: Wollongong Station: WIN Wollongong**

**Program:** WIN News **Producer:** Mr Peter Freestone

**Aired On:** 7/08/2013 6:34:49 PM **Compere:** Kerry Johnston

Wollongong City Council has flagged a rate increase among numerous possible measures in a bid to reduce the organisation's debt. Gordon Bradbery, Mayor, has received a number of complaints regarding the decision of Greg Petty, Councillor, to take part in a debate despite a possible conflict of interest.

**Duration:** 1 mins 50 secs

**Interviewee:** Gordon Bradbery, Mayor, Wollongong City Council

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** Mornings **Producer:** Ms Jennifer Courtney

**Aired On:** 8/08/2013 8:45:24 AM **Compere:** Nick Rheinberger

Rheinberger discusses the interview between ABC host Peter Riley and Leigh Stewart Campaigner, and a conversation with Gordon Bradbury about Mt Keira Road. Rheinberger notes that it will be expensive to fix Mt Keira and the infrastructure in the area. In a pre-recorded interview Bradbery says tenders will be called for the stabilisation of the mountain, which will then allow work on the road to commence. Bradbery says it will cost \$2.3m. Bradbery says it is a geotechnical challenging area and this costs 'big bickies' to keep it open. Riley sites David Farmer has said everything is on the table, and questions the Wollongong Council's financial sustainability. Bradbery says they are adding to



their bill all the time and replacement costs are immense. Bradbery goes on to say that many of the assets of the city including footpaths and water infrastructure have not been maintained over the last 50 years and have reached their use by date. He says the standard of the footpaths in the city are horrific. He says that the asset depreciation bill is \$62m but the council are only putting n \$45m to cover that this year. Bradbery says that one option is to raise rates but to go above the IPART recommended rate requires approaching the community.

**Duration:** 8 mins 43 secs

**Interviewee:** Gordon Bradbery, Mayor, Wollongong [Extract]

**Interviewee:** Peter Riley, Compere, ABC Radio [Extract]

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** 06:30 News **Producer:**

**Aired On:** 12/08/2013 6:31:55 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

Wollongong Council is preparing to ask the community whether it would prefer high rates or a cutback in services to ensure the council's financial sustainability. Lord Mayor Gordon Bradbery says IPART needs to be notified by December of any intention to apply for a rate rise above the standard variation.

**Duration:** 0 mins 55 secs

**Interviewee:** Gordon Bradbury, Lord Mayor, Wollongong City Council

**Location: Wollongong Station: WIN Wollongong**

**Program:** WIN News **Producer:** Mr Peter Freestone

**Aired On:** 10/09/2013 6:40:46 PM **Compere:** Kerryn Johnston

Wollongong Council is set to launch a community panel within weeks, as an attempt to cut costs across the business. Gordon Bradbery, Lord Mayor, Wollongong City Council, says the panel will be truly representative.

**Duration:** 1 mins 44 secs

**Interviewee:** Gordon Bradbery, Lord Mayor, Wollongong City Council

**Interviewee:** Stephen Spencer, Save Our Services Convenor

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** 17:30 News **Producer:**

**Aired On:** 10/09/2013 5:30:48 PM **Compere:** Newsreader

Save Our Services wants greater transparency from Wollongong Council about its finances. A decision over cuts and rate rises needs to be made by December, when council has to inform IPART. Gordon Bradbery, Mayor, Wollongong City Council says the issue is the long term financial sustainability of council and insists TCorp have assessed them.

**Duration:** 1 mins 30 secs

**Interviewee:** Gordon Bradbury, Mayor, Wollongong City Council

**Interviewee:** Stephen Spencer, Save Our Services

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** 12:30 News **Producer:**

**Aired On:** 10/09/2013 12:32:39 PM **Compere:** Newsreader

Stephen Spencer, Save Our Services wants an independent audit of Wollongong Council finances before any service cuts or rate rises take place. A decision over cuts and rate rises needs to be made by December, when council has to inform IPART.

**Duration:** 1 mins 03 secs

**Interviewee:** Stephen Spencer, Save Our Services

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** Mornings **Producer:** Ms Jennifer Courtney

**Aired On:** 10/09/2013 10:10:33 AM **Compere:** Nick Rheinberger

Interview with Stephen Spencer, Save Our Services, regarding his address to the Wollongong Council last night, calling for an independent financial review of council 'books', before service cuts or rate



rises take place. Council was informed of a structure renewal backlog of \$192m in 2007, now it allegedly stands at \$500m, while the community knew nothing of the increase. Save Our Services wants the council General Manager to create a comprehensive report of the current financial outlook, explaining how it has occurred, and then hire an independent third party to assess the report.

**Duration:** 6 mins 25 secs

**Interviewee:** Stephen Spencer, Save Our Services

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** 07:30 News **Producer:**

**Aired On:** 11/09/2013 7:33:09 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

Gordon Bradbery, Lord Mayor, Wollongong City Council, says council hasn't made a decision yet about increasing rates or cutting services. A three month community consultation process will now begin.

**Duration:** 0 mins 56 secs

**Interviewee:** Gordon Bradbery, Lord Mayor, Wollongong City Council

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** 08:30 News **Producer:**

**Aired On:** 11/09/2013 8:33:24 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

Lord Mayor Gordon Bradbery says a panel of randomly selected Wollongong ratepayers will be asked for their views on rate rises and possible savings as part of a financial sustainability review for Wollongong Council.

**Duration:** 0 mins 44 secs

**Interviewee:** Lord Mayor Gordon Bradbery

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** Breakfast **Producer:**

**Aired On:** 11/09/2013 7:21:55 AM **Compere:** Peter Riley

Pre-recorded interview between Melinda James, ABC reporter and Lord Mayor of Wollongong Gordon Bradbery about the planned community engagement programme to tackle the long term financial sustainability of the council. Riley says this follows the actions of Steve Spencer from Save Our Services who addressed the council because he was concerned about the financial sustainability review that was underway. Bradbery says they are approaching the community for their ideas and while no decisions have been made, he says they have identified that there is a depreciation bill of \$60m per year and are only spending \$45m to address it at present. He says they are working to reduce the deficit in regards to their long term financial sustainability and assures the community that they have been scrutinised by TCorp. Bradbery details the issues they are focussing on including infrastructure, roads, and West Dapto 'coming on line'.

**Duration:** 4 mins 57 secs

**Interviewee:** Gordon Bradbery, Mayor, Wollongong City Council

**Interviewee:** Melinda James, Reporter, ABC Radio

**Location: Wollongong Station: i98 FM**

**Program:** 07:00 News **Producer:** Ms Nicole Charlton

**Aired On:** 11/09/2013 7:04:12 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

Wollongong City Council will launch a community panel in a bid to cut costs. The panel will include 25-40 people chosen by random, and telephoned and will be briefed before making recommendations, with councillors having the final say. General Manager David Farmer says Council needs to find \$200m over the next ten years to improve the city's assets.

**Duration:** 0 mins 39 secs

**Interviewee:** David Farmer, General Manager, Wollongong City Council

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** 06:30 News **Producer:**

**Aired On:** 11/09/2013 6:31:11 AM **Compere:** Newsreader



Gordon Bradbury, Lord Mayor, Wollongong City Council, says the council is showing courage by addressing the issue of its long term financial sustainability. The council is asking residents over the next three months whether they prefer an increase in rates and charges or service cuts to fund infrastructure maintenance.

**Duration:** 0 mins 57 secs

**Interviewee:** Gordon Bradbury, Lord Mayor, Wollongong City Council

**Location:** Wollongong **Station:** ABC Illawarra

**Program:** 06:30 News **Producer:**

**Aired On:** 15/10/2013 6:30:29 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

Gordon Bradbury, Wollongong Lord Mayor, is rejecting suggestions the identities of the city's citizens panel, which provides feedback to council about areas where costs could be cut or rates and fees increased, should be made public. Anna Watson, Shellharbour MP, is calling for more transparency around the panel.

**Duration:** 0 mins 48 secs

**Interviewee:** Gordon Bradbury, Wollongong Lord Mayor

**Interviewee:** Anna Watson, Shellharbour MP

**Location:** Wollongong **Station:** ABC Illawarra

**Program:** 06:30 News **Producer:**

**Aired On:** 15/10/2013 6:31:17 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

Wollongong City Council's annual income has increased due to capital grants and developer contributions, with a net operating surplus of \$25m. David Farmer, General Manager, Wollongong City Council, warns that there will be significant challenges ahead as infrastructure ages and needs to be renewed.

**Duration:** 0 mins 44 secs

**Location:** Wollongong **Station:** ABC Illawarra

**Program:** 07:30 News **Producer:**

**Aired On:** 15/10/2013 7:30:34 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

Anna Watson, MP for Shellharbour has called for the members of Wollongong City Council's Citizens Panel to be publicly revealed but the idea has been rejected by Gordon Bradbery, Wollongong Lord Mayor.

**Duration:** 0 mins 59 secs

**Interviewee:** Gordon Bradbery, Wollongong Lord Mayor

**Interviewee:** Anna Watson, MP for Shellharbour

**Location:** Wollongong **Station:** ABC Illawarra

**Program:** Mornings **Producer:** Ms Jennifer Courtney

**Aired On:** 16/10/2013 9:49:48 AM **Compere:** Nick Rheinberger

Caller Gordon Bradbery, Mayor of Wollongong City Council says in response to the interview about the anonymity of the Community Citizen's Panel, that the Council will make the decisions, and says the panel is a means of achieving consultation. Bradbery explains the make up of the panel and says they statistically represent the city. Bradbery says that Shaun Prince [former Mayoral Candidate] believes he is the 'be all and end all' in terms of advice for the community however Bradbery says in the case of the panel, ordinary everyday people of the community are being consulted.

**Duration:** 2 mins 44 secs

**Interviewee:** Gordon Bradbery, Mayor, Wollongong

**Location:** Wollongong **Station:** ABC Illawarra

**Program:** Mornings **Producer:** Ms Jennifer Courtney

**Aired On:** 16/10/2013 9:38:46 AM **Compere:** Nick Rheinberger

Pre-recorded interview with Shaun Prince, former Mayoral Candidate for Wollongong Council and Stephen Spender(\*) from Save Our Services, about the anonymity of the Community Citizen's Panel set up for the Wollongong Council. Rheinberger says he spoke with Shellharbour MP Anna Watson



who believes the people need to be revealed, but Wollongong Mayor Gordon Bradbery rejects the suggestion. Spender says you can't have a healthy democracy if the process is not transparent and you do not know who is on the panel. He believes it is a cop-out on the part of the Council. Prince also agrees that the identities of the panel should be revealed.

**Duration:** 11 mins 02 secs

**Interviewee:** Shaun Prince, former Mayoral Candidate, Wollongong Council [Extract]

**Interviewee:** Stephen Spender (\*), Spokesperson, Save Our Services [Extract]

**Location: Wollongong Station: WIN Wollongong**

**Program:** WIN News **Producer:** Mr Peter Freestone

**Aired On:** 15/11/2013 7:29:56 PM **Compere:** Kerryn Johnston and Geoff Phillips

Closing Footage. More than 315 disgruntled workers and the community rallied against recommendations made by the citizens panel for major cuts to the Wollongong Council budget.

**Duration:** 0 mins 09 secs

**Location: Wollongong Station: i98 FM**

**Program:** 17:00 News **Producer:**

**Aired On:** 15/11/2013 4:59:04 PM **Compere:** Newsreader

Up to 500 people and council workers have rallied in Wollongong against the city's citizen-led panel budget evaluation. Arthur Rorris, South Coast Labour Council says progress has been made.

**Duration:** 0 mins 39 secs

**Interviewee:** Arthur Rorris, South Coast Labour Council

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** Mornings **Producer:** Ms Jennifer Courtney

**Aired On:** 15/11/2013 10:57:16 AM **Compere:** Nick Rheinberger

ABC reporter Nick McLaren says there are about 300 people at the Wollongong Council stop work rally outside the IPAC Theatre. He says Arthur Rhodes from the South Coast Labour Council, the MP for Wollongong Noreen Hay, General Secretary of the United Services Union Graham Kelly, and Felix Broninberg (\*) from Save Our Services Wollongong will speak at the event. McLaren says council workers have rejected the idea of a citizens panel, because 34 people on the panel doesn't represent 200,000 rate payers. He says Noreen Hay said any move to accept the report is a joke.

**Duration:** 2 mins 33 secs

**Location: Wollongong Station: i98 FM**

**Program:** 17:00 News **Producer:**

**Aired On:** 19/11/2013 5:01:11 PM **Compere:** Newsreader

There are calls for cuts to Wollongong Council staff in the debate over the city's budget problems. Cr Michelle Blicavs says we must do what is necessary to contain spending and the increase in rates, including cutting council staff and cutting their conditions. Graeme Kelly, United Services Union says the council is out of touch with the rest of the community.

**Duration:** 0 mins 55 secs

**Interviewee:** Cr Michelle Blicavs, Wollongong Council

**Interviewee:** Graeme Kelly, United Services Union

**Location: Sydney Station: 2UE**

**Program:** Nights **Producer:** Ms Vanessa Till

**Aired On:** 19/11/2013 10:09:08 PM **Compere:** Clive Robertson

Regular Segment: Tomorrow's Headlines with Sarah Whyte, Sydney Morning Herald. Whyte says the Wollongong Mayor, Gordon Bradbery, is contemplating allowing three of the ocean pools to be reclaimed by the sea. Whyte says the reason is apparently to secure the long term finance of the council. [cont]

**Duration:** 1 mins 29 secs

**Interviewee:** Sarah Whyte, Sydney Morning Herald



**Location: Sydney Station: 2UE**

**Program:** Breakfast **Producer:** Ms Sophie Onikul

**Aired On:** 20/11/2013 6:58:36 AM **Compere:** Ian 'Dicko' Dickson and Sarah Morice

Dicko says Wollongong Council is thinking of letting the sea reclaim three of their ocean pools. Morice says they are great and doesn't want them closed down.

**Duration:** 1 mins 17 secs

**Location: Sydney Station: 702 ABC Sydney**

**Program:** Breakfast **Producer:** Mr Lotta Haegg

**Aired On:** 20/11/2013 6:42:01 AM **Compere:** Adam Spencer

Interview with Gordon Bradbery, Lord Mayor of Wollongong City Council about the possibility that they may reduce the number of ocean pools they operate. Bradbery shares that they are looking specifically at one of their eight pools, and notes that councils have to get their head around how they spend their money.

**Duration:** 5 mins 32 secs

**Interviewee:** Gordon Bradbery, Lord Mayor, Wollongong City Council

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** 06:30 News **Producer:**

**Aired On:** 20/11/2013 6:32:13 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

Wollongong residents have until five o'clock today to have their say on service cuts and rate rises, recommended by a citizen's panel. As part of a review of the long term financial sustainability of Wollongong Council, a citizens panel was set up to give feedback to councillors on possible savings and fee increases. Hundreds of council workers walked off the job in protest last week. Petitions have been launched and rallies held to save facilities like the Unanderra Library and the Coalcliff Hall. Gordon Bradbery, Lord Mayor, Wollongong says no decisions have yet been made.

**Duration:** 0 mins 53 secs

**Location: Sydney Station: 702 ABC Sydney**

**Program:** Breakfast **Producer:** Mr Lotta Haegg

**Aired On:** 20/11/2013 6:26:32 AM **Compere:** Adam Spencer

Program Preview - The cost of upkeeping ocean pools, with Wollongong Council considering closing some down.

**Duration:** 0 mins 20 secs

**Location: Sydney Station: ABC1**

**Program:** ABC News **Producer:** Mr Glenn Trowbridge

**Aired On:** 20/11/2013 7:18:16 PM **Compere:** Juanita Phillips

Three ocean rock pools in the Illawarra face closure, as Wollongong Council considers ways to reduce spending. Local residents are now rallying to stop the Coalcliff Rock Pool. Wollongong Council says it has spent \$5 million on rock pool capital works in the last five years, while the annual cleaning bill is \$400,000.

**Duration:** 1 mins 47 secs

**Interviewee:** Jenny Dalmer, Coalcliff resident

**Interviewee:** Pat Goodchild, Coalcliff Community Association

**Location: Wollongong Station: WIN Wollongong**

**Program:** WIN News **Producer:** Mr Peter Freestone

**Aired On:** 20/11/2013 7:04:12 PM **Compere:** Kerryn Johnston

Hundreds of submissions have been submitted against the Wollongong Council Citizens Panel recommendations, including a proposal to shut down a number of its sea pools. The norther suburbs community is particularly upset after learning their ocean pool may be closed. Council spent \$400,000 cleaning the rockpools last year.

**Duration:** 1 mins 55 secs



**Interviewee:** vox pops  
**Interviewee:** David Farmer, Wollongong City Council  
**Interviewee:** Beth Cooper-Wares

**Location:** Wollongong **Station:** WAVE FM

**Program:** 11:00 News **Producer:** Mr Rob Gooda

**Aired On:** 20/11/2013 10:59:57 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

Coalcliff feels it is being picked on by Wollongong City Council. Recommendations by the council appointed citizen's panel includes several that will directly impact the small town. Jo Reed, Save Coalcliff says it is not the first time the villages in Wollongong's north have been targeted for cuts and they have had enough.

**Duration:** 0 mins 44 secs

**Interviewee:** Jo Reed, Save Coalcliff

**Location:** Sydney **Station:** 702 ABC Sydney

**Program:** Afternoons **Producer:** Ms Laura McAuliffe

**Aired On:** 20/11/2013 1:17:39 PM **Compere:** James Valentine and John Donegan

Valentine says Wollongong Council has decided to stop maintaining their ocean pools. He comments that he doesn't think it would be allowed to create something like the pools these days.

**Duration:** 2 mins 41 secs

**Location:** Sydney **Station:** 702 ABC Sydney

**Program:** Mornings **Producer:** Mr Yuske Aso

**Aired On:** 20/11/2013 10:39:10 AM **Compere:** Linda Mottram

Interview with Marie-Louise McDermott, historian, regarding her thesis A History of Ocean Pools Across Sydney. Mottram says Wollongong Council is considering not continuing to maintain three ocean pools in the Illawarra area, which cost the council more than \$800,000 a year to clean. Mottram refers to Adam Spencer's interview with the Wollongong Mayor this morning. McDermott says the pools are often threatened on the grounds of cost and safety, but the pools are very special in the history of swimming and the beach culture of Australia. McDermott talks about the history of the pools, saying ones at Newcastle were largely built by convicts, whereas the Harbour Pools had more of an element of private enterprise and tourism. McDermott says they provided important safety before the start of the lifesaver movement. McDermott says in the early 20th century Bulli Shire Council said they could not afford to maintain the Scarborough Pool, so it was left for the sea to take back, but some people still swim there.

**Duration:** 8 mins 17 secs

**Interviewee:** Marie-Louise McDermott, historian

**Mentions:** Illawarra Mercury

**Location:** Sydney **Station:** 702 ABC Sydney

**Program:** 07:45 News **Producer:** Mr Trevor Thompson

**Aired On:** 20/11/2013 7:55:22 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

The chance for public comment on the recommendations from Wollongong Council Citizens Panel ends today. The closure of facilities like the Unanderra Library and the Coalcliff Hall have led to petitions being circulated and rallies being held.

**Duration:** 0 mins 57 secs

**Location:** Wollongong **Station:** WIN Wollongong

**Program:** WIN News **Producer:** Mr Peter Freestone

**Aired On:** 21/11/2013 7:15:22 PM **Compere:** Kerryn Johnston

Hundreds of residents have signed a petition against Wollongong City Council's citizens panel recommendation to close Unanderra Library. Sandra Luschwitz, Unanderra Community Centre says the library is popular and well utilised. Its closure will save Council \$200,000. Residents are fearful how elderly and disadvantaged people will get to the closest libraries at Wollongong and Dapto because the Unanderra train station has no lift.



**Duration:** 1 mins 39 secs

**Interviewee:** Peter Stanhope, Unanderra Community Centre

**Interviewee:** Sandra Luschwitz, Unanderra Community Centre

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** 12:30 News **Producer:**

**Aired On:** 21/11/2013 12:31:11 PM **Compere:** Newsreader

The Wollongong Lord Mayor, Gordon Bradbery has addressed community concerns about recommendations made by a Citizen's Panel. He says the Council will need to flag with the Independent Pricing Regulatory Tribunal a possible rate rise but says it is not a done deal. Steven Spence(\*) from Save our Services says the community has been left out of the process.

**Duration:** 1 mins 11 secs

**Interviewee:** Gordon Bradbery, Lord Mayor, Wollongong

**Interviewee:** Steve Spence, Spokesperson, Save Our Services

**Location: Wollongong Station: i98 FM**

**Program:** 07:00 News **Producer:** Ms Nicole Charlton

**Aired On:** 21/11/2013 7:01:31 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

There have been 100s of submissions lodged against the Wollongong Council Citizen's Panel recommendations.

**Duration:** 0 mins 10 secs

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** Mornings **Producer:** Ms Jennifer Courtney

**Aired On:** 21/11/2013 8:55:10 AM **Compere:** Tony Arthur

Continued interview with Gordon Bradbery, Lord Mayor of Wollongong, about the Citizen's Panel's recommendations. Caller Daniel says that the panel is abdicating the Councillors of responsibility but Bradbery says the Councillors will ultimately be responsible for the decision making. Caller Shaun asks if the Council considered amalgamation with nearby councils and Bradbery says this was not in their report. [cont]

**Duration:** 2 mins 02 secs

**Interviewee:** Gordon Bradbery, Mayor, Wollongong

**Location: Wollongong Station: WIN Wollongong**

**Program:** WIN News **Producer:** Mr Peter Freestone

**Aired On:** 21/11/2013 7:15:22 PM **Compere:** Kerryn Johnston

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**Duration:** 2 mins 02 secs

**Interviewee:** Gordon Bradbery, Mayor, Wollongong

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** 07:30 News **Producer:**

**Aired On:** 22/11/2013 7:32:50 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

Wollongong Council says it has received about 500 submissions in response to the recommendations of a citizens' panel. Gordon Bradbery, Lord Mayor of Wollongong, says there will be a number of further opportunities for the community to comment before the June budget.

**Duration:** 0 mins 24 secs

**Location: Wollongong Station: WAVE FM**

**Program:** 06:00 News **Producer:** Mr Rob Gooda

**Aired On:** 22/11/2013 6:02:18 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

Wollongong City Council has received around 500 public submissions over the recommendations of the Citizens Panel, that included cuts to services and rate rises.

**Duration:** 0 mins 24 secs

**Location: Wollongong Station: i98 FM**

**Program:** 17:00 News **Producer:**

**Aired On:** 2/12/2013 5:01:38 PM **Compere:** Newsreader

Local council rates will increase by about \$20 a year in most parts of NSW with IPART approving a maximum rate increase of 2.3% for next year. Wollongong City is applying to raise rates by 10%.

**Duration:** 0 mins 22 secs

**Location: Wollongong Station: WIN Wollongong**

**Program:** WIN News **Producer:** Mr Peter Freestone

**Aired On:** 3/12/2013 7:13:20 PM **Compere:** Geoff Phillips

The Save Coalcliff Community Action Group will hold a public meeting tomorrow night. The group has lodged a freedom of information request to discover how much Coalcliff contributes to council coffers.

**Duration:** 0 mins 50 secs

**Interviewee:** Leigh Colacino, Wollongong City Council

**Location: Wollongong Station: WIN Wollongong**

**Program:** WIN News **Producer:** Mr Peter Freestone

**Aired On:** 3/12/2013 7:11:30 PM **Compere:** Geoff Phillips

Wollongong Council has released three scenarios to cut \$20m from its budget. All three include a rise



of rates.

**Duration:** 1 mins 50 secs

**Interviewee:** Gordon Bradbery, Lord Mayor, Wollongong City Council

**Interviewee:** Leigh Colacino, Wollongong City Council

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** 17:30 News **Producer:**

**Aired On:** 3/12/2013 5:30:42 PM **Compere:** Newsreader

Wollongong Council is to consider three main options for addressing its financial future in a report to go to next monday's meeting. All three options involve a mix of measures to reduce services and increase rates and Wollongong Lord Mayor Gordon Bradbery says it is necessary to find money to pay for future capital expenditure by making efficiencies, cutting services or increasing rates.

**Duration:** 0 mins 52 secs

**Interviewee:** Gordon Bradbery, Wollongong Lord Mayor

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** 17:30 News **Producer:**

**Aired On:** 3/12/2013 5:30:42 PM **Compere:** Newsreader

Wollongong Council is to consider three main options for addressing its financial future in a report to go to next monday's meeting. All three options involve a mix of measures to reduce services and increase rates and Wollongong Lord Mayor Gordon Bradbery says it is necessary to find money to pay for future capital expenditure by making efficiencies, cutting services or increasing rates.

**Duration:** 0 mins 52 secs

**Interviewee:** Gordon Bradbery, Wollongong Lord Mayor

**Location: Wollongong Station: WAVE FM**

**Program:** 09:00 News **Producer:**

**Aired On:** 4/12/2013 9:02:02 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

Wollongong ratepayers will be left with no option but to accept rate hikes way above the government cap or drastic cuts to services. Councillors will be called on to pick one of several options aimed at saving money for the Council.

**Duration:** 0 mins 24 secs

**Location: Wollongong Station: i98 FM**

**Program:** 17:00 News **Producer:**

**Aired On:** 4/12/2013 5:03:28 PM **Compere:** Newsreader

Coalcliff residents who are concerned about service cuts recommended by the Wollongong Council Citizens Panel can attend a public meeting tonight.

**Duration:** 0 mins 18 secs

**Location: Wollongong Station: WIN Wollongong**

**Program:** WIN News **Producer:** Mr Peter Freestone

**Aired On:** 4/12/2013 7:02:13 PM **Compere:** Kerryn Johnston

Resident groups are incensed over Wollongong city council's plans to cull \$200 million from the budget over the next decade. The Save Our Services group believes that the council's plan is a rush job and proper consultation has not taken place.

**Duration:** 1 mins 56 secs

**Interviewee:** vox pops

**Interviewee:** Gordon Bradbery, Lord Mayor, Wollongong City Council

**Interviewee:** Stephen Spencer, Save Our Services Convenor

**Location: Wollongong Station: WAVE FM**

**Program:** 12:00 News **Producer:** Mr Rob Gooda

**Aired On:** 4/12/2013 12:03:33 PM **Compere:** Newsreader



Wollongong ratepayers may have to accept rate hikes and service cuts by the council.  
**Duration:** 0 mins 29 secs

**Location: Wollongong Station: WAVE FM**

**Program:** 11:00 News **Producer:** Mr Rob Gooda

**Aired On:** 4/12/2013 11:00:49 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

The extent of the catchup facing Wollongong City Council has been revealed in a report in which council staff are given four budget options, including rate rises, and cuts to services.

**Duration:** 0 mins 19 secs

**Location: Wollongong Station: i98 FM**

**Program:** 11:00 News **Producer:** Ms Nicole Charlton

**Aired On:** 4/12/2013 11:01:35 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

The Save Coalcliff group will hold a public meeting tonight to discuss budget cuts proposed by Wollongong Council. They have recommended some rock pools be closed to save \$135,000.

**Duration:** 0 mins 22 secs

**Location: Wollongong Station: i98 FM**

**Program:** 10:00 News **Producer:**

**Aired On:** 4/12/2013 10:02:16 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

Wollongong Council has release three scenarios to cut around \$20m from its budget, all three with rates rises. Gordon Bradbery. Lord Mayor, Wollongong, says the change is needed.

**Duration:** 0 mins 36 secs

**Interviewee:** Gordon Bradbery. Lord Mayor, Wollongong

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** 12:30 News **Producer:**

**Aired On:** 4/12/2013 12:31:58 PM **Compere:** Newsreader

The group Save Our Services is critical of Wollongong Council's plan to budget for future asset renewal and infrastructure programs. The council has released four options to take to the next council meeting aiming to free up \$21m per year.

**Duration:** 0 mins 53 secs

**Interviewee:** Steven Spencer, Spokesperson, Save Our Services

**Location: Wollongong Station: i98 FM**

**Program:** 09:00 News **Producer:** Ms Nicole Charlton

**Aired On:** 4/12/2013 9:01:19 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

Wollongong Council has released three scenarios to cut around \$20m annually from its budget.

**Duration:** 0 mins 10 secs

**Location: Wollongong Station: WAVE FM**

**Program:** 07:00 News **Producer:** Mr Rob Gooda

**Aired On:** 4/12/2013 7:02:01 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

Wollongong ratepayers may have to accept rate hikes and service cuts by the council.

**Duration:** 0 mins 22 secs

**Location: Wollongong Station: i98 FM**

**Program:** 07:00 News **Producer:** Ms Nicole Charlton

**Aired On:** 4/12/2013 7:04:17 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

Wollongong Council release potential plans to cut its budget.

**Duration:** 0 mins 10 secs



**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** Mornings **Producer:** Ms Jennifer Courtney

**Aired On:** 4/12/2013 8:55:50 AM **Compere:** Nick Rheinberger

Caller Jim says [in regards to the Wollongong Council's budget] that the productivity of the Council should be questioned as should their wages and salary budgets. He asks if the Council checks the productivity of contractors and says the council has decimated the workforce in favour of contractors. He also questions the decision making process of the Council and asks if the necessity of a Citizen's Panel shows the incompetence of the General Manager.

**Duration:** 1 mins 46 secs

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** Mornings **Producer:** Ms Jennifer Courtney

**Aired On:** 4/12/2013 8:39:00 AM **Compere:** Nick Rheinberger

Interview with Steven Spencer, from Save Our Services, about the proposed budget options from the Wollongong City Council. Rheinberger notes the interview with the Lord Mayor [Gordon Bradbery] discussing the four budget options the Council is considering. Rheinberger plays a pre-recorded interview with Councillor Leigh Colacino, who says he is happy the decision is coming before the Council and wishes to represent the wants of the community. He notes he is on the Destination Wollongong Board and recognises how important tourism is to the area. Rheinberger says Save Our Services is planning a protest outside Wellington City Council next Monday because the Wollongong Community has not been properly consulted. Spencer says he believes the Council is jumping and says they have called for an independent financial review of council. He says the Lord Mayor and the General Manager have told the community they are not facing a crisis, but says if there is a large rate rise this should be considered as a crisis. He mentions the Mall and the Gateway Centre and says he believes the council has conned the community.

**Duration:** 9 mins 55 secs

**Interviewee:** Leigh Colacino. Councillor, Wollongong City Council[Extract]

**Interviewee:** Steve Spencer, Spokesperson, Save Our Services

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** Mornings **Producer:** Ms Jennifer Courtney

**Aired On:** 4/12/2013 8:35:25 AM **Compere:** Nick Rheinberger

Program Preview -Wollongong City Council Budget options. -The future of David Brown Gear Industries, another manufacturing company that is losing a lot of people and is suffering from the mining down turn. -

**Duration:** 2 mins 26 secs

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** Breakfast **Producer:**

**Aired On:** 4/12/2013 7:23:16 AM **Compere:** Steve Parsons

Interview with Gordon Bradbery about the four budget scenarios on offer from the Wollongong City Council. Parsons notes that if there is a rate rise, the decision must go to IPART. Bradbery explains the redirection of funds and says scenario four is not recommended, and emphasises the choices are not all about rates. Caller Tony, asks if the budget difficulties are a result of cuts from the NSW Government, and Bradbery says under the previous Labor Government they had certain commitments made that are now being challenged and says Local Government is 'feeling the pinch'. Bradbery says he is leaning towards scenario two. He says the recommendations of the Citizen's panel were harsh and does not believe the city wants those.

**Duration:** 7 mins 32 secs

**Interviewee:** Gordon Bradbery, Lord Mayor, Wollongong City Council

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** 08:30 News **Producer:**

**Aired On:** 4/12/2013 8:30:20 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

Wollongong Council is considering four options for addressing its financial future. Gordon Bradbery, Lord Mayor of Wollongong says it is necessary to cut services, increase rates, and make efficiencies.



Leigh Colacino, Wollongong councillor is pushing for more funding for the Grand Pacific Walk, but does not want to see the Coalcliff Ocean Pool forced to close, or reduced beach patrols for Coalcliff.

**Duration:** 1 mins 02 secs

**Interviewee:** Gordon Bradbery, Lord Mayor of Wollongong

**Interviewee:** Leigh Colacino, Wollongong Councillor

**Location: Wollongong Station: WAVE FM**

**Program:** 06:00 News **Producer:** Mr Rob Gooda

**Aired On:** 4/12/2013 6:00:21 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

Wollongong City Council have been given four budget options, including a steep rate rise and drastic cuts to services to catch up.

**Duration:** 0 mins 20 secs

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** Breakfast **Producer:**

**Aired On:** 4/12/2013 6:25:32 AM **Compere:** Steve Parsons

Newspaper Headlines Illawarra Mercury - Wollongong City Council and residents face a choice between a rate raise or cuts to services and council jobs. Illawarra Mercury - Deputy SES Commissioner Steven Pearce used a work credit card to buy \$286 roof racks, as the Independent Commission Against Corruption was told yesterday. Illawarra Mercury - Chris Anderson's Art Installation. Daily Telegraph - The Federal Government freezes visas for refugees. Daily Telegraph - Police allege disability pensioner Hamdi Alqudsi is the mastermind behind a group sent to fight alongside Al Qaeda. Daily Telegraph - Teenagers reading and maths skills have fallen. Daily Telegraph - Prime Minister Tony Abbott accused ABC Management of lacking sense. Sydney Morning Herald - Intelligence and security agencies are investing a suspected industrial espionage case at CSIRO. Sydney Morning Herald - The decline in maths and reading levels in High School students. Sydney Morning Herald - The egg shortage. Sydney Morning Herald - Fuel discounts may come to an end. The Australian - The secret offer James Hird to end the AFL drugs shame. The Australian - Abbott blasts the ABC's judgement on spying.

**Duration:** 4 mins 46 secs

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** Breakfast **Producer:**

**Aired On:** 4/12/2013 6:19:32 AM **Compere:** Steve Parsons

Parsons notes [in relation to the budget options proposed by the Wollongong City Council], that none of the scenarios look pleasant for rate payers. McLaren says he is puzzled why they included option four.

**Duration:** 0 mins 43 secs

**Interviewee:** Nick McLaren, Reporter, ABC Radio

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** Breakfast **Producer:**

**Aired On:** 4/12/2013 6:19:03 AM **Compere:** Steve Parsons

News Headlines -A man has drowned in the surf at a beach near Ulladulla. -Three surfers, have saved a father and son struggling in a rip. -Wollongong Council Officers have prepared a report canvassing three viable options for the city to address its current long term budget shortfall. -A Batemans Bay women has won this year's ReVive art prize.

**Duration:** 0 mins 29 secs

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** Breakfast **Producer:**

**Aired On:** 4/12/2013 6:16:33 AM **Compere:** Steve Parsons

Program Preview -Interview with the Lord Mayor of Wollongong [Gordon Bradbery] about Wollongong City Council Staff who have presented to council four budget scenarios to choose from. Parsons notes that none are palatable if you are a rate payer.



**Duration:** 0 mins 44 secs

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** 06:30 News **Producer:**

**Aired On:** 4/12/2013 6:31:36 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

Wollongong Council Officers have prepared a report canvassing three viable options for the city to address its current long term budget shortfall.

**Duration:** 0 mins 55 secs

**Interviewee:** Gordon Bradbery, Lord Mayor, Wollongong

**Location: Wollongong Station: i98 FM**

**Program:** 09:00 News **Producer:** Ms Nicole Charlton

**Aired On:** 5/12/2013 9:01:35 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

Wollongong Council has released options to cut \$200m from the budget over the next decade. The Mayor says it is more about redirecting services than slashing them. Stephen Spencer, Save Our Services, says an independent review is needed.

**Duration:** 0 mins 39 secs

**Interviewee:** Stephen Spencer, Save Our Services

**Location: Wollongong Station: i98 FM**

**Program:** 10:00 News **Producer:**

**Aired On:** 5/12/2013 10:01:58 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

The community and local councillors are divided, after Wollongong Council released its options to cut \$20 million each year for the next decade.

**Duration:** 0 mins 08 secs

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** Mornings **Producer:** Ms Jennifer Courtney

**Aired On:** 5/12/2013 8:50:01 AM **Compere:** Nick Rheinberger

Interview with Jo Reed from the Coalcliff Community Association about the Wollongong City Council's budget options and the lack of services in the Northern Suburbs. Reed discusses the issues raised at their community meeting and said their main concern was the Pool. She says their rates are high in the area and discusses the redistribution of their rates. She says a lot of people have lost faith in the competence of the Council.

**Duration:** 9 mins 24 secs

**Interviewee:** Jo Reed, Coalcliff Community Association

**Location: Wollongong Station: i98 FM**

**Program:** 07:00 News **Producer:** Ms Nicole Charlton

**Aired On:** 5/12/2013 7:03:04 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

The community and councillors are divided after Wollongong Council released its options to cut \$20m from the budget over the next decade. The options range from big cuts to services to a rate rise of up to 25%. Steve Spencer, Save Our Services, says an independent review is needed.

**Duration:** 0 mins 40 secs

**Interviewee:** Steve Spencer, Save Our Services

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** 08:30 News **Producer:**

**Aired On:** 5/12/2013 8:31:05 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

Wollongong Councillors are breaking ranks on plans to ensure the future economic viability of the city. Council has released four options to take to the next Council meeting on Monday, all four options aiming to free up an extra \$21m a year. Option Four involves no rates increase and is not recommended. Bede Crasnich, Wollongong Councillor, says he supports option four.



**Duration:** 0 mins 50 secs

**Interviewee:** Bede Crasnich, Wollongong councillor

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** Breakfast **Producer:**

**Aired On:** 5/12/2013 7:39:35 AM **Compere:** Steve Parsons

Interview with Councillor Bede Crasnich, from Wollongong City Council about the budget options put forward by the Wollongong Council. Parsons plays a pre-recorded interview with Lord Mayor Gordon Bradbery, and says he is leaning towards option two. Crasnich says he is leaning towards option four, and explains why, but Parsons notes that option four has been all but ruled out. He says he does not want to raise the rates and says he is considering outsourcing. He notes that the United Services Union demonstrated last week.

**Duration:** 4 mins 54 secs

**Interviewee:** Bede Crasnich, Councillor, Wollongong City Council

**Interviewee:** Gordon Bradbery, Lord Mayor, Wollongong [Extract]

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** Breakfast **Producer:**

**Aired On:** 5/12/2013 7:35:24 AM **Compere:** Steve Parsons

Program Preview -Interview with Wollongong Councillors about the budget options in front of the Wollongong City Council. He notes he interviewed Lord Mayor Gordon Bradbery yesterday.

**Duration:** 0 mins 29 secs

**Location: Wollongong Station: i98 FM**

**Program:** 06:00 News **Producer:** Ms Nicole Charlton

**Aired On:** 5/12/2013 6:02:24 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

The Save Our Services group is outraged by the scenarios Wollongong Council has presented to cut \$200m from the budget over the next decade.

**Duration:** 0 mins 38 secs

**Interviewee:** Stephen Spencer, Save Our Services

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** Breakfast **Producer:**

**Aired On:** 5/12/2013 6:48:55 AM **Compere:** Steve Parsons

Program Preview -Interview with councillors about the four budget options in front of the Wollongong council Parsons notes yesterday's interview with Lord Mayor of Wollongong, Gordon Bradbery.

**Duration:** 0 mins 41 secs

**Location: Wollongong Station: POWER FM Illawarra**

**Program:** 06:00 News **Producer:** Mr Graham French

**Aired On:** 5/12/2013 6:02:24 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

The Save Our Services Group is outraged at the scenarios that Wollongong Council has presented to cut \$200m from the budget over the next decade. Steve Spencer, Save Our Services Group, says it is a rushed job.

**Duration:** 0 mins 38 secs

**Interviewee:** Steve Spencer, Save Our Services Group

**Location: Wollongong Station: WAVE FM**

**Program:** 12:00 News **Producer:** Mr Rob Gooda

**Aired On:** 6/12/2013 12:00:52 PM **Compere:** Newsreader

Wollongong has won most of the \$100 million Restart NSW Illawarra Infrastructure Fund. Warrigal Care, Wollongong University's iAccelerate project, and the Fowlers Road bridge. Lord Mayor Gordon Bradbery says the council still needs to go ahead with tough cost-saving measures.



**Duration:** 0 mins 28 secs

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** Mornings **Producer:** Ms Jennifer Courtney

**Aired On:** 6/12/2013 9:32:51 AM **Compere:** Nick Rheinberger

Caller Jim, asks [in regards to the Wollongong Council Criticism] why the Council has spent all the money on the mall, and says the Council seems to have little input.

**Duration:** 8 mins 29 secs

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** Mornings **Producer:** Ms Jennifer Courtney

**Aired On:** 6/12/2013 9:27:14 AM **Compere:** Nick Rheinberger

Interview with Councillor Michelle Blicavs about the criticism of Wollongong City Council. Blicavs says she has not suggested Council workers are not doing a good job, and says they are looking at the sustainability of the Council. She says when BlueScope was at its strongest, Wollongong was competing significantly for staff, and says this may be why there are 'amazing' conditions within the council. She says the enterprise agreement needs to be considered.

**Duration:** 3 mins 50 secs

**Interviewee:** Michelle Blicavs, Councillor, Wollongong City Council

**Location: Wollongong Station: WAVE FM**

**Program:** 06:00 News **Producer:** Mr Rob Gooda

**Aired On:** 6/12/2013 6:00:35 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

Gordon Bradbery, Mayor, Wollongong, says the council is not off the hook yet, despite receiving over \$64m for local projects as part of the NSW Government's Illawarra Infrastructure Fund.

**Duration:** 0 mins 48 secs

**Interviewee:** Gordon Bradbery, Mayor, Wollongong

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** 12:30 News **Producer:**

**Aired On:** 9/12/2013 12:31:53 PM **Compere:** Newsreader

Wollongong councillors will tonight vote to place on exhibition a plan to support rate rises above the rate pegging levels, and implement a range of efficiencies and service cuts. Greg Petty, Wollongong Council wants an independent review of Council finances. Ann Martin, Wollongong Council says a rate rise is the only sensible option.

**Duration:** 0 mins 48 secs

**Interviewee:** Ann Martin, Wollongong Council

**Interviewee:** Greg Petty, Wollongong Council

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** 08:30 News **Producer:**

**Aired On:** 9/12/2013 8:30:20 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

Wollongong councillors are expected to adopt a policy for exhibition tonight to support rate rises above the rate pegging limits, and a range of efficiencies and service cuts. Council will vote tonight to put on public display four budget options to address a budget shortfall of \$11m a year. Councillors Bede Crasnich and Greg Petty say they won't support moves by the council administration to push for a rates rise. However, Anne Martin, Wollongong Council, says the majority of councillors will support options two and three.

**Duration:** 0 mins 57 secs

**Interviewee:** Anne Martin, Wollongong Council

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** Mornings **Producer:** Ms Jennifer Courtney

**Aired On:** 9/12/2013 8:40:15 AM **Compere:** Nick Rheinberger



Interview with Greg Petty, Wollongong Councillor. The Wollongong Council is considering either cuts or a rate rise to cover a projected shortfall in Council funds. Petty says the proposals put up tonight don't reflect all the options available. Petty says other options include transferring expenditure and capital and reviewing the depreciation. Petty says we need to get this right the first time. Petty says he is not prepared to entertain any rate rise this year.

**Duration:** 7 mins 14 secs

**Interviewee:** Greg Petty, Wollongong Councillor

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** Mornings **Producer:** Ms Jennifer Courtney

**Aired On:** 9/12/2013 8:37:00 AM **Compere:** Nick Rheinberger

Program Preview: - [Wollongong] Council considering either service cuts or rate rises. - The start of the Royal Commission into abuse within institutions from a local point of view. - A surfing exhibition on at Wollongong Art Gallery.

**Duration:** 0 mins 55 secs

**Location: Wollongong Station: WIN Wollongong**

**Program:** WIN News **Producer:** Mr Peter Freestone

**Aired On:** 10/12/2013 7:00:29 PM **Compere:** Geoff Phillips

Wollongong councillors have made it clear that cutbacks are inevitable, but some residents are upset at the potential loss of rockpools, libraries and pools. A rate rise is also on the cards. Gordon Bradbery, Wollongong City Council Lord Mayor says without a rate rise the Council can't achieve everything.

**Duration:** 1 mins 53 secs

**Interviewee:** Gordon Bradbery, Wollongong City Council Lord Mayor

**Interviewee:** Paul Wesley, United Services Union

**Interviewee:** Stephen Spencer, Save Our Services Group

**Location: Wollongong Station: WAVE FM**

**Program:** 09:00 News **Producer:**

**Aired On:** 10/12/2013 9:01:26 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

Wollongong City Council voted overnight to go ahead with plans resulting in steep rate rises and service cuts to the city. The Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal will be notified of the council's intentions.

**Duration:** 0 mins 31 secs

**Location: Wollongong Station: i98 FM**

**Program:** 09:00 News **Producer:** Ms Nicole Charlton

**Aired On:** 10/12/2013 9:01:49 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

Council plans to cut services in Wollongong have been condemned by the Save Our Services lobby group, which protested at a council meeting overnight. They were joined by United Services Union members and local residents. Group spokesperson Stephen Spencer wants to know why so much was spent upgrading Wollongong Mall if the council was seriously considering slashing services.

**Duration:** 0 mins 40 secs

**Interviewee:** Stephen Spencer, Spokesperson, Save Our Services

**Location: Wollongong Station: WAVE FM**

**Program:** 11:00 News **Producer:** Mr Rob Gooda

**Aired On:** 10/12/2013 11:00:54 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

Proposed rate rises and service cuts led to a rally outside Wollongong City Council chambers overnight. David Brown, Councillor, Wollongong City Council, says unfortunately they had not alternative.

**Duration:** 0 mins 45 secs

**Interviewee:** David Brown, Councillor, Wollongong City Council



**Location: Wollongong Station: WAVE FM**

**Program:** 07:00 News **Producer:** Mr Rob Gooda

**Aired On:** 10/12/2013 7:04:04 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

Wollongong City Council voted overnight to go ahead with plans that will result in rate rises and service cuts to the city. Council will notify the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal of its intention to apply for higher rates.

**Duration:** 0 mins 28 secs

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** Mornings **Producer:** Ms Jennifer Courtney

**Aired On:** 10/12/2013 9:33:18 AM **Compere:** Nick Rheinberger

News headlines - Holden Chief Mark Devereux says no decision has been made about the future of operations in Australia, giving evidence to the Productivity Commission. - The Australian Greens with Christine Milne, Leader, are moving to set up an inquiry to oversee the Federal Government's Commission of Audit. - Wollongong Council has voted in favour of a rate rise above rate pegging limit.

**Duration:** 0 mins 59 secs

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** 08:30 News **Producer:**

**Aired On:** 10/12/2013 8:30:20 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

Wollongong Council has voted to adopt a rate rise for council above the rate pegging limit. The council will write to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal to flag their intentions. Council voted for adopting one of three different scenarios put forward under the Securing Our Future Financial Sustainability Review. David Brown, Labor Councillor, says that the reality is that most local governments need to cut costs.

**Duration:** 0 mins 47 secs

**Interviewee:** David Brown, Labor Councillor

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** Mornings **Producer:** Ms Jennifer Courtney

**Aired On:** 10/12/2013 8:44:44 AM **Compere:** Nick Rheinberger

[cont] Interview with Cr. Greg Petty, who wanted Option 4 at the Wollongong City Council meeting last night but decided not to vote against the whole project because while he is slightly critical of it he still wants to get community input. He agrees with Gordon Bradbery, Wollongong Lord Mayor, that something needs to be done. Rheinberger asks why he didn't go on record as wanting Option 4.

**Duration:** 2 mins 12 secs

**Interviewee:** Cr. Greg Petty, Wollongong City Council

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** Mornings **Producer:** Ms Jennifer Courtney

**Aired On:** 10/12/2013 8:44:44 AM **Compere:** Nick Rheinberger

[cont] Interview with Cr. Greg Petty, who wanted Option 4 at the Wollongong City Council meeting last night but decided not to vote against the whole project because while he is slightly critical of it he still wants to get community input. He agrees with Gordon Bradbery, Wollongong Lord Mayor, that something needs to be done. Rheinberger asks why he didn't go on record as wanting Option 4.

**Duration:** 2 mins 12 secs

**Interviewee:** Cr. Greg Petty, Wollongong City Council

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** Mornings **Producer:** Ms Jennifer Courtney

**Aired On:** 10/12/2013 8:38:58 AM **Compere:** Nick Rheinberger

Interview with Gordon Bradbery, Wollongong Lord Mayor. Rheinberger notes Save Our Services Wollongong convener Stephen Spencer addressed Wollongong Council last night over savings measures being considered. Bradbery says they have voted on the three scenarios they will consider,



with different levels of rate rises, savings and efficiencies. Bradbery says when he came to Council he was aware they were servicing a massive amount of assets on a small budget. He says many assets are reaching their use-by date, and it has to be addressed incrementally in order to avoid a crisis in a few years' time. [cont]

**Duration:** 5 mins 46 secs

**Interviewee:** Gordon Bradbery, Wollongong Lord Mayor

**Interviewee:** Stephen Spencer, Save Our Services Wollongong [excerpt]

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** Mornings **Producer:** Ms Jennifer Courtney

**Aired On:** 10/12/2013 9:05:57 AM **Compere:** Nick Rheinberger

Program preview - Wollongong Council meeting voting on three options for rate increase. - Albion Park bypass may affect Croom Regional Sporting Complex. - Alzheimer's Australia.

**Duration:** 1 mins 24 secs

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** 07:30 News **Producer:**

**Aired On:** 10/12/2013 7:30:25 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

Wollongong Council will write to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal to ask for a general rates rise increase above the rate pegging level, following a vote at last night's Council meeting.

**Duration:** 0 mins 59 secs

**Interviewee:** Cr George Takacs, Wollongong Council

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** 07:30 News **Producer:**

**Aired On:** 10/12/2013 7:30:25 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

Wollongong Council will write to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal to ask for a general rates rise increase above the rate pegging level, following a vote at last night's Council meeting.

**Duration:** 0 mins 59 secs

**Interviewee:** Cr George Takacs, Wollongong Council

**Location: Wollongong Station: WAVE FM**

**Program:** 06:00 News **Producer:** Mr Rob Gooda

**Aired On:** 10/12/2013 6:01:10 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

Proposed rate rises and service cuts led to a rally outside Wollongong City Council overnight. However, motions that included rate rises and service cuts were passed by the council. Cr David Brown, Wollongong City Council, says doing nothing is not an option.

**Duration:** 0 mins 47 secs

**Interviewee:** Cr David Brown, Wollongong City Council

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** Breakfast **Producer:**

**Aired On:** 10/12/2013 6:51:26 AM **Compere:** Steve Parsons

Parsons says last night Wollongong City Council have voted to look into rate rises, with three scenarios to be examined.

**Duration:** 0 mins 31 secs

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** Breakfast **Producer:**

**Aired On:** 10/12/2013 6:28:23 AM **Compere:** Steve Parsons

Newspaper headlines - 14-year-old girl in intensive care after horrific crash. - Thieves steal Kids Wish Christmas decorations. - Wollongong Council takes first official step towards raising rates. - Johnson and Stokes cleared by ICC. - Catholic Church admits paying \$43m in hush money to abuse victims. - Ashes test at WACA preview. - D-Day for Holden. - QBE Insurance Group chair Belinda Hutchinson



steps down. - Court opens files on AWU fraud.

**Duration:** 2 mins 12 secs

**Location: Wollongong Station: i98 FM**

**Program:** 06:00 News **Producer:** Ms Nicole Charlton

**Aired On:** 10/12/2013 6:02:05 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

A rally outside Wollongong Council has called for service cuts to be scrapped. Stephen Spencer(\*), spokesperson, group opposing Wollongong Council cuts says council services like Unanderra Library and Lakeside Leisure Centre should not close.

**Duration:** 0 mins 46 secs

**Interviewee:** Stephen Spencer(\*), spokesperson, group opposing Wollongong Council cuts

**Location: Wollongong Station: WAVE FM**

**Program:** 11:00 News **Producer:** Mr Rob Gooda

**Aired On:** 11/12/2013 11:01:18 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

Protestors who gathered outside this week's Wollongong Council meeting say they will continue to push for a fully independent review of the council's finances.

**Duration:** 0 mins 42 secs

**Interviewee:** Stephen Spencer, Save Our Services Wollongong

**Location: Wollongong Station: WAVE FM**

**Program:** 06:00 News **Producer:** Mr Rob Gooda

**Aired On:** 11/12/2013 6:01:13 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

Protesters who gathered outside this week's Wollongong City Council meeting say they will push for a fully independent review of the council's finances.

**Duration:** 0 mins 42 secs

**Interviewee:** Stephen Spencer, Save Our Services Wollongong

**Location: Wollongong Station: i98 FM**

**Program:** 10:00 News **Producer:**

**Aired On:** 16/12/2013 10:01:14 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

Wollongong Council has written to the NSW regulator detailing plans to implement rate rises next year.

**Duration:** 0 mins 14 secs

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** Breakfast **Producer:**

**Aired On:** 16/12/2013 6:21:11 AM **Compere:** Nick Rheinberger

Newspaper Headlines Mercury - Wollongong City Council iso ne of 35 NSW Councils to notify of its intent to apply for a rate rise next year. Daily Telegraph - The Federal Government will post a \$47b deficit tomorrow and warn of a further decade of deficits as it exposes the 'fiscal disaster' Treasurer Joe Hockey claims has been left by Labor. Sydney Morning Herald - When Joe Hockey was wanting to be PM as a young man he had no idea he would be a 'bomb disposal expert' as treasurer. Sydney Morning Herald - Ashes are in reach Sydney Morning Herald - The woman at the centre of the military sex scandal has been named Daily Life's Woman of the Year. Financial Review - Abbott Government abandoned target of returning the budget to surplus in four years. The Australian - Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, President of Indonesia, is determined to restore his country's relationship with Australia. The Australian - Federal Deficit set to double in the next four years as Tony Abbott, PM vows to embark on a repair job. The Australian - National Union Leader Steve Purvinas has backed the Coalition's proposed Royal Commission into unions and called for a ban on slush funds.

**Duration:** 3 mins 54 secs

**Location: Wollongong Station: WIN Wollongong**

**Program:** WIN News **Producer:** Mr Peter Freestone



**Aired On:** 6/01/2014 7:15:15 PM **Compere:** Geoff Phillips

Chris Connor, Deputy Mayor, Wollongong City Council admits the way council explored cutting expenditure through a citizens panel process could have been handled differently. Connor says he is looking forward to 2014, including the development of the largest land release outside of Sydney.

**Duration:** 1 mins 45 secs

**Interviewee:** Chris Connor, Wollongong City Council Deputy Mayor

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** 12:30 News **Producer:**

**Aired On:** 13/01/2014 12:30:15 PM **Compere:** Newsreader

Stephen Spencer, Save our Services Wollongong, says people aren't responding to a survey on Wollongong Council's handling of financial review because Council has predetermined the outcome. The Council website says that more than half people support rate rises and cuts to services and staff.

**Duration:** 0 mins 56 secs

**Interviewee:** Stephen Spencer, Save Our Services Wollongong

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** Mornings **Producer:** Ms Jennifer Courtney

**Aired On:** 13/01/2014 9:32:36 AM **Compere:** Nick Rheinberger

News headlines: - Residents in WA Perth Hills are still waiting to find if their homes were destroyed by bushfires. - More than 20 farmers, environmentalists and owners have begun a protest at Whitehaven Coals Maules Creek project near Boggabri. The mine was approved last year by Tony Burke, former Environment Minister. - The United Nations says that it will take months to rebuild in Tonga after a cyclone. - A group critical of the Wollongong Council's handling of its financial review says that people aren't responding to a survey because the Council has already made the outcome.

**Duration:** 1 mins 32 secs

**Location: Wollongong Station: WIN Wollongong**

**Program:** WIN News **Producer:** Mr Peter Freestone

**Aired On:** 13/01/2014 7:10:45 PM **Compere:** Kerryn Johnston and Geoff Phillips

Save Our Services says it is not surprised that Wollongong City Council has had a small number of responses to its latest round of consultation to cut the budget. The community group says views of residents have been largely ignored. The options range from the controversial citizen's panel recommendations, to an 8% rate rise with minimal cuts to services.

**Duration:** 2 mins 00 secs

**Interviewee:** Stephen Spencer, Save Our Services

**Interviewee:** Chris Connor, Wollongong City Council Deputy Lord Mayor

**Location: Wollongong Station: WAVE FM**

**Program:** 06:00 News **Producer:** Mr Rob Gooda

**Aired On:** 14/01/2014 6:01:44 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

The latest Valuer-General's report on Wollongong properties show land values have not risen, but the Wollongong City Council says its planned rate rises of around 25% over the next three years will still go ahead.

**Duration:** 0 mins 20 secs

**Location: Wollongong Station: i98 FM**

**Program:** 12:00 News **Producer:**

**Aired On:** 14/01/2014 12:03:46 PM **Compere:** Newsreader

Community group Save Our Services says it is not surprising Wollongong Council had a small number of responses to its latest round of consultations cut the budget. Stephen Spencer, Save Our Services, says it is unfair the community has to choose from options that council, and not residents, have come up with.

**Duration:** 0 mins 41 secs

**Interviewee:** Stephen Spencer, Save Our Services



**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** Mornings **Producer:** Ms Jennifer Courtney

**Aired On:** 7/02/2014 8:43:16 AM **Compere:** Nick Rheinberger

Interview with Debra Murphy, CEO, Illawarra Business Chamber, about business rates. Rheinberger says Wollongong has the third highest rates in NSW behind Sydney and Parramatta and Murphy is calling on council not to further increase business rates. She says lower rates would attract more businesses to the region.

**Duration:** 6 mins 35 secs

**Interviewee:** Debra Murphy, CEO, Illawarra Business Chamber

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** Mornings **Producer:** Ms Jennifer Courtney

**Aired On:** 7/02/2014 9:07:51 AM **Compere:** Nick Rheinberger

Interview with Greens Cr Jill Merrin about the rates review. Merrin more than 50% of residents want a lower rate rise or no rise at all and council should listen to that. She says council needs to provide services but there are a lot of people in hardship.

**Duration:** 3 mins 11 secs

**Interviewee:** Cr Jill Merrin, Wollongong City Council

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** Mornings **Producer:** Ms Jennifer Courtney

**Aired On:** 7/02/2014 9:11:02 AM **Compere:** Nick Rheinberger

Interview with Liberal Cr Michelle Blicavs about the rates review. Blicavs says residents should not be expected to fund the rate increase and is calling for an efficiency restructure within council. She is calling for a special rate variation.

**Duration:** 3 mins 13 secs

**Interviewee:** Cr Michelle Blicavs, Wollongong City Council

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

**Program:** Mornings **Producer:** Ms Jennifer Courtney

**Aired On:** 7/02/2014 9:14:15 AM **Compere:** Nick Rheinberger

Interview with Mayor Gordon Bradbury about the rates review. Bradbury says council is deciding on which rate rise to put to IPART and confirms they are not contemplating massive hikes in business rates. He says staff are doing their best to ensure they deliver good services and he doesn't want council to become inefficient through further cuts.

**Duration:** 4 mins 05 secs

**Interviewee:** Mayor Gordon Bradbury, Wollongong City council

**Location: Wollongong Station: i98 FM**

**Program:** 11:00 News **Producer:** Ms Nicole Charlton

**Aired On:** 7/02/2014 11:00:39 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

The Illawarra Business Chamber and local shop owners have criticised a plan by Wollongong Council to increase business rates under the Securing Our future proposal. Gordon Bradbury, Mayor of Wollongong, says any increase will be in line with CPI.

**Duration:** 0 mins 43 secs

**Interviewee:** Gordon Bradbury, Mayor of Wollongong

**Location: Wollongong Station: i98 FM**

**Program:** 12:00 News **Producer:**

**Aired On:** 7/02/2014 12:05:56 PM **Compere:** Newsreader

The Illawarra Business Chamber and local shop owners have criticised a plan by Wollongong Council to increase business rates.

**Duration:** 0 mins 16 secs



# COMMUNITY UPDATE ADVERTISEMENTS – WOLLONGONG ADVERTISER

Wollongong Advertiser, Community Update, 18 September 2013



## Council's Financial Sustainability Review

You may have heard Council is planning a community engagement program to help develop options for how we can address our long term financial sustainability.

Council is not broke. However, like most councils across NSW, Wollongong needs to put more money into renewing and maintaining our roads, footpaths, pools, buildings and other key community infrastructure, much of which is more than 40 years old.

Over the next three months we will be working with the community, staff and Councillors to investigate options for operational improvements, changes to service levels, and opportunities for increased revenue and funding.

As part of this engagement there will be online discussion forums, a call for submissions and other forms of consultation.

There will also be the selection of an independent Citizens Panel who will review community feedback and provide recommendations to Council.

For more information on Council's Financial Sustainability Review Discussion Board please visit our website's Have Your Say pages.

## →HAVE YOUR SAY

### Neighbourhood Forums

Neighbourhood Forums are community groups that meet monthly to help solve local problems. To get involved, please visit Council's website or contact the Community Engagement Team on (02) 4227 7050.

- **Towradgi – Area 4**  
Tuesday 1 October, 7pm  
Towradgi Community Hall, Cnr Moray and Towradgi Roads, Towradgi

## →PUBLIC NOTICES

### Adoption of Development Contributions Plan

Council on 9 September 2013 approved the adoption of the Wollongong Section 94A Development Contributions Plan (2013). The Plan comes into effect on 16 September 2013. Council also resolved to repeal the Wollongong Section 94A Development Contributions Plan (2012). This Plan will be repealed on 16 September 2013.

The Plan can be downloaded from Council's website. For more information contact Land Use Planning on (02) 4227 7111.

### Art on a Box

Show your artistic ability in our Art on a Box traffic signal box program.

As part of the program local artists paint original art designs on the signal boxes you find at traffic light-controlled intersections. We're inviting individuals, schools, children, elderly, community groups, social and sporting groups to get involved.

There are some rules, and guidelines you will need to follow. To register your interest in this project call (02) 4227 7111 or send an email to [artonabox@wollongong.nsw.gov.au](mailto:artonabox@wollongong.nsw.gov.au).

### Exhibition of Proposed Road Naming for the Subdivision of 80 Shone Avenue in the Suburb of Horsley

In accordance with Council Policy the following Proposed Road Naming for the Subdivision of Lot 2360 Smiths Lane, in the suburb of Wongawilli, is being placed on exhibition for public comment:

- Roy Sheargold Avenue
- Dairy Farm Way
- Coral Vale Drive
- Hayshed Lane

An exhibition plan showing the Proposed Road Name locations is available for inspection at the Ground Floor of Council's Administration Building, Burelli Street, Wollongong from 9am–5pm Monday to Friday.

The exhibition will close at 5pm on Friday 18 October 2013.

Any person may make a submission for or against a Proposed Road Name before 18 October. Where a submission is made by way of objection, the grounds for objection should be specified in the submission. Submissions must be made in writing and addressed to The General Manager.

In any correspondence please quote file no. RN-2013/2

For more information contact Council's Customer Service team on (02) 4227 7111.

### Review of Expenses and Facilities to Lord Mayor and Councillors Policy

The purpose of the Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities to Lord Mayor and Councillors Policy is to ensure there is accountability and transparency in the payment of expenses and/or reimbursement of expenses to the Lord Mayor and Councillors in carrying out their civic duties, and that the facilities provided to them are appropriate and reasonable.

Council at its meeting of 9 September 2013 endorsed, in principle, a number of minor amendments to the current Policy subject to public notification. An outline of the amendments made is listed in the report to Council on 9 September, with additional amendments included in the Minutes of the Meeting, which are

available on Council's website. Written submissions are invited and will be accepted until Monday 14 October 2013.

Any person can make a submission by writing to the General Manager. Please read the privacy notification on this page before making a submission. For more information and/or a copy of the Draft Amended Policy, please visit Council's website or call Council's Governance Officer on (02) 4227 7111.

### Spotlight on Keiraville, Gwynneville: Community Planning Workshops

- **Saturday 21 September**  
Village Protection and Development, 10am–12 noon  
Building Our Community and Relationships, 2–4pm
- **Saturday 12 October**  
Parking and Access, 10am–12 noon  
Street Safety, 2–4pm

All workshops are at St Brigids Primary School, Gipps Road, Gwynneville.

Council is sponsoring a community-led plan for the Keiraville and Gwynneville areas, and all interested people are encouraged to get involved. There are a number of upcoming workshops over the next two months which will build on information gathered from community engagement held in June. This information will assist the development of the Keiraville Gwynneville Precinct Plan. For more information, visit <http://keiravillegwynnevilleplan.wikispaces.com> or [www.facebook.com/keiravillegwynneville](http://www.facebook.com/keiravillegwynneville).

## →WHAT'S ON

### Botanic Garden

#### Greenplan Native Plant Sale

**Friday 20 September, 7.30am–2.30pm**  
Wollongong Botanic Garden Greenplan Nursery  
Entrance: Northfields Avenue, Keiraville

Local indigenous trees, shrubs, ground covers and grasses will be available to Wollongong residents. Species available are listed on Botanic Garden website. Bring your rates notice. Payment is by card (not AMEX) or cheque only.

### The Beetles – School Holiday Activities

**Monday 23–Friday 27 September, 10am–1.30pm**

Botanic Garden Discovery Centre – Madoline Street, Keiraville  
Join The Beetles for a fun treasure hunt, crafts and the "Strawberry Fields" Beetle Show during our school holiday activities. Activities are suitable for children aged between 3–12 years. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Cost is \$9 per child or \$18 for two or more children. Bookings only required for large groups.

### Environment

#### Join the Wollongong Indian Myna Action Program

The Wollongong Indian Myna Action Program is looking for people who live in Balgownie, Mount Pleasant, Fairy Meadow, Mount Dunsley, North Wollongong, Keiraville, Gwynneville, Towradgi, Fernhill, Corral or East Corral to get involved in our backyard trapping program. These areas have been highlighted by researchers as Myna bird hot spots particularly during the breeding season.

At the workshop you will learn about the trapping methods, animal welfare protocols, options for euthanasia and various ways to deter these pests from coming into your yard. Traps are made by the Corral Mens Shed and will be available to purchase at the end of the workshop for \$50.

Our next workshops will be held on Saturday 19 October and Friday 15 November between 10–11am.

To register for one of our free workshops please call Council's Customer Service team on (02) 4227 7111.

### Library

#### Author Talk – Ailsa Piper

**Wednesday 25 September, 5pm**

Thirroul District Library, Lawrence Hargrave Drive, Thirroul

Ailsa Piper will speak on her recent book *Sinning Across Spain*, which is the story of her 1,300 kilometre walk from Granada to Galicia, a Camino route to Santiago de Compostela. She will be joined by Father Tony Doherty who has also walked sections of the Camino. This is a free talk and bookings aren't required.

#### Labour Day – Closure

**Monday 7 October 2013**

All Wollongong City Libraries will be closed on Monday 7 October for the Labour Day public holiday.

Returns chutes will close at end of business Saturday 5 October and reopen on Tuesday 8 October.

### Volunteering

#### Volunteering Expo

**Thursday 26 September, 9.30am–3pm**

Master Builders Club Function Room, 61 Church Street, Wollongong  
Interested in learning about volunteering? Why not come along to this free expo. Everyone who attends has a chance to win a \$50 wish card lucky door prize, which will be drawn at the end of the event.

**Privacy Notification:** The purpose for seeking your submission on advertised matters is to better assist Council in its decision making processes.

The intended recipients of your submission are officers within Council and those persons granted lawful access to the information. Your submission, including your name, address and other contact details, may be exhibited on Council's website and included in publicly accessible registers. If you make an anonymous submission, Council will be unable to contact you further.

If your submission relates to a development proposal or other relevant planning application, Council is required to disclose on its website all relevant details of political donations or gifts made by you.

In limited circumstances, you may apply for suppression of your personal information from a publicly accessible register. Further information is available on Council's website at [www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/pages/privacy.aspx](http://www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/pages/privacy.aspx) or by phoning Council on (02) 4227 7111.

## →DEVELOPMENT CONSENTS

From 4/09/2013 to 10/09/2013

The following applications have been approved by Council. Notification under Section 101 Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.

### Balgownie

- DA 2013/765 Lot 1 DP 37847 No. 11 Church Street.  
Residential demolition of existing cottage, garage and paths, and construction of single spill level dwelling house.

### Bellambi

- DA 2013/085 Lot 31 DP 1078571 No. 130A Rothery Street.  
Residential dwelling house.

### Berkeley

- DA 2013/896 Lot 5 DP 739471 No. 50 Semaphore Road.  
Residential patio cover.
- DA 2013/849 Lot 160 DP 834506 No. 82 Shearwater Drive.  
Residential retaining wall.

### Bulli

- DA 2013/199/A Lot 1 DP 1023355 No. 33 Wilmoth Street.  
Residential alterations and additions and swimming pool modification to add toilet to cabana.
- DA 2013/745 Lot 23 DP 7812 No. 23 George Avenue.  
Residential alterations and additions.
- DA 2013/800 Lot 2 DP 1141237 No. 56 Aragan Circuit.  
Subdivision Torrens title 2 residential lots.
- DA 2012/1172/A Lot 222 DP 1130028 No. 33A Hospital Road.  
Residential dwelling house. Modification A to include additional door on eastern elevation, rotation on site of dwelling and minor increase in floor levels.

### Dapto

- DA 2013/894 Lot 1 DP 564523, Pt Lot 1 Sec A DP 564523 No. 102-110 Princes Highway.  
Use of existing tenancy 3a as a business premises – hair salon.  
Use of existing tenancy 3b as food and drinks premise – café.  
Use of existing tenancy 3c as a food and drinks premise – restaurant.  
Use of existing tenancy 3d as a business premises – beauty salon.
- DA 2013/942 Lot 101 DP 1117541 No. 75-87 Phinias Highway.  
Commercial upgrade to existing entry including signage.

### East Corral

- DA 2013/895 Lot 93 DP 38239 No. 28 Augusta Street.  
Residential demolition of existing structures and construction of dwelling house.

### Farmborough Heights

- DA 2013/808 Lot 214 DP 829521 No. 5 Aberdare Place.  
Residential demolition of existing pergola and construction of pergola, retaining walls and fencing.

### Figtree

- DA 2013/854 Lot 404 DP 1145155 No. 57 Redgum Forest Way.  
Residential dwelling house.
- DA 2013/062 Lot 45 DP 225036 No. 1 Sleigh Street.  
Residential awning.
- DA 2013/729 Lot 12 DP 1110567 No. 25 Larriane Place.  
Residential construction of dual occupancy and 2-lot strata subdivision.
- DA 2011/843/A Lot 6 DP 28702 No. 5 Brook Place.  
Residential additions and deck. Modification to roof pitch.

### Gwynneville

- DA 2013/881 Lot 7 DP 18935 No. 7 Waitangi Street.  
Residential dwelling house.
- DA 2013/1038 Lot 12 DP 16051 No. 15 Kiernan Street.  
Residential demolition of dwelling house and structures.

Visit us: 41 Burelli Street, Wollongong Find us online: [www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au](http://www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au)

Write to us: [council@wollongong.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@wollongong.nsw.gov.au) or Locked Bag 8821, Wollongong DC NSW 2500

Talk to us: Customer Service (02) 4227 7111. For after-hours emergencies call 1300 557 960



Wollongong City Council



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**SECURING OUR FUTURE - YOUR OPINION COUNTS**

Recently there's been a lot of talk about Council's long term financial sustainability. We're in a good position now, but with ageing roads and buildings we need to think about how we're going to manage infrastructure renewal in the future. That's why we want to hear from you.

We want to know what you think of Wollongong City Council's services, how we deliver them and what you might change. Log on to Council's website for loads of background information, and have your say through surveys, submissions and discussion boards.

Now's the time to have your say...  
[www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/securingourfuture](http://www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/securingourfuture).

Not sure what to do? Contact our Customer Service Team on (02) 4227 7111 and they'll point you in the right direction. Submissions must be received by Tuesday 8 October 2013.

**Privacy Notification:** The purpose for seeking your submission or advertised matters is to better assist Council in its decision-making processes.

The intended recipients of your submission are officers within Council and those persons granted lawful access to the information. Your submission, including your name, address and other contact details, may be exhibited on Council's website and included in publicly accessible registers. If you make an anonymous submission, Council will be unable to contact you further.

If your submission relates to a development proposal or other relevant planning application, Council is required to disclose on its website all relevant details of political donations or gifts made by you.

In limited circumstances, you may apply for suppression of your personal information from a publicly accessible register. Further information is available on Council's website at [www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/pages/privacy.aspx](http://www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/pages/privacy.aspx) or by phoning Council on (02) 4227 7111.

**→ HAVE YOUR SAY**

**Neighbourhood Forums**

Neighbourhood Forums are community groups that meet monthly to help solve local problems. To get involved, please visit Council's website or contact the Community Engagement Team on (02) 4227 7050.

- Towradgi - Area 4**  
 Tuesday 1 October, 7pm  
 Towradgi Community Hall, Cnr Moray and Towradgi Roads, Towradgi
- Wollongong & Unanderra - Areas 5 & 6**  
 Neighbourhood Forum 8 now meeting with Neighbourhood Forum 5  
 Wednesday 2 October, 7pm  
 Wollongong Town Hall, Cnr Crown and Kumbia Streets, Wollongong

**Born to Read**  
**From Wednesday 9 October, 9.30am**  
 Unanderra Library

This literacy program for babies aged between 0-2 years will begin at Unanderra Library on 9 October. It runs for 9 weeks, and bookings are essential on (02) 4271 1217.

**Volunteering**  
**Volunteering Expo**  
**Thursday 26 September, 9.30am-3pm**

Master Builders Club Function Room, 61 Church Street, Wollongong interested in learning about volunteering? Why not come along to this free expo. Everyone who attends has a chance to win a \$50 wish card lucky door prize, which will be drawn at the end of the event.

**→ PUBLIC NOTICES**

**Picnic Day**  
**Friday 27 September**  
 Wollongong City Council will hold its annual Picnic Day on Friday 27 September 2013.

Council's Customer Service Centre will be open between 8.30am-5pm, however the services provided on this day will be limited.

Council's Libraries, Beaton Park and Lakeside Leisure Centres, fresh and saltwater pools, our Memorial Gardens and three tourist parks will all open with normal hours.

For enquiries call Council's Customer Service Centre on (02) 4227 7111.

**Notice of Proposed Licence on Council-owned Community Land**

Council is proposing to grant a licence to Combined Pensioners and Superannuant Association of NSW Inc (Coronial CPISA) for office and storage space for the group's activities at Coronial District Library and Community Centre, Part Lot 101 in Deposited Plan No. 1062386, 15 Short Street, Coronial.

The proposed licence is for a term of five years.

Pursuant to Chapter 6 Part 2 of the Local Government Act 1993, Council is required to advertise this proposal as it is located on community land. Submissions in writing concerning the proposed licence may be made to the General Manager, quoting reference number LGS.015.040. They must be received by 5pm, Wednesday 23 October 2013. Any objections would be clearly outlined and based on the effect the granting of the licence will have on the existing or future use of the community land.

For more information call Council's Branch Libraries and Community Facilities on (02) 4227 7788.

**Spotlight on Keiraville, Gwynneville: Community Planning Workshops**

- Saturday 12 October**  
 Parking and Access, 10am-12 noon  
 Street Safety, 2-4pm.

All workshops are at St Brigid's Primary School, Gipps Road, Gwynneville.

Council is sponsoring a community-led plan for the Keiraville and Gwynneville areas, and all interested people are encouraged to get involved. There are a number of upcoming workshops over the next two months which will build on information gathered from community engagement held in June. This information will assist the development of the Keiraville Gwynneville Precinct Plan. For more information, visit <http://keiravillegwynnevilleplan.wikispaces.com> or [www.facebook.com/keiravillegwynneville](http://www.facebook.com/keiravillegwynneville).

**Waterfall General Cemetery**

We're seeking community input on future management options for the Waterfall General (Garrawarra) Cemetery in Helensburgh. From 1909 to 1949, this site was used for the burial of over 2,000 tuberculosis patients from the former Waterfall Sanatorium.

For more information about the challenges and options for the cemetery, including a discussion paper, draft Conservation Management Plan and a short film, visit Council's website and follow the Have Your Say link. Information will also be available at all Council libraries.

A drop-in information session will be held on Thursday 24 October 2013 on Level 3 of the Council Administration Building from between 5-7pm. Council staff will be available to answer your questions.

To share your ideas or comments for the Waterfall General (Garrawarra) Cemetery write to, or email, Council before Friday 15 November 2013. For more information please call Land Use Planning on (02) 4227 7111.

**→ DEVELOPMENT CONSENTS**

**From 11/09/2013 to 17/09/2013**

The following applications have been approved by Council. Notification under Section 101 Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.

- Austimber**
- DA 2013/467 Lot 10 DP 7143 No. 21 The Grove. Residential demolition of dwelling house and construction of dwelling house.
- Avondale**
- DA 2009/1037/E Lot 1 DP 549152 No. 520 Avondale Road. Demolition of existing structures; construction of 18-hole championship golf course and associated facilities including clubhouse, golf lodge accommodation and biomechanics and sports education centre. Modification B - modification to relocate the access road to clubhouse requiring the repositioning of associated buildings and car parking, and the relocation of golf holes and tree removal.
- Berkeley**
- DA 2013/907 Lot 1658 DP 227526 Wilkinson Street. Signage advertisement 1.
- Buli**
- DA 2013/660 Lot 57 DP 226539 No. 27 Cope Place. Residential alterations and additions.
  - DA 2013/895 Lot 21 DP 31481 No. 66 Hutton Avenue. Residential alterations and additions.
  - DA 2013/608 Lot 201 DP 785812 No. 23 National Avenue. Residential alterations and additions.
- Clifton**
- DA 2012/181/A Lot 4 Sec 1 DP 2281 No. 327 Lawrence Hargrave Drive. Residential dwelling house and swimming pool. Modification to amend lower floor plan, front facade, footing/pier design, replace skillion roof, replace louvred screens, amend courtyard layout and inclusion of boulder retaining wall.
- Coalcliff**
- DA 2013/837 Lot 11 DP 703468 No. 236 Lawrence Hargrave Drive. Residential alterations and additions.
  - DA 2013/941 Lot 561 DP 801115 No. 9A Paterson Road. Residential addition of front verandah to existing residence.
- Cordeaux Heights**
- DA 2013/608 Lot 15 DP 1168440 No. 94A Staff Road. Residential dwelling house.
- Fairy Meadow**
- DA 2013/968 Lot A DP 388507 No. 80 Storey Street. Residential dwelling house.
  - DA 2013/797 Lot 1 DP 965338 No. 37 Princes Highway. Business premises use of building for post office, accounting office and employment services premises.
- Figtree**
- DA 2013/920 Lot 238 DP 232650 No. 34 Alexander Avenue. Residential alterations and additions.
  - DA 2013/652 Lot 2 DP 1136414 No. 23 Princes Highway. Commercial change of use to recreational facility, fitout and associated business signs.
  - DA 2013/981 Lot 306 DP 1174980 No. 8 Cranestill Way. Residential dwelling house.
  - DA 2013/926 Lot 13 DP 223368 No. 59 Kolonia Avenue. Residential deck.
  - DA 2013/1068 Lot 705 DP 1150875 No. 6 Cascairia Street. Residential swimming pool and spa.

**→ WHAT'S ON**

**Botanic Garden**

**The Beetles - School Holiday Activities**  
**Monday 23-Friday 27 September, 10am-1.30pm**

Botanic Garden Discovery Centre - Madoline Street, Keiraville

Join The Beetles for a fun treasure hunt, crafts and the "Strawberry Fields" Beetle Show during our school holiday activities. Activities are suitable for children aged between 3-12 years. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Cost is \$9 per child or \$18 for two or more children. Bookings only required for large groups.

**Nocturnal Walk**  
**Friday 27 September, 6-9pm**

Entrance: Madoline Street, Keiraville

Explore the garden after hours. Cost is \$9 per person and bookings are essential on (02) 4227 7667 or by emailing [botanicgarden@wollongong.nsw.gov.au](mailto:botanicgarden@wollongong.nsw.gov.au).

**Garden Design Workshop**  
**Wednesday 2 October, 10am-12pm**

Botanic Garden Discovery Centre - Madoline Street, Keiraville

Explore ideas to design or re-design your own garden. Cost is \$9 per person and bookings are essential on (02) 4227 7667 or by emailing [botanicgarden@wollongong.nsw.gov.au](mailto:botanicgarden@wollongong.nsw.gov.au).

**Guided Bird Walk**  
**Thursday 3 October, 12.30-1.30pm**

Walk starts at the Botanic Garden Discovery Centre - Madoline Street, Keiraville.

Join the Illawarra Birders for a free one hour walk through the Garden. Bookings aren't required.

**Environment**

**Puckeys Estate and Mangerton Park Bushcare**

Bushcare has projects Puckeys Estate in North Wollongong on Squires Way and at Mangerton Park off Meares Avenue in Mangerton.

New members welcome. The Groups run from 7am-2pm each Wednesday and Thursday. For more information call Bushcare on (02) 4227 7111.

**Library**

**Jane Austen Afternoon Tea**  
**Wednesday 9 October, 2pm**

Wollongong City Council, Administration Building, Level 9 Function Room

In 2013 Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* turns 200. To celebrate this milestone Wollongong Central Library is hosting an afternoon tea with Susannah Fullerton, President of the Jane Austen Society of Australia.

Susannah will speak on her book *Happily Ever After* which discusses the characters, structure and style as well of the popular novel. For information and bookings call (02) 4227 7414.





**SECURING OUR FUTURE – YOUR OPINION COUNTS**

Recently there's been a lot of talk about Council's long term financial sustainability. We're in a good position now, but with ageing roads and buildings we need to think about how we're going to manage infrastructure renewal in the future. That's why we want to hear from you.

We want to know what you think of Wollongong City Council's services, how we deliver them and what you might change. Log on to Council's website for loads of background information, and have your say through surveys, submissions and discussion boards.

Now's the time to have your say...  
[www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/securingourfuture](http://www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/securingourfuture).  
 Not sure what to do? Contact our Customer Service Team on (02) 4227 7111 and they'll point you in the right direction. Submissions must be received by Tuesday 8 October 2013.

**Library**

**Born to Read**  
**From Wednesday 9 October, 9.30am**  
 Unanderra Library, Princes Highway, Unanderra  
 This literacy program for babies and toddlers aged up to two years will begin at Unanderra Library on 9 October. It runs for 9 weeks, and bookings are essential on (02) 4271 1217.

**Jane Austen Afternoon Tea**  
**Wednesday 9 October, 2pm**  
 Wollongong City Council, Administration Building, Level 9 Function Room  
 In 2013 Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* turns 200. To celebrate this milestone Wollongong Central Library is hosting an afternoon tea with Susannah Fullerton, President of the Jane Austen Society of Australia.  
 Susannah will speak on her book *Happily Ever After* which discusses the characters, structure and style of the popular novel. For information and bookings call (02) 4227 7414.

**→ COUNCIL MEETINGS**

**Extraordinary Council Meeting (broadcast live)**  
**Tuesday 8 October, 6pm**  
**To consider Tenders T13/22 Collection Services and T13/23 Recyclables Processing**  
**Administration Building, Level 10 Council Chambers, 41 Burelli Street, Wollongong**  
 An extraordinary meeting of Council will be held to consider tenders for Collection Services and Recyclables Processing. This meeting is open to the public and in order to enhance public access, the meeting will be broadcast live on Council's website. By attending this meeting you consent to the possibility that your image and voice may also be broadcast to the public.  
 Business Papers will be available from Council's website, the Administration Building and Reference Library prior to Friday 4 October. There will be no Public Access Forum at this meeting.

**Independent Hearing and Assessment Panel (IHAP) Meeting**  
**Thursday 10 October, 5pm**  
**Council's Administration Building, Level 9 Function Room**  
 The next IHAP meeting will consider the following development applications:

- DA-2012/1167 – 35-37 Keerong Avenue, Russell Vale – Residential – demolition of existing 2 detached houses, removal of trees and construction of residential flat building.
  - DA-2013/777 – 13 Cato Place, Mount Keira – Residential – patio roof and extension to existing garage
  - DA-2006/1150-D – 14-15 Virginia Street, North Wollongong – Demolition of all existing structures/buildings and construction of a multi-unit residential flat building comprised of 4 x 3-bedroom, 23 x 2-bedroom and 9 x 1-bedroom units over basement parking. Modification D – awning to penthouse level.
- The meeting agenda and business paper will be available on Wollongong City Council's website no less than five days prior to the meeting.
- If you wish to speak at the meeting please register with the IHAP Coordinator by close of business Wednesday 9 October 2013 on (02) 4227 7285 or email [twilson@wollongong.nsw.gov.au](mailto:twilson@wollongong.nsw.gov.au). Please note that each speaker will be allocated three minutes to speak unless extended time is agreed to by the Panel Chair.

**→ WHAT'S ON**

**Australia Day**  
**Australia Day Nominations Open Now**  
 We're looking for those people who help make our City a great place to live. Council is calling for nominations for our annual Australia Day Awards. There are six categories: Citizen of the Year, Young Citizen of the Year, Cultural Award, Community Award, Sports Award and – new to 2014 – Senior Citizen of the Year. If you know someone who has made a valuable contribution to our community, check out our website or contact Council's Customer Service team for a nomination form. Nominations close Thursday 5 December 2013.

**Culture**  
**Get Ready for Springtime Events**  
 Spring has sprung and it's time to get out and about and enjoy the terrific weather. Over the coming months there's a whole host of activities to get involved in. Below are just a few highlights.



• **Twilight Markets**  
 The Markets are back from this Friday 4 October until March 2014 at Flagstaff Hill. Come along to the markets on the first Friday of each month from 5.30pm. As always, you can try dishes from around the globe and this Friday, listen to live entertainment from Penny Hartgerink.

• **Moonlight Movies**  
 The popular Moonlight Movies return to Thirroul and Dapto in October and November. These free family events are brought to you by Wollongong TAFE, Council and the IMB Building Society. The flicks are 'Tangled' at Thirroul's Beach Reserve on Saturday 26 October, and 'Despicable Me' at Dapto's Reed Park on Saturday 2 November. The fun starts at 7pm.

• **Viva la Gong**  
 On Saturday 9 November this annual celebration of cultural diversity in our community brings a riot of colour, performances and activities to MacCabe Park in Wollongong. Check out Viva la Gong's Facebook page for the latest news and events.  
 Want to know more? Check out Council's website, or follow us on social media for all the latest events news.

**Botanic Garden**  
**Guided Bird Walk**  
**Thursday 3 October, 12.30-1.30pm**  
 Walk starts at the Botanic Garden Discovery Centre – Madoline Street, Keiraville  
 Join the Illawarra Birders for a free one hour walk through the Garden. Bookings aren't required.

**Guided Garden Walk**  
**Sunday 6 October, 2.30-4pm**  
 Botanic Garden Discovery Centre – Madoline Street, Keiraville  
 Tour the Garden with the Friends of Wollongong Botanic Garden then, for a small donation, enjoy a light afternoon tea. No need to book.

**Ghost of Courtney Puckey Tour**  
**Thursday 10 October, 10am-12pm**  
 Meet at the northern car park at Stuart Park, next to the playground.  
 Join the ghost of Courtney Puckey on a tour of his Estate. Cost is \$9 per person and bookings are essential on (02) 4227 7667 or by emailing [botanicgarden@wollongong.nsw.gov.au](mailto:botanicgarden@wollongong.nsw.gov.au).

**Labour Day Public Holiday**  
**Monday 7 October**  
 All Wollongong City Libraries will be closed on Monday 7 October. Returns chutes will close at end of business on Saturday 5 October and will reopen on Tuesday 8 October.

**Corrimal District Library Renovation News**  
 Corrimal District Library is undergoing a renovation that will improve its look and allow us to serve our customers better.  
 The first stage of this renovation is scheduled to start on Tuesday 8 October and will continue into early November.  
 The library will remain open during this work and a temporary entrance and service desk will be set up. You'll find it through the Flametree room. We apologise for any inconvenience.

**→ HAVE YOUR SAY**

**Neighbourhood Forums**  
 Neighbourhood Forums are community groups that meet monthly to help solve local problems. To get involved visit Council's website or contact the Community Engagement Team on (02) 4227 7060.

- **Helensburgh – Area 1**  
 Wednesday 9 October, 7pm  
 Helensburgh Community Centre, Walker Street, Helensburgh
- **Thirroul – Area 3**  
 Tuesday 15 October, 7pm  
 Thirroul Library & Community Centre, Lawrence Hargraves Drive, Thirroul
- **Wollongong & Unanderra – Areas 5 & 6**  
 Wednesday 2 October, 7pm  
 Wollongong Town Hall, Corner Kembla and Crown Streets, Wollongong
- **Berkeley – Area 7**  
 Tuesday 15 October, 6pm  
 Illawarra Yacht Club, Northcliff Drive, Warrawong
- **Dapto – Area 8**  
 Wednesday 9 October, 7pm  
 Dapto Ribbonwood Centre, Princes Highway, Dapto

**Draft Swimming Pool Barrier Policy**  
 You're invited to have your say on Council's draft Swimming Pool Barrier Policy, which has been developed as part of the recent changes to the *Swimming Pools Act (2012)*.  
 The policy focuses on increasing pool safety and new requirements for pool owners. Find out more about the policy and have your say by visiting Council's website. Information packs will also be available at Council's libraries, Leisure Centres and Tourist Parks. Feedback must be received by Tuesday 29 October 2013.

**→ PUBLIC NOTICES**

**Rabbit Control Program**  
 Notice is hereby given that Feral Solutions is undertaking a rabbit control program on behalf of Wollongong City Council.  
 The program will be conducted using Pindone poison at the Wollongong Surf Leisure Resort and North Dalton Park Regional Sports Centre. The program shall start on Tuesday 8 October and finish on Friday 1 November 2013. For further information please contact Ian McCall of Feral Solutions on 0403 844 844.

**Smoke-free Zones in Crown Street Mall and Outdoor Dining**  
 Council is committed to addressing both the health and environmental issues associated with smoking. We're taking a leading role in helping to create cleaner, healthier and happier spaces for people to live and visit.  
 The Crown Street Mall will become a smoke-free zone from 1 November 2013. Smoke-free zones will be gradually introduced in outdoor dining venues on public land across our Local Government Area from 1 January 2014.  
 For more information please visit Council's website or contact Council on (02) 4227 7111.

**Spotlight on Keiraville, Gwynneville: Community Planning Workshops**

• **Saturday 12 October**  
 Parking and Access, 10am-12 noon  
 Street Safety, 2-4pm.  
 St Brigid's Primary School, Gipps Road, Gwynneville.  
 Council is sponsoring a community-led plan for the Keiraville and Gwynneville areas, and all interested people are encouraged to get involved. These workshops will build on information gathered from community engagement held in June. This information will assist the development of the Keiraville Gwynneville Precinct Plan. For more information, visit <http://keiravillegwynnevilleplan.wikispaces.com> or [www.facebook.com/keiravillegwynneville](http://www.facebook.com/keiravillegwynneville).

**→ RECRUITMENT**

**Development Project Officer (Planner)**  
 Salary: From \$1,247.14 to \$1,582.60 per week plus super  
 Recruitment No: 13054  
 Enquiries: Pier Panozzo on (02) 4227 7480  
 Closing date: 18 October 2013

**Seasonal General Assistants at Wollongong City Council's Tourist Parks**  
**Seasonal General Assistant/Receptionist**  
**Seasonal General Assistant/Cleaners**  
**Seasonal General Assistant/Maintenance**  
 Salary: \$26.45 per hour plus super. Minimum 4 hours per week up to 12 months  
 Enquiries: Shaun Reason on (02) 4297 3166  
 Closing date: 11 October 2013

**How to apply: Visit Council's website to view full job advertisements, the position description and the selection criteria which must be addressed.**





### SECURING OUR FUTURE - YOUR OPINION COUNTS

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We want to know what you think of Wollongong City Council's services, how we deliver them and what you might change.

Over the past few weeks we've encouraged people to put their submissions in through Council's website. These submissions closed on Tuesday 8 October 2013.

In November we'll once again call for feedback from the community on a set of recommendations that will be put together by a Citizens Panel.

In the meantime, we encourage you to keep visiting the website and have your say through the regular surveys and discussion boards. You'll also find loads of background information.

Now's the time to have your say...  
[www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/securingourfuture](http://www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/securingourfuture).

Not sure what to do? Contact our Customer Service Team on (02) 4227 7111 and they'll point you in the right direction.

### Presentation of Financial Statements as per Section 418 (3) of the Local Government Act

In accordance with Section 418 (3) of the Local Government Act, 1993, Wollongong City Council advises that the Ordinary Council Meeting to be held on 11 November 2013 will include the presentation of the audited Financial Statements and the Auditor's Reports for the financial year ending 30 June 2013.

A summary of the Financial Statements is provided below:

	2013 \$'000	2012 \$'000
<b>Income Statement</b>		
Total Income from Continuing Operations	263,364	238,892
Total Expenses from Continuing Operations	238,225	232,627
<b>Operating Result from Continuing Operations</b>	<b>25,139</b>	<b>5,965</b>
<b>Net Operating Result for the year</b>	<b>25,139</b>	<b>5,965</b>
Net Operating Result before Grants and Contributions provided for Capital Purposes	(13,909)	(13,521)
<b>Statement of Financial Position</b>		
Total Current Assets	137,102	114,538
Total Current Liabilities	(67,368)	(64,671)
Total Non-Current Assets	2,390,673	2,334,813
Total Non-Current Liabilities	(78,637)	(57,331)
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>2,389,972</b>	<b>2,327,049</b>
<b>Other Financial Information</b>		
Unrestricted Ratio	2.01 : 1	1.79 : 1
Debt Service Ratio (%)	1.7%	1.5%
Rates Coverage Ratio (%)	55.5%	60.0%
Rates & Annual Charges Outstanding Ratio (%)	7.1%	6.1%

In accordance with Section 420 of the Local Government Act, 1993, any person may make a submission in writing to Council with respect to the Council's Audited Financial Statements or the Auditor's Reports.

Copies of the audited Financial Statements and the Auditor's Reports may be inspected at:

Internet: [www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au](http://www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au)

Location: 41 Burelli Street, Wollongong NSW 2500

Submissions close one week after the above Public Meeting has been held.

### Community Transport: Wollongong - Shellharbour (Wollongong Office)

#### Community Bus Bookings for 2014

We're seeking Expressions of Interest from community groups and not-for-profit organisations wishing to hire our Community Transport buses during 2014.

Any eligible non-profit community group or organisation in the Wollongong Local Government Area may apply.

**Community Transport: Wollongong-Shellharbour** is funded by federal and state governments and administered by Transport for New South Wales, under the Home and Community Care (HACC) and Community Transport Programs.

The aim of the project is to provide transport to organisations assisting older people, people with disabilities and their carers to live independently within the community.

Priority will be given to groups and organisations contributing to the aims and objectives of the HACC program. In addition, consideration will be given to the needs of other transport disadvantaged community groups and organisations, subject to availability of resources.

Please contact Community Transport Officer, on (02) 4227 7109 for an application package or for more information.

Closing date for applications is Friday 1 November 2013.

### Review of Expenses and Facilities to Lord Mayor and Councillors Policy

The purpose of the Payment of Expenses and Provision of Facilities to Lord Mayor and Councillors Policy is to ensure that there is accountability and transparency in the payment of expenses and/or reimbursement of expenses to the Lord Mayor and Councillors in carrying out their civic duties and that the facilities provided to them are appropriate and reasonable.

Council at its meeting of 9 September 2013 endorsed, in principle, a number of minor amendments to the current Policy subject to public notification. An outline of the amendments made is listed in the report to Council on 9 September, with additional amendments included in the Minutes of the Meeting, which are available on Council's website.

Written submissions are invited and will be accepted until Monday 14 October 2013.

Any person can make a submission by writing to the General Manager. Please read the privacy notification on these pages before making a submission.

For more information and/or a copy of the Draft Amended Policy, please visit Council's website or call Council's Governance Officer on (02) 4227 7111.

## → COUNCIL MEETINGS

### Council Meeting (now broadcast live)

Monday 14 October 2013, 6pm

Administration Building, Level 10, Council Chambers  
41 Burelli Street, Wollongong

Council meetings are open to the public except for any part of the meeting where items are to be considered in Closed Council. In order to enhance public access, the meeting will be broadcast live on Council's website. By attending this meeting you consent to the possibility that your image and voice may also be broadcast to the public.

Business Papers are available from Council's website, the Administration Building and Reference Library from 5pm on Tuesday 8 October.

Community members can apply to address Council by submitting a Public Access Forum application by 12 noon on Friday 11 October. All applicants will be contacted by 5pm on Friday 11 October. The Public Access Forum policy and application forms are available on Council's website or by phoning (02) 4227 7111.

### Corrimal District Library Renovation News

Corrimal District Library is undergoing a renovation that will improve its look and allow us to serve our customers better.

The first stage of this renovation is scheduled to start on Tuesday 8 October and will continue into early November.

The library will remain open during this work and a temporary entrance and service desk will be set up. You'll find it through the Flametree room.

We apologise for any inconvenience.

### Botanic Garden

#### Ghost of Courtney Puckey Tour

Thursday 10 October, 10am-12pm

Meet at the northern car park at Stuart Park next to the playground.

Join the ghost of Courtney Puckey on a tour of his Estate. Cost is \$9 per person and bookings are essential on (02) 4227 7667 or by emailing [botanicgarden@wollongong.nsw.gov.au](mailto:botanicgarden@wollongong.nsw.gov.au).

#### Love it, Buy it, Grow it Workshop

Wednesday 16 October, 10am-12.30pm

Botanic Garden Discovery Centre - Madoline Street, Keiraville  
Learn tips for making great meals with leftovers, and how to store them. Cost is \$9 per person and bookings are essential on (02) 4227 7667 or by emailing [botanicgarden@wollongong.nsw.gov.au](mailto:botanicgarden@wollongong.nsw.gov.au).

#### Greenplan Native Plant Sale

Friday 18 October, 7.30am-2.30pm

Wollongong Botanic Garden, Greenplan Nursery,  
Northfields Avenue, Keiraville

Wollongong residents can buy local indigenous trees, shrubs, ground covers and grasses. A species list is available on the Botanic Garden's website. Don't forget your rates notice. Payment is by card (not AMEX) or cheque only.

## → PUBLIC NOTICES

### Illawarra Digital Enterprise Workshops

Learn how to expand your business onto eBay and create a social media presence by attending these free, federally-funded Illawarra Digital Enterprise workshops. All workshops will be held at Council's Administration Building on Level 9.

The workshops are:

**Tuesday 15 October, 5-7.30pm** - Expanding Your Business onto eBay

**Thursday 17 October, 5-7.30pm** - Creating a Social Media Presence

For more information or to book your place call (02) 4227 4500 or visit [www.illawarradigital.com.au](http://www.illawarradigital.com.au).

### Information for all Dog and Cat Owners

Under the *Companion Animals Act*, you cannot sell or give away a dog or cat without having it permanently identified by microchip. All dogs or cats need to be microchipped before changing ownership. It is the responsibility of the 'old/original owner' - the person selling or giving away the animal - to notify their local council of the change in ownership within 14 days.

Failure to comply with this requirement can result in the original dog owner being issued with \$165 penalty infringement notices for each offence.

For Change of Owner/Details forms and information on your responsibility as a pet owner, contact Council or visit our 'Pets' on our website.

### Rabbit Control Program

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The program will be conducted using Pindone poison at the Wollongong Surf Leisure Resort and North Dalton Park Regional Sports Centre. This will finish on Friday 8 November 2013. For further information please contact Ian McCall of Feral Solutions on 0403 844 844.

## → HAVE YOUR SAY

### Neighbourhood Forums

Neighbourhood Forums are community groups that meet monthly to help solve local problems. To get involved please visit Council's website or contact the Community Engagement Team on (02) 4227 7050.

#### • Helensburgh - Area 1

Wednesday 9 October, 7pm

Helensburgh Community Centre, Walker Street, Helensburgh

#### • Thirroul - Area 3

Tuesday 16 October, 7pm

Thirroul Library & Community Centre,  
Lawrence Hargrave Drive, Thirroul

#### • Berkeley - Area 7

Tuesday 15 October, 6pm

Illawarra Yacht Club, Northcliff Drive, Warrawong

#### • Dapto - Area 8

Wednesday 9 October, 7pm

Dapto Ribbonwood Centre, Princes Highway, Dapto

### Draft Swimming Pool Barrier Policy

You're invited to have your say on Council's draft Swimming Pool Barrier Policy, which has been developed as part of the recent changes to the *Swimming Pools Act (2012)*.

The policy focuses on increasing pool safety and new requirements for pool owners. Find out more about the policy and have your say by visiting Council's website. Information packs will also be available at Council's libraries, Leisure Centres and Tourist Parks.

Feedback must be received by Tuesday 29 October 2013.

## → WHAT'S ON

### Library

#### Illawarra Remembers Project

Guest speaker: Kim Phillips

Monday 14 October 2-4pm

Wollongong Central Library

As part of the Illawarra Remembers Project historian Kim Phillips will speak on her project 'Spirits of Gallipoli - then and now'.

The talk will be held at Wollongong Central Library Ground Floor Theatre. For bookings or information please phone (02) 4227 7414.

Visit us: 41 Burelli Street, Wollongong Find us online: [www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au](http://www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au)  
Write to us: [council@wollongong.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@wollongong.nsw.gov.au) or Locked Bag 8821, Wollongong DC NSW 2500  
Talk to us: Customer Service (02) 4227 7111. For after-hours emergencies call 1300 557 980

Wollongong City Council @Wollongong\_City wollongongcity





### SECURING OUR FUTURE – YOUR OPINION COUNTS

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Now's the time to have your say... [www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/securingourfuture](http://www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/securingourfuture).

Not sure what to do? Contact our Customer Service Team on (02) 4227 7111 and they'll point you in the right direction.

### Environment

#### Garage Sale Trail

Saturday 26 October

Get involved in the Garage Sale Trail – a day of buying and selling across Australia and the Illawarra.

Register your sale free online at [www.garagesaletrail.com.au](http://www.garagesaletrail.com.au).

If you're planning to hit the trail for a bargain, visit the website, type in your postcode and you'll see all the garage sales in your area.

#### Puckeys Estate and Mangerton Park Bushcare

Bushcare has projects at Puckeys Estate in North Wollongong and in Mangerton Park in Mangerton. Both run 7am-2pm Wednesdays and Thursdays. To get involved call Bushcare on (02) 4227 8113.

### → HAVE YOUR SAY

#### Neighbourhood Forums

Neighbourhood Forums are community groups that meet monthly to help solve local problems. To get involved visit Council's website or contact the Community Engagement Team on (02) 4227 7060.

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The policy focuses on increasing pool safety and new requirements for pool owners. Find out more about the policy and have your say by visiting Council's website. Information packs will also be available at Council's libraries, Leisure Centres and Tourist Parks.

Feedback must be received by Tuesday 29 October 2013.

### Botanic Garden

#### Greenplan Native Plant Sale

Friday 18 October, 7.30am-2.30pm

Local indigenous trees, shrubs, ground covers and grasses are available to buy by Wollongong residents. A list of available species is listed on the Botanic Garden website.

#### Greenplan Spring Plant Sale

Saturday 26 October, 7.30am-2.30pm

Buy local indigenous trees, shrubs, ground covers and grasses as well as exotic species. Wollongong ratepayers can buy up to 50 plants at discounted prices.

Both plant sales are at the Wollongong Botanic Garden Greenplan Nursery, Northfields Avenue, Keiraville. Don't forget your rates notice and payment is by card (not AMEX) or cheque only.

### Library

#### Illawarra Remembers 1914-1918

Saturday 26 October, 10am-4pm

Wollongong Central Library

Join us for our last public scanning day as part of the Illawarra Remembers project.

Bring along family treasures dating from World War One and a professional scanning company will add them to a new historical database.

For more information on the project visit:

<http://illawarraremembers.com/>

#### eReader Help Sessions

Wollongong City Libraries are running free, drop-in eReader help sessions.

• **Corrimal District Library:** Tuesdays, 11am-12 noon

• **Dapto District Library:** Friday 18 October, 1-3pm and Friday 15 November, 1-3pm

• **Warrawong District Library:** Thursday 31 October and Thursday 15 November, 1-3pm

• **Wollongong Central Library:** Wednesday 16 October, 8 November and 4 December, 1-3pm

#### Corrimal District Library's New Look

Corrimal District Library is being renovated. The new look will allow us to better serve our customers and the first stage of works will continue into early November.

The library remains open and a temporary entrance and service desk has been set up through the Fitzmatree room.

We apologise for any inconvenience.

### Culture

#### Moonlight Movies

The popular Moonlight Movies return to Thirroul and Dapto in October and November. These free family events are brought to you by Wollongong TAFE, Council and the IMB Building Society.

The flicks are 'Tangled' at Thirroul's Beach Reserve on Saturday 26 October, and 'Despicable Me' at Dapto's Reed Park on Saturday 2 November. The fun starts at 7pm.



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### → DEVELOPMENT CONSENTS

From 2/10/2013 to 6/10/2013

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#### Balgownie

• DA 2013/417 Lot 5 DP 38203 No. 2A Camden Street. Residential swimming pool.

#### Corrimal

• DA 2013/1137 Lot 3 DP 26572 No. 4 Powell Avenue. Residential cover deck and carport.

#### Dapto

• DA 2013/1082 Lot 1 DP 1077277 No. 70-76 Marshall Street. Convert existing bowling green to mini football fields, artificial turf and erect columns for netting and lighting.

• DA 2012/1455/A Lot 2 DP 206260, Lot 2 DP 570882 No. 125-127 Princes Highway. Commercial replacement of existing underground fuel tanks and associated remediation works. Modification A to delete Condition 24.3 of consent.

#### East Corrimal

• DA 2013/483/A Lot 13 DP 137549 No. 58 Park Road. Subdivision Torrens title 2 residential lots. Modification A to include easement.

#### Figtree

• DA 2013/1140 Lot 224 DP 1150675 No. 4 Gahnis Avenue. Residential swimming pool.

• DA 2013/678 Lot 23 DP 38426 No. 147 The Avenue. Recreational Facility (Indoor) change of use of existing premises to Anytime Fitness gym operating 24 hours, 7 days a week including internal fitout and signage.

• DA 2013/906 Lot 4 SP 31341 No. 4/12 Cameron Place. Residential partial demolition of existing pergola and construction of repositioned pergola.

#### Helensburgh

• DA 2013/1040 Lot 103 DP 1147123 No. 21 Cemetery Road. Industrial first use of light industrial Unit 15 for a clothing warehouse.

• DA 2013/1041 Lot 102 DP 1147123 No. 23 Cemetery Road. Industrial first use of light industrial Unit 4 for warehouse for assembly and distribution of locker units and change room bench seating.

• CD 2013/14/A Lot 2 DP 510168 No. 3 Laurina Avenue. Residential garage. Modification A to existing driveway to remain and changes to floor plan of garage.

#### Horstey

• DA 2013/1130 Lot 509 DP 1165208 No. 53 Moreon Avenue. Residential dwelling house.

#### Kanahooka

• DA 1988/865/B Lot 2 Sec 1 DP 3358 No. 168 Kanahooka Road. Second dwelling and parking modification to proposal description to dual occupancy and permit parking of the rear lane.

• DA 2013/1044 Lot 454 DP 605705 No. 113 Edgeworth Avenue. Residential alterations and additions.

### → PUBLIC NOTICE

#### Keep Your Pets Contact Details Current

Have you moved house and forgotten to update your pet's contact details with Council?

Pet owners should be sure their address and contact phone number is up to date. That way, if a pet goes missing they've got a better chance of being reunited with their owner.

Under the *NSW Companion Animals Act 1998* you have 14 days to notify Council of changes of address or contact details for your pet.

For Change of Detail forms contact Council's Customer Service team or visit the pets pages on our website.

#### Swim Safely this Summer

We take beach safety seriously. That's why our Lifeguard staff visit local schools and the University as part of our surf education program. It's also why last summer we launched new beachside signage with QR codes so that beachgoers could scan with their smartphones for the latest on surf conditions.

This year, we're trying something different. For the 2013-14 swim season we've launched four short surf education videos. The first video covers all the important safe swimming messages and we'd encourage everyone – whether you're a seasoned beach pro or not – to have a look at it. The other three look at some of our most dangerous beaches – Stanwell Park, Puckeys and Coniston. You'll find the links of our website's homepage. In the meantime, remember, No Flags, No Swim.

### → WHAT'S ON

#### Australia Day

##### Australia Day Nominations Open Now

We're looking for those people who help make our City a great place to live. Council is calling for nominations for our annual Australia Day Awards. There are six categories: Citizen of the Year, Young Citizen of the Year, Cultural Award, Community Award, Sports Award and – new to 2014 – Senior Citizen of the Year. If you know someone who has made a valuable contribution to our community, check out our website or contact Council's Customer Service team for a nomination form. Nominations close Thursday 5 December 2013.

Visit us: 41 Burrell Street, Wollongong Find us online: [www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au](http://www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au)  
Write to us: [council@wollongong.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@wollongong.nsw.gov.au) or Locked Bag 8821, Wollongong DC NSW 2500  
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Wollongong City Council @Wollongong\_City wollongongcity





### Talking about Council's Finances

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Asbestos Awareness Month aims to educate Australians about the dangers of working with asbestos during home renovations and maintenance.

To help with this process Betty – a purpose-built mobile home that demonstrates where asbestos might be found in and around any home built or renovated before 1987 – will be in the Bunnings Warrawang car park, Cowper Street, Warrawang, on Monday 18 November from 10am-12 noon.

For more information visit [www.asbestosawareness.com.au](http://www.asbestosawareness.com.au).

**Privacy Notification:** The purpose for seeking your submission on advertised matters is to better assist Council in its decision making processes.

The intended recipients of your submission are officers within Council and those persons granted *explicit* access to the information. Your submission, including your name, address and other contact details, may be exhibited on Council's website and included in publicly accessible registers. If you make an anonymous submission, Council will be unable to contact you further.

If your submission relates to a development proposal or other relevant planning application, Council is required to disclose on its website all relevant details of political donations or gifts made by you.

In limited circumstances, you may apply for suppression of your personal information from a publicly accessible register. Further information is available on Council's website at [www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/pages/privacy.aspx](http://www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/pages/privacy.aspx) or by phoning Council on (02) 4227 7111.

## → WHAT'S ON

### Botanic Garden

#### The Secrets of Good Gardening Short Course

**Wednesday 13 November, 10am-12pm**

Entrance: Madoline Street, Keiraville

Learn some simple and practical techniques to enhance your backyard. This workshop focuses on Backyard Self Sufficiency. Course cost is \$9 per person. Bookings are essential on (02) 4227 7667 or by emailing [botanicgarden@wollongong.nsw.gov.au](mailto:botanicgarden@wollongong.nsw.gov.au).

#### Step Back in Time Tour at Gleniffer Brae

**Thursday 14 November, 10am-12 noon**

Meet at Gleniffer Brae front door – Murphys Avenue, Keiraville

Join this theatrical tour of Gleniffer Brae where 'Sid Hoskins', the one-time owner of Australian Iron and Steel and Gleniffer Brae, will share details of his home and garden. Cost is \$9 per person. Bookings essential on (02) 4227 7667 or by emailing [botanicgarden@wollongong.nsw.gov.au](mailto:botanicgarden@wollongong.nsw.gov.au).

### Library

#### Free Author Talk – Marie Bean

**Thursday 14 November, 10.30am**

Warrawang District Library

Marie Bean will speak about her book, *Lazy Loser*, and offer tips on breaking eating and drinking weaknesses.

Call (02) 4227 8133 to book your spot.

#### Friends of the Library – Lunch with Catherine Barker

**Thursday 28 November, 12 for 12.30pm**

Council Administration Building, Level 9 Function Room

Join the Friends of the Library for their final function of 2013 – a lunch with Catherine Barker.

Cost is \$20 for members and \$25 for non-members. Tickets on sale from Thursday 14 November at Council's Cashier's Office in the Customer Service Centre and at Corimal, Dapto and Thirroul district libraries.

#### Big Book Sale

**Wednesday 20-Saturday 30 November, during library hours**

Wollongong Central Library

Great ex-library books and magazines for sale – and all under \$1.

## → DEVELOPMENT CONSENTS

**From 30/10/2013 to 5/11/2013**

The following applications have been approved by Council. Notification under Section 101 Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.

**Austimmer**

- DA 2013/1244 Lot 2 DP 270564 Buttersnow Drive, Residential replace existing roof members due to termite damage.
- DA 2013/1162 Lot 34 DP 224116 No. 54 Hill Street, Residential decking.

**Avondale**

- DA 2013/1126 Lot 4 DP 270170 No. 14 Mountain View Terrace, Residential in-ground swimming pool.


**Bulli**

- DA 2013/1016 Lot 309 DP 1161627 No. 16 Air Avenue, Residential dwelling house.
- DA 2013/1221 Lot 6 DP 27811 No. 11 Banelong Street, Residential removal and relocation of existing dwelling house.
- DA 2013/832 Lot 65 DP 35975 No. 2A O'Brien Street, Residential demolition of existing structures and construction of dwelling house and swimming pool.

**Corimal**

- DA 2013/763 Lot 6 DP 26829 No. 39 Princes Highway, Change of use from respite day care centre to a transitional group home on the first floor to accommodate up to 3 persons with a disability and staff members and fire safety upgrade works.
- DA 2013/1278 Lot Y DP 164371 No. 80 Railway Street, Residential demolition of existing dwelling and structures.





# WOLLONGONG CITY COUNCIL

## Securing Our Future: What next?

Like many of NSW's 152 councils we're faced with the challenge of making sure we've set aside enough money to look after our ageing roads, footpaths and buildings into the future. Over the past few months we've been working with you to develop a way to manage this long term problem with infrastructure.

This has seen passionate debate in our community and more than 600 people and groups gave us their thoughts and feedback on a series of suggestions made by a Citizens Panel. This feedback will help us over the next seven months, as Councillors start making some big decisions.

We need your ongoing involvement to secure our future. To make it easy to see where we're headed, we've divided this process into five phases. We're in Phase Four.

**STAY INVOLVED – VISIT**  
[www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/securingourfuture](http://www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/securingourfuture)

**PHASE ONE:** For the past five years Council has worked to reduce our internal costs. To date, we've been able to make savings of about \$20.3 million each year and used this money to improve ageing assets such as roads and footpaths, as well as the Crown Street Mall.

**PHASE TWO:** This included the recruitment of a 34-member Citizens Panel who met six times and provided a set of recommendations for the community and Council to consider. The community also had an opportunity to comment on the review by participating in an online survey and discussion boards.

**PHASE THREE:** This has just been completed and involved the exhibition of the Citizens Panel's recommendations and collation of community feedback on the report.

**PHASE FOUR:** On 9 December, Councillors will consider a report addressing the infrastructure challenge. The report will include a number of options developed from the community and staff feedback, and the Citizens Panel report. The options will go out for community feedback from mid-December to early 2014.

**PHASE FIVE:** This phase will focus on detailing Council's preferred option in the Annual Plan, including an in-depth rundown of the budget and capital program. These documents will be out for comment April-May 2014, with a final discussion in June.

**Watch the 9 December Council meeting. You can come along – it's in the Council Chambers at 41 Burelli Street, Wollongong – or follow the links from our homepage to watch the live webcast. It starts at 6pm.**

PHASE ONE


PHASE TWO

PHASE THREE

PHASE FOUR

PHASE FIVE

A sustainable plan to secure our future



### → HAVE YOUR SAY

#### Neighbourhood Forums

Neighbourhood Forums are community groups that meet monthly to help solve local problems. To get involved please visit Council's website or contact the Community Engagement Team on (02) 4227 7060.

#### • Towradgi – Area 4

Tuesday 3 December, 7pm  
Towradgi Community Hall, Corner Moray and Towradgi Roads, Towradgi

#### • Wollongong & Unanderra – Area 5 & 6

Wednesday 4 December, 7pm  
Wollongong Town Hall, Corner Crown and Kambie Streets, Wollongong

#### Grand Pacific Walk

We were out and about earlier this year talking to the community about the Grand Pacific Walk, a proposed shared pathway along our coastline from the Royal National Park to Lake Illawarra.

Council has developed a draft Grand Pacific Walk Masterplan for the whole route, concept plans for Stage 1 (Coalcliff to Stanwell Park) and construction plans for shereaway improvements at Coalcliff. The plans will be on exhibition from Monday 25 November 2013 – Monday 10 February 2014.

During the exhibition period there'll be a number of opportunities for the community to discuss the draft plans with Council staff.

The first engagement session is at Berkeley Community Centre Park on Saturday 14 December from 4.30–6.30pm.

You can find out more about the plans for Grand Pacific Walk and have your say by visiting <http://haveyoursaywollongong.com.au/projects/grand-pacific-walk>.

Copies of the draft plans, FAQ sheets and feedback forms will also be available at all local libraries.

For more information please contact Community Engagement at [engagement@wollongong.nsw.gov.au](mailto:engagement@wollongong.nsw.gov.au) or on (02) 4227 7060.

### → WHAT'S ON

#### Australia Day

##### Australia Day Nominations Open Now

We're looking for those people who help make our City a great place to live. Council is calling for nominations for our annual Australia Day Awards. There are six categories: Citizen of the Year, Young Citizen of the Year, Cultural Award, Community Award, Sports Award and – new to 2014 – Senior Citizen of the Year. If you know someone who has made a valuable contribution to our community, check out our website or contact Council's Customer Service team for a nomination form. Nominations close Thursday 5 December 2013.

#### Botanic Garden

##### City of Wollongong Christmas Carols proudly sponsored by McDonalds Illawarra

**Saturday 21 December, 6–9pm**  
Wollongong Botanic Garden on the lawn below Gleniffer Brae  
Entrance: Murphys Avenue, Keiraville

96FM's Marty and Bianca will host this free community celebration which features performances from The Conservatorium of Music. Refreshments and LED candles will be available for purchase. For safety reasons, traditional candles can't be used.

Entry is free but, as spaces are limited, we ask carollers to register their interest by filling out an online registration form on the Botanic Garden's website.

The Carols are proudly sponsored by McDonalds, the Illawarra Mercury, 96FM and WIN Television.

#### Sunset Cinema

**Thursday 26 December 2013–Saturday 15 February 2014**  
Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings from 7pm

Wollongong Botanic Garden (Fig Lawn)  
Entrance: Murphys Avenue, Keiraville

Gather family and friends, pack a picnic and head outdoors for a night out under the stars. There are movies to suit everyone's tastes. Book your tickets at [www.sunsetcinema.com.au](http://www.sunsetcinema.com.au).

#### Environment

##### Indian Myna Bird Workshop

Learn about the Indian Myna bird and find out how you can get involved in our humane backyard trapping and euthanasia program. We'll also discuss how to reduce their breeding and feeding opportunities and how you can get involved with our research.

Register your interest in attending a workshop by calling Council's Customer Service team on (02) 4227 7111.

#### Library

##### Summer Reading Club Monday 2 December–Saturday 16 January 2014

Join the Summer Reading Challenge – it's free and open to all children up to 12 years. There are weekly prize draws, major prize draws, shows and fun library activities. Register at any of Council's libraries.

##### Free e-Reader Help Sessions

Come along to one of these drop-in sessions for advice and tips on using e-Readers.

- **Corrimal District Library:** Tuesdays 11am–12 noon
- **Warrawong District Library:** Thursday 28 November, 1–3pm
- **Wollongong Central Library:** Wednesday 4 December, 1–3pm

#### Young People

##### Learn Safe Workshop for Supervisors and Learner Drivers

**Tuesday 3 December, 6–8pm**

Council's Administration Building, Level 9 Function Room.

Learner driver supervisors, and accompanied learners, can join in this free workshop where they'll learn teaching strategies, tips for completing the Learner Driver Log Book and about the L & P Plate licence regulations.

Supper is provided and bookings are a must on (02) 4227 7111 or by emailing [rs@wollongong.nsw.gov.au](mailto:rs@wollongong.nsw.gov.au).

Visit us: 41 Burelli Street, Wollongong Find us online: [www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au](http://www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au)  
Write to us: [council@wollongong.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@wollongong.nsw.gov.au) or Locked Bag 8821, Wollongong DC NSW 2500  
Talk to us: Customer Service (02) 4227 7111. For after-hours emergencies call 1300 557 980



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# WOLLONGONG CITY COUNCIL

## Securing Our Future: What next?

Like many of NSW's 152 councils we've faced with the challenge of making sure we've set aside enough money to look after our ageing roads, footpaths and buildings into the future. Over the past few months we've been working with you to develop a way to manage this long term problem with infrastructure.

This has seen passionate debate in our community. More than 600 people and groups gave us their thoughts and feedback on a series of suggestions made by a Citizens Panel. This feedback is helping us over the next seven months, as Councillors start making some big decisions.

We need your ongoing involvement to secure our future. To make it easy to see where we've come from and where we're headed, we've divided this process into stages.

### WHAT WE'VE DONE SO FAR Until November 2013

For the past five years Council has worked to reduce our internal costs. To date, we've been able to make savings of about \$20.3 million each year and used this money to improve ageing assets such as roads and footpaths, as well as the Crown Street Mall.

Following this process, we've focused on working with the community to develop a plan that outlines how to sustainably maintain our ageing assets. As part of this, a randomly selected group of residents who represented the age and make-up of our community were invited to study our long term community asset renewal challenge. This group put together a number of recommendations to act as a starting point for the community discussion around the problem. The community also had an opportunity to comment by participating in an online survey and discussion boards.

### WHAT HAPPENS NOW December 2013 – February 2014

On 9 December the Councillors will consider a report addressing the infrastructure challenge. This report includes a number of options developed from the community and staff feedback, and the Citizens Panel report. The Councillors will use this material to start to make decisions about a way forward. The first of these is likely to involve a community engagement phase, which will run until February 2014.

### WHAT HAPPENS NEXT February – June 2014

As this is a long term project, there will be a number of steps for Council and the community to work through over the coming months. Between February and June we will focus on detailing Council's preferred option in the Annual Plan, including an in depth rundown of the budget and capital program. These documents will be out for comment April-May 2014, with a final decision in June.

**STAY INVOLVED – VISIT**  
[www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/securingourfuture](http://www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/securingourfuture)

Watch the 9 December Council meeting. You can come along – It's in the Council Chambers at 41 Burelli Street, Wollongong – or follow the links from our homepage to watch the live webcast. It starts at 6pm.

A sustainable plan to secure our future

### → COUNCIL MEETINGS

#### Council Meeting (broadcast live)

**Monday 9 December, 6pm**  
Council's Administration Building, Level 10, Council Chambers

Council meetings are open to the public except for any part of the meeting where items are to be considered in Closed Council. To enhance public access, the meeting will be broadcast live on Council's website. By attending this meeting you consent to the possibility that your image and voice may also be broadcast to the public.

Business Papers are available from Council's website, the Administration Building and Reference Library from 5pm on Monday 2 December.

Community members can apply to address Council by submitting a Public Access Forum application by 12 noon on Friday 6 December 2013.

#### Independent Hearing and Assessment Panel (IHAP) Meeting

**Tuesday 10 December, 5pm**  
Council's Administration Building, Level 9 Function Room

The next IHAP meeting will consider the following development applications:

- DA-2013/1196, 11 Hunter Street, Balgownie, Residential – multi-dwelling development – three townhouses.
- DA-2013/949, 35 Yellagong Street, West Wollongong, Residential – multi-dwelling housing – eight attached townhouses, alterations to existing dwelling, demolition of old sheds.
- DA-2013/1027, 21 Cliff Parade, Thirroul, Community markets – Tingara Park – one event per month (second Saturday of the month).

The meeting agenda and business paper will be available on Council's website no less than five days prior to the meeting.

If you wish to speak at the meeting please register with the IHAP Coordinator by close of business Monday 9 December 2013 on (02) 4227 7111 or email [twilson@wollongong.nsw.gov.au](mailto:twilson@wollongong.nsw.gov.au). Please note that each speaker will be allocated 3 minutes to speak unless extended time is agreed to by the Panel Chair.

### → HAVE YOUR SAY

#### Neighbourhood Forums

Neighbourhood Forums are community groups that meet monthly to help solve local problems. To get involved, visit Council's website or contact the Community Engagement Team on (02) 4227 7060.

- **Wollongong & Unanderra – Areas 5 & 6**  
Wednesday 4 December, 7pm  
Wollongong Town Hall,  
Cnr Crown and Kembla Streets, Wollongong

- **Berkeley – Area 7**  
Tuesday 17 December, 6pm  
Illawarra Yacht Club, Northcliffe Drive, Warrawong

#### Grand Pacific Walk

The first engagement session for the Grand Pacific Walk Masterplan and Stage 1 Concept Plan will take place at Berkeley Community Centre Park on Saturday 14 December from 4.30-6.30pm. For more information please contact Community Engagement at [engagement@wollongong.nsw.gov.au](mailto:engagement@wollongong.nsw.gov.au) or (02) 4227 7060.

### → WHAT'S ON

#### Australia Day

##### Wanted – Creatives for Australia Day Competitions

We've launched two competitions to coincide with our Oz Day in the Gong celebrations to be held around Wollongong Harbour on Sunday 26 January 2014.

The first of the competitions is an Australia Day Short Film Competition, and the second is Council's The Gong Factor Talent Quest.

Full competition details, including entry forms, and a complete program of Australia Day events are listed on Council's website.

### Botanic Garden

#### City of Wollongong Christmas Carols proudly sponsored by McDonald's Illawarra

**Saturday 21 December, 6-9pm**

On the lawn below Gleniffer Brae, Murphys Avenue, Keiraville 198FM's Marty and Bianca will host this free community celebration which features performances from Wollongong Conservatorium of Music.

Refreshments and LED candles will be available for purchase. For safety reasons, traditional candles can't be used. Carolers should register by filling out an online registration form on the Botanic Garden's website. The Carols are sponsored by McDonald's Illawarra, the Illawarra Mercury, 198FM and WIN Television.

### Environment

#### Council's On-Call Household Clean-up

Getting ready for Christmas and giving your house a spring clean? Get rid of unwanted rubbish using Council's On-call Household Clean-up Service.

Clean-up materials must be:

- Booked in for pick up at least two working days before your next garbage collection day.
- Placed neatly to ensure the contractor can safely access and handle your items.
- Placed out no earlier than the day before the collection day and no later than 6am on the morning of the booked collection.
- Tied, wrapped or boxed with small items contained.
- Able to be handled by two people.
- Placed so they won't fall on the roadway or footpath.

If unsuitable items have been placed out for collection, they will not be collected. For a full list of what can and can't be put out for collection, please visit Council's website.

Visit us: 41 Burelli Street, Wollongong Find us online: [www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au](http://www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au)

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# WOLLONGONG CITY COUNCIL

## Securing Our Future: You asked...

Like many of NSW's 152 councils we're faced with the challenge of making sure we've set aside enough money to look after our ageing roads, footpaths and buildings into the future. Over the past few months we've been working with you to develop a way to manage this long term problem. This has seen passionate debate in our community. More than 600 people and groups gave us their thoughts and feedback on a series of suggestions made by a Citizens Panel. This feedback is helping us over the next seven months, as Councillors start making some big decisions.

We need your ongoing involvement to secure our future.

**STAY INVOLVED – VISIT**  
[www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/securingourfuture](http://www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/securingourfuture)

### You asked: What has Council done to reduce its expenses?

We've been working hard over the past five years to reduce our internal costs. To date, we've been able to make savings of about \$20.3 million each year. This has resulted in a 210 percent increase in spending on capital works over the past five financial years.

In simple terms, it means that for every household in this city, we've been able to spend an extra \$256 each year on improving ageing assets such as roads and footpaths.

Just a few examples of the renewal work we've carried out include:

- Wollongong Town Hall
- Road resurfacing on Investigator Drive, Berkeley, between Nolan Street and Berkeley Road
- New access ramp at Port Kembla Neighbourhood Centre
- Woonona Rock Pool – replacement of handrail and intake pipeline
- Replacement of the footpath on Crown Street, Wollongong, between New Dapto Road and Osborne Street.

### You asked: What would Council do with an additional \$21 million a year?

There is no simple solution to securing the future of the city's assets and services, but by talking about how we can solve this now we can look to a future where our ageing roads, buildings and footpaths are sustainably managed.

With an additional \$21 million a year – on top of Council's existing savings of \$20.3 million each year – we would be able to look at replacing and renewing many of our city's assets. These include:

- Stanwell Park and Mt Keira Summit Park kiosk renewals
- Austinmer Rock Pool renewal
- Refurbishment of Corrimal, Unanderra and Helensburgh town centres
- An extra 2.3km of footpath replacements in places like Illawarra Street, Port Kembla, Smith Street, Wollongong, and Railway Street, Corrimal
- Renewal of Yallah Bridge, Yallah.

A sustainable plan to secure our future

### → HAVE YOUR SAY

#### Neighbourhood Forums

Neighbourhood Forums are community groups that meet monthly to help solve local problems. To get involved visit Council's website or contact the Community Engagement Team on (02) 4227 7060.

#### • Berkeley – Area 7

Tuesday 17 December, 6pm

Illawarra Yacht Club, Northcliffe Drive, Warrawong

#### Grand Pacific Walk

Earlier this year Council was talking with the community about the Grand Pacific Walk – a proposed shared pathway along our coastline from the Royal National Park to Lake Illawarra.

Council has developed a draft Grand Pacific Walk Masterplan for the whole route, concept plans for Stage 1 which runs from Coalcliff to Stanwell Park, and construction plans for shareway improvements at Coalcliff. The plans are on public exhibition until Monday 10 February 2014.

During this time there will be a number of opportunities for the community to discuss the draft plans with Council staff. The first engagement session is at Berkeley Community Centre Park on Saturday 14 December from 4.30–6.30pm.

Find out more about the plans for Grand Pacific Walk and have your say by visiting <http://haveyoursaywollongong.com.au/projects/grand-pacific-walk>

Copies of the draft plans, FAQ sheets and feedback forms are available at all local libraries.

For more information please contact Community Engagement at [engagement@wollongong.nsw.gov.au](mailto:engagement@wollongong.nsw.gov.au) or on (02) 4227 7060.

### → PUBLIC NOTICES

#### Exhibition of West Dapto Release Area – Darkes Road South West Neighbourhood Plan

Wollongong Development Control Plan 2009 – Chapter D16 West Dapto Release Area requires that a Neighbourhood Plan be prepared and adopted by Council, as an amendment to Chapter D16, to guide development within the specified neighbourhood/precinct. Council is seeking feedback on the draft Neighbourhood Plan which has been submitted for land fronting Darkes and West Dapto Roads, Kembla Grange.

The draft Neighbourhood Plan is on exhibition until Friday 31 January 2014.

The draft Plan and other relating documents can be viewed at:

- Wollongong, Dapto and Unanderra libraries during opening hours
- Council's Administration Building between 9am and 5pm weekdays

- [www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au](http://www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au)

To make a submission, write to or email Council before Friday 31 January 2014.

For more information call Land Use Planning on (02) 4227 7111.

#### Notice of Proposed New Licence on Council-owned Community Land

Council is proposing to grant a licence to Department of Education and Communities (Russell Vale Public School) for the Tennis Courts at part Lot F DP18578 Terania Street, Russell Vale.

The proposed licence is for a term of five years plus five-year option. Pursuant to Chapter 6 Part 2 of the *Local Government Act 1993*, Council is required to advertise this proposal as it is located on community land. Submissions are sought from the public and should be in writing quoting Council's reference number 05.04.01.061. Please forward any submissions to the address shown on this page by Wednesday 22 January 2014.

For more information call Property & Recreation on (02) 4227 7111.

### → WHAT'S ON

#### Botanic Garden

#### City of Wollongong Christmas Carols proudly sponsored by McDonald's Illawarra

Saturday 21 December, 6–9pm

Wollongong Botanic Garden on the lawn below Gleniffer Brae Entrance: Murphys Avenue, Keiraville

i98FM's Marty and Bianca will host this free community celebration, which features performances from Wollongong Conservatorium of Music.

For safety reasons, only LED candles permitted. The Carols are sponsored by McDonald's Illawarra, the Illawarra Mercury, i98FM and WIN Television.

### → RECRUITMENT

#### Transport & Stormwater Services Manager

Salary: From \$1,920 per week plus superannuation, 3.5% civil liability allowance and an option of a Motor Vehicle Equalisation Allowance or a lease for private use of an operational vehicle

Recruitment No: 13093

Enquiries: Mike Dowd on (02) 4227 7111

Closing Date: Friday 10 January 2014

#### Senior Economic Development Officer

Fixed Term 12 months

Salary: From \$1,836 to \$1,892 per week plus superannuation

Recruitment No: 13092

Enquiries: Mark Grimson on (02) 4227 7111

Closing Date: Friday 10 January 2014

**How to apply: Visit Council's website to view full job advertisements, the position description and the selection criteria which must be addressed.**

Visit us: 41 Burelli Street, Wollongong Find us online: [www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au](http://www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au)  
Write to us: [council@wollongong.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@wollongong.nsw.gov.au) or Locked Bag 8821, Wollongong DC NSW 2500  
Talk to us: Customer Service (02) 4227 7111. For after-hours emergencies call 1300 557 980



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## → HAVE YOUR SAY

### Neighbourhood Forums

Thanks to everyone who participated in the Neighbourhood Forums this year. In early 2014 we'll publish details of Forum meetings which will recommence in February.

### Securing Our Future

We, as a Council and a community, are facing a significant challenge to fund our community infrastructure into the future. If we don't, we'll lose services as assets reach the end of their life and fail – only we won't be able to pick what or when.

We're not the only ones facing on this challenge. Many of NSW's 152 councils are faced with the same issue of making sure there's enough money for infrastructure renewal.

The conversations we've had together have resulted in three alternative funding scenarios. We'd like your feedback on the options. You'll find all the details on Council's website at [www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/securingourfuture](http://www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/securingourfuture). Have your say by completing the quick poll, filling in the submission form, sending an email, or writing a letter to Council.

Feedback must be received by Council by 5pm on Wednesday, 5 February 2014.

### Grand Pacific Walk

Earlier this year Council spoke to the community about the Grand Pacific Walk, a proposed shared pathway along our coastlines from the Royal National Park to Lake Illawarra.

Council has developed a draft Grand Pacific Walk Masterplan for the whole route, concept plans for Stage 1 which runs from Coalcliff to Stanwell Park, and construction plans for shareway improvements at Coalcliff.

The plans are on exhibition until Monday 10 February 2014.

During the exhibition there will be a number of opportunities for the community to discuss the draft plans with council staff.

Find out more and have your say by visiting <http://haveyoursaywollongong.com.au/projects/grand-pacific-walk>.

Copies of the draft plans, FAQ sheets and feedback forms are available at all local libraries.

For more information please contact the Community Engagement team at [engagement@wollongong.nsw.gov.au](mailto:engagement@wollongong.nsw.gov.au) or on (02) 4227 7060.

### Draft Economic Development Strategy on Exhibition

The Strategy focuses on how Council can best support economic development. It recognises that in a transitional economy jobs growth remains the main economic challenge facing our region.

This draft strategy is now on exhibition and can be viewed on our website, at our libraries and Customer Service Centre.

All feedback needs to be received by Sunday 19 January 2014.

## → WHAT'S ON

### City of Wollongong Christmas Carols proudly sponsored by McDonald's Illawarra Saturday 21 December, 6-9pm

Join hosts Marty and Bianca from 198FM at Wollongong Botanic Garden for a free community celebration, with performances from Wollongong Conservatorium of Music. Enter via Murphy's Avenue.

For details, visit the Botanic Garden's website or call (02) 4227 7667.

Thanks to our event sponsors McDonald's Illawarra, The Illawarra Mercury, 198FM and WIN Television.

### New Year's Eve

Tuesday 31 December from 6pm

Celebrate the New Year at our family friendly, alcohol-free event at Belmore Basin. There'll be rides, stalls, and our popular fireworks display at 9pm. For more details, including transport options and road closures, visit Council's website.

## → PUBLIC NOTICES

### Council's Hours Over the Festive Season

Council wishes all our community members a safe, happy and healthy Christmas and New Year. Council's offices close at 1pm on Tuesday 24 December 2013 and will reopen on Thursday 2 January 2014. A number of services will continue through the 2013/2014 holiday season and we've outlined details below.

For more information, visit Council's website. In a Council-related emergency call (02) 4227 7111.

**Botanic Gardens** – Closed Christmas Day.

**Community Facilities** – Bookings across the closure period will use the self-access system.

**Community Transport** – Finishes up at close of business on 20 December 2013 and resumes on 13 January 2014. Bookings can be made from 2 January 2014.

**Crematorium and Cemeteries** – Closed only 25 and 26 December 2013 and 1 January 2014 for cremations and burials.

**Social Support – Centre Based Day Care** – All centres will be closed from 13 December 2013 until 13 January 2014. Other Social Support programs will be closed from 24 December 2013 until 2 January 2014.

**Customer Service Centre and Call Centre** – Closed from 1pm on 24 December 2013 and reopening on 2 January 2014.

**Libraries** – Corrimal, Dapto, Thirroul, Warrarong, Helensburgh and Unanderra close from 12 noon on 24 December 2013 and reopen 2 January 2014.

Wollongong Central Library closes from 12 noon on 24 December 2013. The library will open on 27, 30 and 31 December 2013 and will be closed on 28 December 2013 and 1 January 2014. Normal operating hours will return from 2 January 2014.

**Mobile Toilet Cleaning** – Holiday operation on public holidays and normal weekend and weekday operations between 24 December 2013 and 2 January 2014.

**Public Swimming Pools** – Closed on Christmas Day only.

**Regulation and Enforcement** – Parking Rangers and Animal Control Officers will be on duty every day, except for Public Holidays when Officers will be on call.

**Street and Gutter and Mechanical Broom** – Holiday operation hours on public holidays only. Otherwise, work will continue as normal.

**Waste Collection** – Council's waste collection contractor will continue as normal throughout the Christmas/New Year period. The only exception is Christmas Day when waste, recycling and green bins normally emptied on a Wednesday will be collected on the following day, Boxing Day. Over the holiday period all residents should put their bins out before 6am on their collection day, rather than rely on their usual collection times. Missed bins should be reported within 24 hours of the scheduled collection day on the waste hotline 1300 362 360. On-Call Household Clean-up Service won't be available from 21 December 2013 until 5 January 2014. It will recommence on 6 January 2014.

**Whytes Gully Waste Disposal Depot** – Closed Christmas Day. Open weekends and all other public holidays from 8am-4pm. Open weekdays from 7.30am-4.30pm.

**Wollongong City Gallery** – Closed on 25 and 26 December 2013 and 1 January 2014 (Public Holidays).

**Wollongong and Warrarong Youth Centres** – Closed from 24 December 2013 to 1 January 2014.

**Volunteering Illawarra** – Closed from 20 December 2013 to 1 January 2014.

### Adoption of Amendments to the Wollongong Development Control Plan 2009

In accordance with Clause 21 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Regulation 2000*, Council at its meeting on 9 December 2013, approved the adoption of the updated Chapter D16 West Dapto Release Area (incorporating the Reddells Road Industrial Neighbourhood Plan); the amendments to the DCP will come into effect on 14 December 2013.

The Wollongong DCP 2009, including the above-mentioned chapter, can be viewed or downloaded from Council's website. For more information call (02) 4227 7111.

### Exhibition of Draft Wollongong Development Control Plan 2009 – Chapter D14: Wollongong Innovation Campus Masterplan

This chapter contains development controls for the Innovation Campus. The draft Chapter and supporting documentation is on exhibition until Friday 31 January 2014.

The draft Plan and other relating documents can be viewed at:

- Libraries at Wollongong and Corrimal during library hours
- Council Administration Building between 9am and 5pm weekdays.
- [www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au](http://www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au)

To make a submission, write or email Council before the submission period closes on Friday 31 January 2014.

For more information call our Customer Service team on (02) 4227 7111.

### Exhibition of West Dapto Release Area – Darkes Road South West Neighbourhood Plan

Wollongong Development Control Plan 2009 – Chapter D16 West Dapto Release Area requires that a Neighbourhood Plan be prepared and adopted by Council, as an amendment to Chapter D16, to guide development within the specified neighbourhood/precinct. Council is seeking feedback on the draft Neighbourhood Plan which has been submitted for land fronting Darkes and West Dapto Roads, Kembla Grange.

The draft Neighbourhood Plan is on exhibition until Friday 31 January 2014.

The draft Plan and other relating documents can be viewed at:

- Wollongong, Dapto and Unanderra libraries during opening hours
- Council's Administration Building between 9am and 5pm weekdays
- [www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au](http://www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au)

To make a submission, write to or email Council before the submission period closes on Friday 31 January 2014.

For more information call Land Use Planning on (02) 4227 7111.

### Horsley Community Centre Under New Management

In accordance with the *Local Government Act 1993* and Council policy, Council has authorised the granting of a licence to CareWays Community Incorporated to operate the Horsley Community Centre, 82 Bong Bong Road, Horsley for a period of five years starting Thursday 2 January 2014.

The Centre is a multipurpose facility with a focus on providing community support, education, social and cultural activities to the members of the community. A number of activities already operate from the building including exercise groups, youth activities, hobby activities, playgroups and church as well as being available for casual bookings for community and social events.

CareWays Community Incorporated will administer the bookings for use of the building by current and future regular use and casual hire ensuring that the operation of the building is consistent with Council's aims.

All enquiries regarding the use of the Horsley Community Centre from 2014 should be directed to CareWays Community Incorporated on 1300 307 902.

### Notice of Proposed Renewal of Licence on Council-owned Community Land

Council is proposing to renew a licence to Woonona Junior Soccer Club Inc and Woonona Football Club Inc for soccer and other sporting activities on part Lots 4 and 5 DP 1129987, known as Ocean Park, Woonona. The proposed licence term is five years.

Pursuant to Chapter 6 Part 2 of the *Local Government Act 1993*, Council is required to advertise these proposed renewals as they are located on Community land. Submissions are sought from the public and should be in writing quoting Council's reference number 05.04.01.204. Any objections should be clearly outlined and based on the effect the licence will have on the existing or future use of the community land. Please forward any submissions to the General Manager by 15 January 2014.

For more information call Council on (02) 4227 7111.

### Wollongong Senior Citizens Centre – Updated Contact Details

From Wednesday 18 December 2013 all enquiries and bookings for Wollongong Senior Citizens Centre will be through Corrimal District Library and Community Centre.

For more information call the Centre Administration on (02) 4227 8180.





→ HAVE YOUR SAY

**Neighbourhood Forums**

Neighbourhood Forums are community groups that meet monthly to help solve local problems. To get involved visit Council's website or contact the Community Engagement Team on (02) 4227 7060.

- **Berkeley - Area 7**  
Tuesday 21 January, 8pm  
Illawarra Yacht Club, Northcliff Drive, Warrawong

**Securing Our Future**

We, as a Council and a community, are facing a significant challenge to fund our community infrastructure into the future. If we don't, we'll lose services as assets reach the end of their life and fail - only we won't be able to pick what or when. We're not the only ones working on this challenge. Many of NSW's 152 councils are faced with the same issue of making sure there's enough money for infrastructure renewal.

The conversations we've had together have resulted in three alternative funding scenarios. We'd like your feedback on the options. You'll find all the details on Council's website at [www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/securingourfuture](http://www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/securingourfuture). Have your say by completing the quick poll, filling in the submission form, sending an email, or writing a letter to Council.

Feedback must be received by Council by 5pm on Wednesday 6 February 2014.

**Grand Pacific Walk**

Earlier this year Council spoke to the community about the Grand Pacific Walk, a proposed shared pathway along our coastline from the Royal National Park to Lake Illawarra.

Council has developed a draft Grand Pacific Walk Masterplan for the whole route, concept plans for Stage 1 which runs from Coalcliff to Stanwell Park, and construction plans for shareway improvements at Coalcliff. The plans are on exhibition until Monday 10 February 2014.

During the exhibition there will be a number of opportunities for the community to discuss the draft plans with council staff.

Find out more and have your say by visiting <http://haveyoursay.wollongong.com.au/projects/grand-pacific-walk>.

Copies of the draft plans, FAQ sheets and feedback forms are available at all local libraries. For more information please contact the Community Engagement team at [engagement@wollongong.nsw.gov.au](mailto:engagement@wollongong.nsw.gov.au) or on (02) 4227 7060.

**Draft Economic Development Strategy on Exhibition**

The Strategy focuses on how Council can best support economic development, recognising that in a transitional economy jobs growth remains the main economic challenge facing our region. This draft strategy is on exhibition and can be viewed on our website, at our libraries and Customer Service Centre. All feedback needs to be received by Monday 3 February 2014.

→ WHAT'S ON

**Botanic Garden**

**Sunset Cinema**

Until Saturday 15 February

Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings from 7pm

Wollongong Botanic Garden (Fig Lawn)

Entrance: Murphys Avenue, Keiraville

Gather your family and friends for movies under the stars. Tickets available at [sunsetcinema.com.au](http://sunsetcinema.com.au).

**Summer School Holiday Activities - Captain Compost and the Chocolate Explorers**

Monday 13 - Friday 17 January, 10am - 1.30pm daily

Wollongong Botanic Garden: Madoline Street, Keiraville

Join the pirates on the seas to learn about the discovery of chocolate. On this journey kids can participate in a treasure hunt, hands-on craft activities and enjoy a garden theatre performance. Captain Compost will show kids how to turn winter holiday food into compost. Kids should wear appropriate shoes, a hat and sunscreen. Bookings only required for large groups. Call (02) 4227 7667 or email [botanicgarden@wollongong.nsw.gov.au](mailto:botanicgarden@wollongong.nsw.gov.au)

**Florilegium Art Class**

Tuesday 14 January, 10am - 4pm

Botanic Garden Tower Centre: Madoline Street, Keiraville car park

Learn how to draw native botanical species on the second Tuesday of each month. Bookings aren't essential but all participants must register as a Friend of Wollongong Botanic Garden before the class. Membership forms on the Botanic Garden website.

**Library**

**Basic Computer Skills**

Hands-on courses will be held at the Central Library and some branches during January 2014.

Contact your local library for details or check our website at [www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/library](http://www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/library).

**Privacy Notification:** The purpose for seeking your submission on advertised matters is to better assist Council in its decision making processes.

The intended recipients of your submission are officers within Council and those persons granted lawful access to the information. Your submission, including your name, address and other contact details, may be exhibited on Council's website and included in publicly accessible registers. If you make an anonymous submission, Council will be unable to contact you further.

If your submission relates to a development proposal or other relevant planning application, Council is required to disclose on its website all relevant details of political donations or gifts made by you.

In limited circumstances, you may apply for suppression of your personal information from a publicly accessible register. Further information is available on Council's website at [www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/pages/privacy.aspx](http://www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/pages/privacy.aspx) or by phoning Council on (02) 4227 7111.

→ DEVELOPMENT CONSENTS

From 11/12/2013 to 17/12/2013

The following applications have been approved by Council. Notification under Section 101 Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.

- Balgownie**
  - DA 2013/1196 Lot A DP 180389 No. 11 Hunter Street. Residential. Multi dwelling housing development 3 townhouses.
- Berkeley**
  - DA 2013/1231 Lot 120 DP 1186764 No. 16 Halyard Street. Residential. Attached dual occupancy and 2-lot strata subdivision.
- Bull**
  - DA 2013/1397 Lot 101 DP 810609 No. 1A Beach Street. Residential. Alterations and additions to existing dwelling, swimming pool and shed.
  - DA 2013/1031 Lot 4 DP 1139964 No. 49 Urula Road. Residential. Dwelling house.
- Corston**
  - DA 2013/1297 Lot 10 DP 2490084 No. 33 The Avenue. Residential. Removal of existing carport and construction of double garage.
- Comrial**
  - DA 2013/1375 Lot 12 DP 241700 No. 10 Louis Street. Residential. Covered deck.
- Cringle**
  - DA 2011/732/B Lot A DP 298582 No. 5 Lockwood Street. Subdivision. Torrens title 2 residential lots. Modification B to amend Conditions 27 and 77 of consent.
- Dapto**
  - DA 2011/1480 Lot 182 DP 31100 No. 34 Parkside Drive. Residential. Alterations and additions.
- Fairy Meadow**
  - DA 2013/1192 Lot 157 DP 18354 No. 49 Donald Street. Residential. Retaining walls, fencing and earthworks. Modification A to retaining wall material and details etc filling.
  - DA 2013/1042 Lot 210 DP 17045 No. 2 Norman Street. Residential. Alterations and additions.
  - DA 2013/1011 Lot 11 DP 556676 No. 109 Princess Highway. Commercial. Demolition of 1 existing restaurant and alterations and additions to a second existing restaurant.
- Farmborough Heights**
  - DA 2006/827/A Lot 31 DP 208614 No. 73 Iola Avenue. Additions to dwelling house including upper balcony and retaining wall modification addition of laundry and changes to roof.
- Figtree**
  - DA 2012/1470/A Lot 1 DP 298530 No. 65 O'Briens Road. Residential. Retaining walls, fencing and earthworks. Modification A to retaining wall material and details etc filling.
  - DA 2013/1340 Lot 59 DP 263048 No. 22 Nebo Drive. Demolition of existing deck and construction of new deck.
  - DA 2013/1258 Lot 2 DP 222238 No. 2 Gibsons Road. Community. Carols Event 14 December 2013.
  - DA 2012/1266/A Lot 405 DP 1148155 No. 58 Redgum Forest Way. Residential. Dwelling house. Modification A decrease in roof overhang, amendments to west and south windows and various internal layout changes.
  - DA 2013/1385 Lot 215 DP 845376 No. 3 Casuarina Place. Residential. Fatio.
- Gwynneville**
  - DA 2013/1413 Lot 4 DP 15310 No. 154 Glippe Street. Residential. Demolition of dwelling house and construction of dwelling house.
- Haywards Bay**
  - DA 2013/1437 Lot 627 DP 1159494 No. 11 Estuary Avenue. Residential. Dwelling house.
- Helenburgh**
  - DA 2011/1209/A Lot 6 Sec 7 DP 758513 No. 50 Walker Street. Residential. Stage 1 Torrens title subdivision into 2 lots. Stage 2 construction of a dual occupancy on each new lot and subdivision. Modification A to amend the staging of consent.
  - DA 2013/1319 Lot 2 SP 68140 No. 2/5 Chippendale Place. Residential. Enclose existing balcony.
- Horsley**
  - DA 2013/1443 Lot 703 DP 1172487 No. 12 Hobbs Street. Residential. Dwelling house.
  - DA 2013/1475 Lot 820 DP 1172488 No. 58 Wholahan Avenue. Residential. Dwelling house.
  - DA 2013/1476 Lot 810 DP 1172488 No. 20 Stockyard Crescent. Residential. Dwelling house.
  - DA 2013/1471 Lot 7184 DP 1179031 No. 32 Wholahan Avenue. Residential. Dwelling house.

**Keiraville**

- DA 2013/1109 Lot 30 DP 217334 No. 52 William Street. Residential. Demolition of existing shed and proposed alterations and additions and detached shed.
- DA 2013/1205 Lot 23 DP 1145742 No. 258 Glippe Road. Residential. Demolition of section of existing house and construction of dwelling house to create dual occupancy and subdivision. Torrens title 2 residential lots.
- DA 2013/1384 Lot 471 DP 718111 No. 7 Gooyong Street. Residential. Double carport and alterations and additions.

**Mount Keira**

- DA 2013/1352 Lot 7 DP 826177 No. 163 Kolobona Avenue. Residential. Deck.

**Mount Kembla**

- DA 2013/1255 Lot 41 DP 826983 No. 37 Stone Road. Residential. In-ground swimming pool, retaining walls and deck.

**Prinbee**

- DA 2005/1703/B Lot 116 DP 597030 No. 22 Government Road. Alterations and additions to preschool and removal of 8 trees. Modification B to increase number of children from 29 to 38 and amend car parking layout.

**Stanwell Park**

- DA 2013/1282 Lot 71 DP 7664 No. 47 Lower Coast Road. Residential. Demolition of existing structures and construction of dwelling house, detached garage and spa.

**Underra**

- DA 2013/1243 Lot 260 DP 31249 No. 15 Rickard Road. Residential. Carport.

**West Wollongong**

- DA 2013/1484 Lot 46 DP 29898 No. 20 Leubum Avenue. Residential. Demolition of existing dwelling house and associated structures.
- DA 2013/1095 Lot 51 DP 1054557 No. 26 Phillips Avenue. Residential. Dwelling house.

**Windong**

- DA 2009/105/C Lot 9 DP 25061 No. 181 Windang Road. Construct and operate a coin operated self service car wash facility. Modification C changes to operating hours and fit automatic wash hall to existing building.

**Wollongong**

- DA 2010/1238/C Lot 4 DP 350386 No. 2 Stewart Street. Car park with 15 spaces. Modification C changes to landscaping.
- DA 2002/300/H Lot 1 DP 195052, Lot 1 DP 350386, Lot 2 DP 350386 No. 1-3 Burrell Street. Alterations and additions to existing Stealers Club. Modification H relocation of position of lift.

The development consents are available for inspection by appointment, free of charge, on the ground floor, Council Administration Building, 41 Burrell Street, Wollongong during normal office hours.

→ DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

**Headlands Hotel, Yuruga Street, Austinmer**

RD-2004/1160/A Lot 87-85 DP 9233

Applicant: M&J Wollongong

Proposed Dev: Review of determination - Construction of a mixed use development consisting of 3 buildings (2, 3 and 4 storeys) comprising hotel, function room with bar, restaurants (x2), 69 serviced apartments and basement parking for 120 vehicles - Modification A - changes/relaxation to Conditions 2 and 3 of development consent to eliminate occupation restrictions for the serviced apartments and deletion of provision 1 of serviced apartments management plan in accordance with Condition 5 of development consent

Dev. Departures: No

Closing Date: 10 February 2014

**Northfields Avenue, Keiraville**

DA-2013/663/A Lot 1 DP 1163615 No. 2

Applicant: University of Wollongong

Proposed Dev: Demolition of existing building 30A and construction of science teaching facility and preliminary works - Modification A - reduce footprint and reduction in height Integrated Development Application (Authorisation under section 100B of the Rural Fires Act 1997, from the NSW Rural Fire Service)

Dev. Departures: No

Closing Date: 10 February 2014

**Keira Street, Wollongong**

DA-2013/469 Lot 1 DP 152048 No. 275

Applicant: M&J Wollongong

Proposed Dev: Business premises - change of use - fitout of community facility and associated signage

Dev. Departures: No

Closing Date: 10 February 2014

**O'Briens Lane, Figtree**

DA-2013/1467 Lot 100 DP 847874 No. 24

Applicant: R W Shargold Pty Ltd

Proposed Dev: Residential - construction of multi dwelling housing comprising of 14 dwellings and strata subdivision Integrated Development Application (Authorisation under section 100B of the Rural Fires Act 1997, from the NSW Rural Fire Service)

Dev. Departures: No

Closing Date: 10 February 2014

Wollongong City Council is the consent authority for the above development proposals. These proposals, including any accompanying plans and documents, may be viewed on Council's website <http://www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/development/Pages/applications.aspx> up to 5pm on the dates listed above. Large scale development proposals, including any accompanying plans and documents, may be inspected during normal office hours on the ground floor of the Council Administration Building. Please also read the Privacy Notification printed above the Development Consents on our Community Update pages.



**FULL PAGE ADVERTISEMENT**


Illawarra Mercury: 18 January 2014

Wollongong Advertiser: 18 December 2013, 22 January 2014 and 29 January 2014.

OUR PLACE  
OUR VOICE  
OUR FUTURE

# Securing Our Future


We need your help to make some important decisions



wollongong  
city of innovation


  

### The Problem



Like most NSW councils, a lot of our roads, footpaths, buildings and other community assets are getting old and need to be upgraded.


**TARGET: \$41M**



This means making some tough choices.

Do we reduce some of the services Council provides?  
Or increase rates?  
Or a bit of both?

### The Savings Challenge



**\$21M** HOW WILL WE SPEND THE ADDITIONAL \$21 MILLION PER YEAR?

Some examples of what we could invest this money on:

- An extra 2.3km of footpath replacements per year
- An extra 6.9km of road resurfacing per year
- Austinmer Rock Pool reconstruction
- Commercial / Town Centre upgrades including Corrimal, Unanderra and Helensburgh.


**\$20M** THE PROBLEM WAS WORSE BUT WE'VE ALREADY SAVED \$20 MILLION ANNUALLY OVER THE PAST 5 YEARS

This has funded:

- Wollongong Town Hall renewal and reopening
- Woonona and Bellambi Rock Pool upgrade
- Replacement of the footpath on Crown Street, Wollongong, between New Dapto Road and Osborne Street
- Road resurfacing on Investigator Drive, Berkeley, between Nolan Street and Berkeley Road.




  

We need to find around \$21 million more per year for this or we'll start losing assets as roads, playgrounds and pools reach the end of their useful life and fail. We've seen this in recent years with the Wollongong Town Hall, Darkes Rd Bridge, Bellambi Rock Pool and Mt Keira Rd all failing. If we don't take action this will get worse.



**UNDER CONSTRUCTION**

OPTION 1	OPTION 2	OPTION 3
<p><b>Efficiency: \$7 million</b> Significant changes that may include some outsourcing and staff reductions.</p> <p><b>Services: \$4 million</b> Significant cuts including closures and selling some assets e.g. reduction in number of rock pools.</p> <p><b>Fees &amp; Charges: \$1.6 million</b> Increase fees and charges for car parking, heated pools, fitness trainers, sports fields and community pools (gold coin donation).</p> <p><b>Rates*: Additional \$8.4 million ↑</b></p> <p><b>IMPACT \$215.75</b> PER YEAR AVERAGE PER HOUSEHOLD <b>\$53.94</b> PER QUARTER</p> <p>Increase of 5.2%, 5.5%, 5.5% cumulative over 3 years including the rate peg.</p>	<p><b>Efficiency: \$5 million</b> Some outsourcing of services and change to industrial arrangements.</p> <p><b>Services: \$2.3 million</b> Limited cuts including some closures and reductions in lesser used playgrounds and community facilities.</p> <p><b>Fees &amp; Charges: \$370,000</b> Increase fees and charges for leasing child care centres, car parking, heated pools and fitness trainers.</p> <p><b>Rates*: Additional \$13.4 million ↑</b></p> <p><b>IMPACT \$279.76</b> PER YEAR AVERAGE PER HOUSEHOLD <b>\$69.94</b> PER QUARTER</p> <p>Increase of 6.7%, 7%, 7% cumulative over 3 years including the rate peg.</p>	<p><b>Efficiency: \$3.5 million</b> Savings that may impact staff levels slightly.</p> <p><b>Services: \$1 million</b> Extend life of footpaths by patching rather than replacing.</p> <p><b>Fees &amp; Charges: N/A</b> No changes above regular annual increases.</p> <p><b>Rates*: Additional \$16.5 million ↑</b></p> <p><b>IMPACT \$323.44</b> PER YEAR AVERAGE PER HOUSEHOLD <b>\$80.81</b> PER QUARTER</p> <p>Increase of 7.7%, 8%, 8% cumulative over 3 years including the rate peg.</p>
<p><b>Finding a Solution?</b> We're asking the community to tell us what you think of the options.</p> <p><b>What's important to you?</b></p> <p><b>What are you willing to live with (or without)?</b></p>	<p><b>How to have your say on the options:</b></p> <p> Visit <a href="http://www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/securingourfuture">www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/securingourfuture</a> to find out more or fill in a survey.</p> <p> Email us at: <a href="mailto:engagement@wollongong.nsw.gov.au">engagement@wollongong.nsw.gov.au</a></p> <p> Write to us at: Locked Bag 8621, Wollongong DC NSW 2500</p>	<p><b>*A QUICK NOTE ON RATES:</b> Every year the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) announces the "rate peg" which is the amount councils can increase their rates. Councils don't need special permission to apply this increase. If a council needs to increase rates on top of the rate peg, they must apply to IPART. The rating increases shown include a 2.3% rate peg (IPART approved) for year 1, and 3% rate peg (estimated) for years 2 and 3. The additional rates income shown is the special rate variation component.</p>

**Find out more: [www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/securingourfuture](http://www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/securingourfuture)**



## **MEDIA RELEASES**

Future Financial Challenge Statement from Council's General Manager, David Farmer - 23 May 2013  
<http://www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/council/news/Pages/futurefinancialchallenge.aspx>

Financial Sustainability Review - 10 September 2013  
<http://www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/council/news/Pages/financialsustainabilityreview.aspx>

Have your say on our future - 20 September 2013  
<http://www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/council/news/Pages/ourfuture.aspx>

Citizens Panel report on Financial Sustainability - 5 November 2013  
<http://www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/council/news/Pages/Citizens-Panel-report-on-Financial-Sustainability.aspx>

Community feedback closes on Citizens Panel report - 21 November 2013  
<http://www.wollongong.nsw.gov.au/council/news/Pages/Community-feedback-closes-on-Citizens-Panel-report.aspx>

Tennis Club roof to be replaced - 2 January 2014  
<http://wccmediareleases.wordpress.com/2014/01/02/tennis-club-roof-to-be-replaced/>

Corrimal District Library and Community Centre refurbishment - 10 January 2014  
<http://wccmediareleases.wordpress.com/2014/01/10/corrimal-community-centre-refurbishment/>

Stabilisation work on Mt Keira Road has commenced - 14 January 2014  
<http://wccmediareleases.wordpress.com/2014/01/14/stabilisation-work-on-mt-keira-road-has-commenced/>

Crown Street Mall refurbishment to resume in 2014 - 21 January 2014  
<http://wccmediareleases.wordpress.com/2014/01/21/crown-street-mall-refurbishment-to-resume-in-2014/>

Securing Our Future feedback - 7 February 2014  
<http://wccmediareleases.wordpress.com/2014/02/07/securing-our-future-feedback/>

## **WEBSITE**

Public exhibition and feedback site  
<http://haveyoursaywollongong.com.au/projects/financial-sustainability>

## **VIDEO**

Message from the Lord Mayor, posted 9 September 2013  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rCWC0QWC7ew&list=UUXkrehyqkWkehgiXnGZ-4Vw&feature=c4-overview>

Securing Our Future, posted 4 November 2013  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=feQwYtabnsQ&feature=c4-overview&list=UUXkrehyqkWkehgiXnGZ-4Vw>

## **TELEVISION COMMERCIAL**

WIN Television, aired 20 – 23 January 2014 inclusive.  
Also available on YouTube at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Epwaf70Ssyl&feature=youtu.be>



# Residents face rate hikes

KATE McILWAIN

WOLLONGONG rates will rise more than 21 per cent over the next three years if councillors support a budget recommendation put forward by council staff.

The latest step in Wollongong City Council's controversial financial sustainability review will be debated on Monday night, following more than two months of community consultation in which nearly 800 residents shared their views.

Along with a rate rise, the staff proposal includes \$1.5 million in service cuts - most of which would come from a \$1 million saving by extending the life of existing footpaths.

There would also be a minimum \$50,000 worth of fee increases, which could include parking fee rises, increases in fitness trailer fees and price rises at some of the council's pools.

Additionally, \$4 million would be made in "efficiencies" within the council, which could include outsourcing some services and changes to staffing arrangements.

The recommendation is a hybrid of the three scenarios, which were placed on public exhibition late last year.

Under the plan to raise rates, residents and most commercial property owners would pay 3.78 per cent more each year until 2017 - a cumulative rise of 21.68 per cent.

## Proposal includes fee rises, service cuts

### RECOMMENDED SCENARIO - RESIDENTIAL (House and Strata Properties)

	Avg Rate	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	Cumulative Increase %	Cumulative Increase \$
Cringila SRV	\$867	\$926	\$988	\$1055	21.68	\$187.98
Dapto SRV	\$608	\$1066	\$1138	\$1215	21.68	\$216.48
West Wollongong SRV	\$1122	\$1198	\$1279	\$1368	21.68	\$243.38
Stanwell Park SRV	\$2701	\$2884	\$3079	\$3287	21.68	\$585.70
AVERAGE ALL SUBURBS SRV	\$1175	\$1255	\$1339	\$1433	21.68	\$284.78

SRV (Special Rate Variation)

This would mean an average rate rise of \$254 across the city.

Stanwell Park residents would pay an average of \$883 extra after three years, while West Wollongong residents would pay \$243 and Dapto residents would pay an average of \$216.

City centre businesses and heavy industry businesses near Port Kembla would be exempt from the special rate hike, paying only the statewide increase of about 3 per cent each year.

Lord Mayor Gordon Bradberry yesterday said he was generally

supportive of the recommendation as it reflected community feedback, but stressed the final decision would be made by all councillors at Monday's meeting.

"The feedback we got from the community is that user pays principles should be employed, but

we've got to be careful in that respect because there are pockets of disadvantage in our city," he said.

"About 78 per cent (of respondents) went for a rate rise - and, ultimately, most people were saying we are prepared to pay a little bit more to save our services and maintain those things we treasure."

Of the 800 people who voiced their opinion about the budget scenario, 173 residents supported a "minimal" rate rise saying rates were high enough, while 184 people supported a "moderate" rate rise.

About 39 people indicated they would prefer the highest suggested rise over any cuts to services and 70 did not support any increase.

Like in previous community consultation rounds, many respondents expressed concerns about proposed cuts to rock pools, Unsworths Library and the Lakeside Leisure Centre.

Cy Bradberry said these concerns would be noted as councillors mapped out details regarding service cuts during the council's annual budget process, which will be finalised by the end of June.

However, he could not rule out service reductions to rock pools and libraries in the future, saying the council would need to investigate its overall strategy for delivering these services in the coming years.

## Emotional memorial for Aboriginal teenager 'TJ' Hickey

EMOTIONS boiled over during a rally marking the 10th anniversary of Aboriginal teen Thomas "TJ" Hickey's death, with police apprehending several people for carrying offensive signs.

About 200 supporters of TJ yesterday marched through inner Sydney to NSW parliament, demanding a government apology over his death and the reopening of an inquest.

TJ's mother Gail Hickey, her family and supporters symbolically placed a plaque at the fence where he died.

Riots were sparked in the inner Sydney suburb of Redfern when the 17-year-old was thrown off his bike and impaled on a fence on February 14, 2004.

As the march came to an end in front of Parliament House, police took issue with a man who was carrying a sign which read "F--- the police".

Officers apprehended the man, along with two others and pulled them away from the crowd but later the men were released. AAP



Sad loss: Gail Hickey, mother of 'TJ' Hickey, places a symbolic plaque at the fence where he died.

## Jamberoo hosts mardi gras day

THE hills of Jamberoo Action Park will take on a rainbow tinge this weekend as the venue hosts hundreds of thrill seekers from the gay and lesbian community.

Jamberoo Goes Gay is a satellite event of the Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras festival.

It is expected to bring busloads of visitors to the park from Sydney and the Illawarra today.

Event organisers Gay4Play have booked picnic huts on the Jamberoo park grounds, with DJs to perform and food and drink packages available to ticket-holders.

The event will run alongside the park's regular operation, and won't impact on access to rides for independent visitors.

Gay4Play's Gary Wright said the event was one of several they offered to social types looking to meet and mingle away from Sydney's club scene.

"Gay4Life was started by a group of people who were tired of the same old things - going out to bars and partying."

"They wanted to do something different," he said.

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- Lake Illawarra Area Command ..... 4232 5099
- Wollongong Hospital ..... 4222 5000
- Shearwater Hospital ..... 4296 2500
- Radiology Director ..... 4228 5522
- Poisons/Mortality ..... 131 128
- Utilities ..... 131 114
- State Emergency Service (SES) ..... 132 500
- National Security Helpline ..... 1800 123 400
- Marine Rescue Port Kembla ..... 4274 4455
- Wires ..... 4285 5830
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# Group speaks out on council address ban

## Nominations call for nurse awards

BREE FULLER

A RESIDENTS' group opposing service cuts has accused Wollongong City Council of brushing aside community concerns after their comment was banned from addressing tonight's council meeting.

'Save Our Services' Wollongong convenor Stephen Spencer will not be allowed to voice residents' concerns about the council's controversial financial sustainability review tonight because he has already addressed the council on

the matter last year.

Council policy stipulates nobody is allowed to address the council on the same matter more than once.

The council's future finances will be back in the spotlight following more than two months of community consultation in which nearly 800 residents shared their views.

If councillors support a budget recommendation put forward by council staff, Wollongong rates will rise more than 21 per cent over the next three years.

The staff proposal also includes \$1.3 million in service cuts and a minimum \$500,000 worth of fee increases, which could include parking fee rises, increases to fitness trainer fees and price rises at some of the council's pools.

'Save Our Services' Wollongong group members have been vocal critics of the council's 'citizens' panel' and last December staged a protest outside of council chambers.

They demanded the council retain a number of services, including the Unanderra Library,

Lakeside Leisure Centre and the city's ocean pools.

Mr Spencer said group members will still attend tonight's meeting and make their opinions heard.

'Save Our Services' Wollongong comes to the attention that council does not like the role we have been playing in trying to bring council to account properly by the community for the cuts in services and a proposed extra special rate rise it proposes,' he said.

'We will be there, in the chamber, making our message loud and clear.'

IF you know of an outstanding nurse in the Illawarra or Shoalhaven, why not nominate them for the 2014 HESTA Australian Nursing Awards?

Nominations for the national awards, now in their eighth year, close on February 28 and nominees will be in the running to share in a \$30,000 prize pool.

Winners will be awarded in three categories - Outstanding Graduate, Team Innovation and Nurse of the Year.

Members of the public and those working in the health and community services sector can nominate a Nurse of the Year, while Outstanding Graduate nominations must come from graduate nurse co-ordinators. Nursing issues can nominate themselves for the Team Innovation Award.

Finalists will be announced on April 15, with winners announced in Sydney on May 3. For information, visit [hestaawards.com.au](http://hestaawards.com.au).

## Hospitals' older staff need care, says nurse

LESA WACHSMUTH

VETERAN Shellharbour nurse Karin Tilden is calling on the state health department to take check of the well-being of its older nurses and midwives.

With retirement age set to increase to 67 in Australia, the Shellharbour branch president of the NSW Nurses and Midwives Association has initiated a state-wide campaign to protect ageing workers.

Last month the Nurses NSW Committee of Delegates passed the Shellharbour branch's resolution that the association liaise with the Ministry of Health to establish an Ageing Nursing and Midwifery Workforce Review Group.

Ms Tilden said the purpose of this group would be to collect data on the ageing nursing population in NSW before establishing guidelines on how to protect this growing sector.

'When I started nursing 41 years ago we did a lot of manual handling - we lifted patients physically, we pushed them around, you'd often have two 50 kilogram nurses lifting a 150 kilogram man with their bare hands,' she said.



Changing rules: Karin Tilden says guidelines need to be established to protect the ageing nurse and midwives workforce. Photo: SYDIA LEEB

'In the past 20 years or so that's changed, with the introduction of lifting aids and equipment, but years of doing that has taken its toll on many of us.'

'I had a knee replacement 18 months ago and six months ago started suffering from a sore back.'

'There's so many older nurses with similar ailments and despite

the changes nursing is still a physically demanding job where you are on your feet constantly. How are we physically going to be able to cope with that in our mid to late sixties?'

Ms Tilden, who works in Shellharbour Hospital's emergency department, said she wanted to see appropriate career paths and tasks developed for nurses and

midwives aged over 55.

'We want management to start thinking about their ageing nursing staff,' she said.

'We don't want staff being forced to retire earlier as they can no longer cope with the physical demands of the job.'

'We don't want to lose all those years of valuable experience, we want to see these older staff put

into mentoring roles so they can teach younger staff and pass their passion for the job on.'

Sitting behind a desk is not the answer for Ms Tilden.

'I've always enjoyed being hands-on and I love the contact with patients.'

'But surely older nurses can take on roles where they can use their brains, not their brawn.'



## Business-savvy explore new tax office facility

GREG ELLIS

MEMBERS of the Illawarra business community have taken advantage of an opportunity to have a look inside the Australian Taxation Office's new facility in Kembla Street, Wollongong.

ATO second commissioner Geoff Leeper agreed to be guest speaker at the Illawarra Business Chamber's first executive breakfast this year.

He said the new ATO building was officially opened on Thursday. Staff began moving in last November.

Chamber chief executive Delora Murphy welcomed

the way the ATO had reformed and become more 'productive' in its approach to the local business community.

'It is good to see there is that two-way dialogue happening,' she said.

Mr Leeper spoke about the ATO's relationship with small business, the changes process in which it operated, tax, and superannuation.

Mr Leeper said the opening of the new building was a 15-year commitment to the Wollongong community.

'That is the length of the lease on this new building,' he said.

'That allows us to build strong relationships with local businesses and also with the university.'

'We are changing and we are up for change in the way we do business in the ATO.'

'We do want to listen and understand your feedback.'

'We look forward to building a very beneficial relationship and partnership with the Wollongong community and with the business chamber.'

Wollongong-based deputy commissioner David Dineart said there had been an ATO presence in Wollongong since the 1960s.

'The first office was

called a typing annex which really takes you back in time,' he said.

'But this brand new office is state-of-the-art environmentally and is a great work area.'

Mr Dineart said there were two areas of work the Wollongong office did that no other tax office in the country handled.

'We are the only site that processes fringe benefit tax returns in the country. It is very much an office that pushes above its weight.'

It also registers and processes excise returns for things like fuel, tobacco and alcohol.



**Elderly woman dies in house fire tragedy**  
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**Protesters fight for bum tree**  
PAGE 6



**Weight loss for a lifetime**  
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# ILLAWARRA *Media* MERCURY

SINCE 1855

Tuesday, February 18, 2014

\$1.40 (incl GST)

## Revealed: The plan to restore abandoned Minnamurra mansion

Christopher Adams inspects damage caused by vandals at the site of the former Kosseris mansion at Minnamurra. Mr Adams and a group of Illawarra businessmen intend to restore the property to a point where it can be sold off, potentially as a private residence or as a guesthouse or boutique motel.  
■ REPORTS: Page 5  
Photo: ORLANDO CHIDDY



## Council to seek IPART approval for 21 per cent hike

# RATES PAIN ON THE WAY

WOLLONGONG city councillors have voted to hit ratepayers with a 21 per cent rate increase over the next three years.  
The council will now seek approval from the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal for the rates hike.  
Along with a rate rise, the budget option endorsed last night includes \$1.5 million in service cuts and a minimum of \$500,000 in fee increases.  
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# Council backs rate rise, service cuts

KATE McILWAIN

WOLLONGONG City Council is set to impose a 6.63 per cent annual rate rise until 2017, after councillors last night voted to reject a slightly higher rate rise recommended by council staff.

The council will now apply to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal for approval to slug residents and most commercial property owners with a cumulative rate rise of about 21 per cent over three years.

The plan was endorsed 11-2 by councillors with independents Vicki Curran and Greg Petty voting against.

Along with a rate rise, the endorsed budget option includes \$1.5 million in service cuts - most of which will come from a \$1 million saving by extending the life of existing footpaths - and a minimum of \$600,000 in fee increases.

The revenue raised from "efficiencies" within the council has been bumped up to \$4.5 million - which is \$600,000 more than the budget option recommended by council staff.

Efficiencies could include outsourcing, changes to staffing at council services and reviewing workers' industrial agreements.

Speaking in favour of the lower rate rise option, Cr Michelle Bilicavs said it would be a show of good faith to residents and would respond to community requests to make the council more efficient.

However, Labor's Chris Connor urged councillors to endorse the budget option recommended by staff, saying he was not in favour of higher efficiency targets as he did not want to see the council reduced to "an administration node that hands out contracts".

He said the council had a responsibility, as one of the region's biggest employers, to provide training and careers for Wollongong residents.



Rally staged: Save Our Services group's Stephen Spencer, right, with other group members before last night's council meeting which agreed to \$1.5 million in service cuts. Photo: CHRIS TOTHMAN

Despite losing his motion, Cr Connor commended his fellow councillors for choosing to "take the flak" over the difficult decision to raise rates and make the council more financially sustainable.

Independent councillor Greg Petty did not support either budget option, instead suggesting the council suspend any requests for a rate rise.

He also said the council should also immediately stop capital expenditure and employ independent consultants to investigate the council's finances before raising rates and cutting services.

The councillors' decision to raise rates and implement targets for service cuts was made despite pressure from the public gallery, United Services Union and Illawarra Business Chamber not to do so.

About 15 members of the residents' group Save Our Services staged a rally outside the council chambers before the meeting, holding signs urging the council to start again and "do this properly".

The group declined to nominate a member to speak at the meeting's public access forum after its co-leader Stephen Spencer was told he had already addressed the council over the financial review late last year.

Council policy stipulates nobody is allowed to address the council on the same matter more than once, and its refusal to budge from this stance caused outcry from the public gallery.

Through the public access forum, Illawarra Business Chamber chief Debra Murphy urged councillors to exclude all businesses from the special rate increase, saying Wollongong business confidence was low and unemployment rates remained above average.

She suggested exploring outsourcing and further efficiencies before increasing rates.

During the council's public consultation process, 178 residents supported a "minimal" rate rise, 184 people supported a "moderate" rate rise and about 80 people indicated they would prefer the highest suggested rise over any cuts to services.

Only 70 respondents did not support any increase. The council has until February 24 to apply to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal, before a final decision will be made by the regulator in June.

## Cootes truck crackdown fuels fears

MIDDLE HASHAM AND MATT O'SULLIVAN

PETROL stations across Sydney are running dry as fuel tankers from the troubled Cootes fleet are taken off the road, prompting a warning to motorists not to fill up their tank in a panic.

Cootes delivers fuel to more than one-third of NSW's petrol stations: BP, T-Eleven and Shell, including the Shell-branded Cootes Express sites.

The company grounded trucks in Victoria last week amid safety concerns and a number of vehicles are off the road in NSW after Roads Minister Duncan Gay ordered full compliance inspections.

BP confirmed yesterday that a shortage of Cootes trucks had disrupted the company's distribution network and that stations in Sydney had run out of some types of petrol.

Company spokesman Jamie Jarline was unable to say how many of its 424 NSW stations had run short because the situation was changing "hour by hour".

McAliese, the owner of Cootes Transport, is due to reveal today how much the crackdown on its trucking fleet in NSW and Victoria has hurt its earnings.

The transport company sought an extra day to prepare a review of the timing and details of its restructuring of Cootes, which employs about 1000 people, after seeking a suspension of trading from the stock exchange.

Authorities made snap inspections of Cootes's fuel tankers in Victoria on Friday, which led to the grounding of 25 of its 35 trucks and trailers inspected.

McAliese also faces the possibility of law firms cross-examining shareholders to consider class actions.

A number of service stations contacted by Fairfax Media yesterday reported fuel shortages, especially of 2.0 petrol.

If V-Roads or the Roads and Maritime Services continue to refuse to allow Cootes tankers onto the road, supplies to fuel retailers in NSW are expected to remain patchy.



Relieved: A diver thanks rescuers after he and two others were caught in caves in Bungonia Gorge. Photo: IAN MORRIS

## Trapped divers survive flood threat

THREE men rescued after spending a night in a flooding NSW cave say they're happy and relieved to be back above ground.

"I don't really believe, I thought I'd be still in there for, like, 48 hours," cave diver Andrew Perry said after the rescue in the Bungonia National Park, in southern NSW.

Mr Perry and two of his friends, all experienced cavers, were trapped in the park overnight on Sunday, unable to make it back to the surface because rising flood waters were blocking their exit.

They dropped their equipment and found refuge in Coffin Chamber, one of the 200 "wild caves" in the area.

"It was just a waiting game," Mr Perry said. They were eventually able to speak to rescuers yesterday morning and, after

crawling 400 metres, were back in the sunlight.

After being rescued, Mr Perry said he wouldn't return to the cave "unless it's a drought".

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Air temp: 22 degrees  
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 Wollongong: Decreasing southerly swell, with moderate northeasterly winds.

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# Union draws battle lines

DOMINIC GEIDER

THE United Services Union says Wollongong City Council employees will "do what they need to do" to protect their jobs after councillors moved to save \$4.5 million through "efficiencies".

Although he stopped short of confirming further industrial action, USU Southern Branch industrial officer Greg Golledge said workers and union members were "prepared".

"The union, along with council employees, will do what they need to do to protect jobs and the welfare of its members," Mr Golledge said.

The cash-strapped council voted on Monday night to bump up revenue to be raised from "efficiencies" to \$4.5 million - \$500,000 more than the budget option recommended by council staff.

## What our online readers think of the rate rise

I am not necessarily opposed to a rate rise per se but I am opposed to the rate rise as it has come about primarily as a result of an incompetent council who are unable to live within their means, waste vast sums of money on unaffordable grandiose projects and are unable to get any project to come in at the original estimate. Absolutely useless. **C J Thirroul**

Just take a look down the mall with its polished and cracked pavers that were only installed last year or so!

Back the already fading force at North Beach and you'll see what quality works your money is getting you. Bring back the administrators. **Stuart**

I might sell my house and move elsewhere. You can't seem to win in this region. Who's with me? **A J**

What a pack of MUDPUS - they need to increase rates to pay for \$750,000 toilet block! Council was being run efficiently by the administrators, we

are back to the old regime of unqualified card holding unionists who have no business qualifications and no idea. Hopefully next council elections there will be a lot to vote for reinstating the administrators. **Disgusted**

Just disgraced Wollongong council. We suffer because of your inability to manage your budget. **Wendy Jane May**

Well we all see that happen don't we. **Rob**

The savings, in addition to an annual rate rise of 6.63 per cent until 2017, aim to address recommendations made by the citizens

review panel last year. In November, the review prompted a mass demonstration with about 300 workers protesting

against the proposed cuts. Efficiencies could include outsourcing, changes to staffing levels and reviewing workers' industrial

agreements.

However, Mr Golledge said council was yet to "apoll out" just what sort of action would be taken.

"We don't know where the general manager may find his efficiencies but we know generally what happens," he said.

"They look at the area of wages, staff cuts and things like that."

"We'll be preparing ourselves and delegates on the ground to deal with those issues as they arise."

Mr Golledge said that based on what had been observed at other councils in similar positions, he expected that retiring staff would not be replaced.

"They don't replace them, which just puts more burden on other staff," Mr Golledge said.

"Council is one of the biggest employers in the area - given the steelworks have shrunk and shrunk over time."

## Alcoa closure part of global trend: minister

ALCOA'S closure of a smelter in Victoria and two rolling mills is part of a "global evolution" in industry, the federal government says.

Almost 1000 jobs will go when the aluminium giant closes the Point Henry smelter in Geelong in August and its rolling mills in Geelong and Yennora in Sydney by the end of the year.

A company review, which started in February 2012, found the 90-year-old smelter and the two mills were no longer financially viable.

The Portland aluminium smelter will continue its operations, as will Alcoa's bauxite mining and alumina refineries in Western Australia.

"Despite the hard work of the local teams, these assets are no longer competitive and are not financially sustainable today or into the future," Alcoa chief executive Klaus Kleinfeld said.

Industry Minister Ian Macfarlane said the government shared the disappointment of workers and their families but was close to finalising a new economic strategy for Victoria and South Australia, which have already been hit by car-maker closures.

Mr Macfarlane said he would receive an interim report of the

Victorian review next week, but the Alcoa decision should be seen in global terms.

"It is part of a global evolution of industry which is causing major changes in 'old world' industry sectors across the globe," the minister said.

He said it made it all the more important for the government to cut business red tape and taxes, which were standing in the way of investor confidence.

Treasurer Joe Hockey said \$90 million the Labor government gave Alcoa in 2012 was money "down the tubes" and was another reason why the Coalition was not in the business of industry handouts.

Mr Hockey said the smelter was never going to be cost-effective with a carbon tax in place.

The company did not mention the carbon tax in its stockmarket statement.

Australian Workers Union Victorian branch secretary Ben Davis said workers had agreed to many productivity improvements and workplace changes.

"Their reward for all that blood, sweat and tears is to lose their jobs. It is a shameful announcement," he said.

AWU NSW secretary Russ Collison said more than 400 jobs



No longer viable: Klaus Kleinfeld announcing closure of the Alcoa smelter yesterday. Photo: JASON SOUTH

would be lost with the closure of the Yennora plant in western Sydney.

Victorian Premier Denis Napthine said the combination of the high Australian dollar and very competitive world market had made the business unviable.

"We'll certainly be working with Alcoa and the workers dur-

ing this transition phase," he said.

Alcoa said it would seek a buyer for the Andreeva coalmine and power station, which currently provides power to the Point Henry smelter.

Federal Opposition Leader Bill Shorten said Labor would support an adjustment package for

workers, but in the long-term the government needed a jobs plan.

ACTU secretary Dave Oliver said that with unemployment at 6 per cent - the highest rate in over a decade - now was not the time for budget cuts.

"It will throw more Australians out of work and onto the dole queues," he said. **AAP**

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**Wollongong jobs to go in Telstra cuts**  
PAGE 5



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# ILLAWARRA MERCURY

SINCE 1855

Thursday, February 20, 2014

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## Moulting season has Penfold in a flap

Penfold the Little Penguin found himself in unfamiliar territory this week when he came ashore at Ulladulla seeking shelter while shedding his old feathers - a process that takes up to 14 days. Penfold is now in the care of Australian Seabird Rescue South Coast.

FULL STORY P7

Picture: ANDY ZAKEL

# CALL TO BLOCK RATES HIKE

ANGELA THOMPSON

A RESIDENTS group will call on the state's pricing regulator to reject Wollongong City Council's bid for a special rate hike, arguing the city has allowed cost blow-outs and shouldn't be handed a fatter public purse.

The council voted on Monday in favour of a 21 per cent rate rise over three years, or 6.63 per cent annually, and will now seek approval from the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal to introduce the hikes.

But the Save our Services Wollongong group will also make a submission to IPART, citing

the cost of the Crown Street Mall refurbishment, and a new toilet block built at Towradgi for \$765,000, as examples of the council's inability to contain costs.

Save Our Services Wollongong convener Stephen Spencer said rate rises should be put on hold. "We believe there shouldn't

be a rate rise until council has thoroughly had its finances examined and addressed its cost containment," Mr Spencer said.

"A vivid example of that is Wollongong mall [refurbishment]. When initiated, council said it was \$10 million, now it's costing \$20 million.

"There are numerous people

in the community questioning why it costs so much.

"The issues there should be effectively addressed before council says 'give us some more money and trust us to spend it wisely'."

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Call to Block Rates Hike – Illawarra Mercury

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Murder trial told of love triangle

SHANNON TONKIN

A WOLLONGONG lawyer who died when her house was deliberately set on fire was murdered by her estranged partner and a former friend who were having a secret affair, a court has heard.

Supreme Court jurors were yesterday told the alleged love triangle between the deceased woman, Katie Foreman, her on/off boyfriend Bradley Max Rawlinson, and once-close friend Wendy Anne Evans, would be at the centre of the trial of three people accused of orchestrating and carrying out the murder.

Prosecutors allege Rawlinson and Evans were desperate to have Ms Foreman "gone" from their lives so they could be together, and agreed to pay to have her killed.

Text messages between the pair in the month before Ms Foreman's October 2011 death revealed their close relationship and the shared "ill-feelings" they had towards Ms Foreman, Crown prosecutor Chris Maxwell, QC, said.

The messages included: "Yeah, so do I but just keep thinking, one more week then she's gone and we are away from her", and "I want to be with you till I die, I hope you understand the various reasons why it needs to happen to her now. I love you". Both were sent from

Rawlinson's phone to Evans, Mr Maxwell said.

The alleged Evans enlisted western Sydney couple Bernard Justin Spicer and Michelle Sharon Proud to help with the murder plan, and it was eventually Evans and Spicer who crept into Ms Foreman's Ox-ford home in the early hours of October 27, threw petrol into her bedroom and set it alight.

Mr Maxwell described the blaze as "ferocious". An amateur video, that by a neighbour shortly after the fire ignited and played to the jury yesterday, showed flames leaping from Ms Foreman's second-storey bedroom window.

Firefighters discovered Ms Foreman's body on the landing immediately outside her bedroom.

A post-mortem examination conducted the following day found widespread, severe burns on Ms Foreman's body, as well as "black debris" in her airways and lungs, leading doctors to conclude she had been alive and breathing for part of the fire, but died from a combination of direct heat injury and the effects of inhaling noxious products.

Evans, Rawlinson, Spicer and Proud were subsequently charged with Ms Foreman's murder.

Evans pleaded guilty to murder last year, however, Rawlinson,

Spicer and Proud indicated they would fight the charge and formally entered not guilty pleas to murder at the start of the trial on Tuesday.

Guilty pleas to lesser charges - Rawlinson to manslaughter and Spicer to break and enter and commit a serious indictable offence, namely lighting the fire - were rejected by the Crown.

In his opening address in the case, Mr Maxwell said despite the fact only Evans and Spicer were physically present at the house when the fire was lit, the jury could find each of the accused guilty of the murder charge if they believed they were part of a criminal group (with Evans) that had agreed to kill or seriously injure Ms Foreman.

Jurors could also return a guilty verdict on the murder charge if they believed the alleged group - referred to as a joint criminal enterprise - had agreed to harm Ms Foreman, and in doing so, contemplated that serious bodily harm could come to her, Mr Maxwell said.

Jurors were also given a third option to consider - that Spicer's actions that evening showed he was "recklessly indifferent" to the continuation of Ms Foreman's life.

The trial continues today in Sydney.



Benchmark NSW Treasurer Mike Baird and Federal Treasurer Joe Hockey answer media questions in Sydney. Photo: TAMARA DEAN

Hockey hails state record

FEDERAL Treasurer Joe Hockey will hold up his home state of NSW as an example of how to grow the economy through building much-needed infrastructure when he meets his international counterparts this weekend.

Mr Hockey will host the Group of 20 finance ministers and central bankers meeting in Sydney, the first gathering of the forum under Australia's 2014 presidency.

"The decisions that are made this weekend, together with decisions that will be made over the next 12 months under the leadership of Australia, will have an impact on the global economy," Mr Hockey said in Sydney yesterday.

In a joint media conference with NSW Treasurer Mike Baird, Mr Hockey praised the state's approach of recycling government investment in exist-

ing assets into new assets. "The sales of ports with the proceeds going into new road infrastructure is a benchmark for the rest of Australia and arguably many countries around the world," he said.

"I'll be using that as a clear example with G20 finance ministers this weekend."

He said the G20 must look at ways to get private sector money into infrastructure, not just in Australia, where there is a backlog of at least \$400 billion of projects, but globally.

As the G20 chair, Australia has a responsibility to drive the growth agenda, he said.

He will attempt to negotiate a global growth target that is faster than the 3.7 per cent to 4 per cent forecast by the International Monetary Fund.

Mr Hockey said the more a growth agenda was driven, the more jobs could be created. **AE**

Late bid to block rates hike

FROM PAGE 1

The Save our Services group will also cite in its submission a lack of community consultation over the rate rises, which - together with \$1.5 million in service cuts, \$600,000 in increased fees and \$4.5 million in council "efficiencies" - are aimed at plugging some of the city's asset renewal funding gap.

The group reinstates the council's citizens panel, which developed a controversial bill aimed at cutting costs, was an ineffective gauge of com-

munity sentiment towards services and facilities.

"We'll be emphasising the lack of real engagement with the community, highlighting such things as the citizens panel, which I think most people in the community regard as a sick joke," Mr Spencer said.

"I'm not suggesting there should be hundreds of meetings, but there should certainly be more than four meetings with a specific group - a hand-picked group."

Responding to Mr Spencer's comments, a council spokesman

said more than 5300 community members, businesses, and representative bodies had contributed to the Securing our Future review. This included more than 900 submissions since December.

"This consultation and engagement was reported to council, who resolved to table an application for a Special Rate Variation with IPART," the spokesman said.

The spokesman would not comment on the submission being put forward by the Save our Services group.

Top brass to probe island riot

OPERATION Sovereign Borders commander Angus Campbell is being sent to Manus Island to assess security measures at the detention centre following a deadly riot on Monday.

Lieutenant-General Campbell arrives this morning and will report back to Immigration Minister Scott Morrison with any suggested security improvements.

Iran, Labor and the Australian Greens want answers over the death of a 24-year-old Iranian asylum seeker during a fracas outside an Australian-run detention centre on

Manus Island. The man was among the first asylum seekers sent to PNG under former Labor prime minister Kevin Rudd's resettlement deal with the PNG government in July 2013, the Refugee Action Coalition said.

Iranian consulate director Hossein Mirfakhari was reported to have expressed Iran's "protest and discontent" about the "practices of inhumanity and mistreatment" that led to the death.

The PNG government is investigating the riots, and Manus Island MP Ron Knight said the actions of police would be scrutinised. **AE**

MERCURY logo and contact information including General Manager, Editor, Sales Manager, Office, Phone, Newsprint, Editorial Chief, Email, Subscriptions, Classifieds, Faxes, and Advertisers.

Inside Services table listing various services and their contact numbers, including Ambulance, Fire and Police, Wollongong Area Command, Lake Illawarra Area Command, Wollongong Hospital, Shellharbour Hospital, Bunnings, Police, Lifeline, State Emergency Service, National Security Helpline, Manly Rescue, and Wine.

Lotto 6/45 results for Wednesday night Draw 3032: 14 9 18 4 39 42. Supplementaries: 15 27. Also includes Petrol prices for Albion Park and Gungahlin.

Surf forecast for the day: Air temp 24 degrees, Water temp 18 degrees, High tides 12:50pm, 12:20pm, Low tides 8:27am, 6:38pm.

Online, twitter, facebook, and other digital service icons and contact information.

Late Bid to Block Rates Hike – Illawarra Mercury 20 February 2014 – Page 2



**Location: Wollongong Station: WIN Wollongong**

Program: WIN News Producer: Mr Peter Freestone

Aired On: 14/02/2014 7:12:22 PM Compere: Kerryn Johnston and Geoff Phillips

Three recommendations to slash the Wollongong City Council budget have been met with resistance from the community. Ratepayers will be subject to a rates increase of around \$50/year. The city's rock pools are unlikely to go, although this will come at the cost of footpath renewal.

Duration: 1 mins 35 secs

Interviewee: Gordon Bradbery, Wollongong City Council Lord Mayor

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

Program: 06:30 News Producer:

Aired On: 17/02/2014 6:30:23 AM Compere: Newsreader

The Wollongong Council will tonight vote on whether to raise rates by more than 20% over the next three years. Wollongong Labor Councillor David Brown says he supports the increase and he believes it reflects community feedback that they would rather pay more and keep council run services open.

Duration: 0 mins 41 secs

Interviewee: David Brown, Councillor, Wollongong

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

Program: 12:00 News Producer:

Aired On: 14/02/2014 12:02:11 PM Compere: Newsreader

The Wollongong Council has released a report into securing its future, with detailed recommendations on service cuts and increased rates.

Duration: 0 mins 45 secs

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

Program: Mornings Producer: Ms Jennifer Courtney

Aired On: 17/02/2014 8:43:06 AM Compere: Nick Rheinberger

Interview with Lord Mayor Gordon Bradbery about Wollongong City Council voting on recommendations for rate increases. Rheinberger says the vote is part of the council's efforts to get on top of a long term funding problem. Bradbery says the recommendation involves efficiency savings of \$4m but they are not planning dramatic cuts in services. He says the rate rise will be 6.7% and residents are happy to pay more to save their services, including rock pools.

Duration: 7 mins 12 secs

Interviewee: Lord Mayor Gordon Bradbery, Wollongong City Council

**Location: Wollongong Station: i98 FM**

Program: 07:00 News Producer: Ms Nicole Charlton

Aired On: 18/02/2014 7:03:28 AM Compere: Newsreader

Wollongong Council is set to introduce a 6.63% annual rate rise until 2017.

Duration: 0 mins 09 secs

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

Program: 06:30 News Producer:

Aired On: 18/02/2014 6:31:19 AM Compere: Newsreader

Wollongong Council has voted to ask IPART to approve a 21% rate rise over the next three years.

Duration: 0 mins 24 secs

**Location: Wollongong Station: WAVE FM**

Program: 06:00 News Producer: Mr Rob Gooda

Aired On: 18/02/2014 6:02:19 AM Compere: Newsreader

Wollongong City Council has agreed at last night's meeting to pursue steep rates rises.

Duration: 0 mins 16 secs

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

Program: 08:30 News Producer:

Aired On: 17/02/2014 8:31:38 AM Compere: Newsreader

Wollongong City Council will vote tonight on whether to increase by 20 percent over the next three years and Councillor, Bede Crasnich says that is too much, especially for those on low incomes.

Duration: 0 mins 45 secs

Interviewee: Councillor, Bede Crasnich

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

Program: Mornings Producer: Ms Jennifer Courtney

Aired On: 17/02/2014 8:50:18 AM Compere: Nick Rheinberger

Melinda James interview with Cr Bede Crasnich, Wollongong City Council, about proposed rate increases. Crasnich says he is fighting to keep rates as low as possible and is pushing for leasing council owned assets to increase revenue. He says it's unfair to hit people with an 'unreasonable rate increase.'

Duration: 2 mins 06 secs

Interviewee: Cr Bede Crasnich, Wollongong City Council

**Location: Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra**

Program: Mornings Producer: Ms Jennifer Courtney

Aired On: 17/02/2014 8:43:06 AM Compere: Nick Rheinberger

Interview with Lord Mayor Gordon Bradbery about Wollongong City Council voting on recommendations for rate increases. Rheinberger says the vote is part of the council's efforts to get on top of a long term



funding problem. Bradbery says the recommendation involves efficiency savings of \$4m but they are not planning dramatic cuts in services. He says the rate rise will be 6.7% and residents are happy to pay more to save their services, including rock pools.

**Duration:** 7 mins 12 secs

**Interviewee:** Lord Mayor Gordon Bradbery, Wollongong City Council

**Location:** Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra

**Program:** Mornings Producer: Ms Jennifer Courtney

**Aired On:** 17/02/2014 8:35:48 AM **Compere:** Nick Rheinberger

Wollongong Council voting on their preferred option for their financial future.

**Duration:** 1 mins 01 secs

**Location:** Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra

**Program:** 07:30 News Producer:

**Aired On:** 17/02/2014 7:30:59 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

Wollongong Cr David Brown says the rate increases recommended by council staff is in line with community feedback about keeping services like ocean pools open. Council will tonight vote on whether to raise rates by more than 20% over the next three years.

**Duration:** 1 mins 10 secs

**Interviewee:** Cr David Brown, Wollongong City Council

**Interviewee:** Cr Bede Crasnich, Wollongong City Council

**Location:** Wollongong Station: WIN Wollongong

**Program:** WIN News Producer: Mr Peter Freestone

**Aired On:** 18/02/2014 7:02:28 PM **Compere:** Kerryn Johnston

A rate rise of more than 20% over three years is all set to go ahead with Wollongong councillors voting to lodge an application to make it a reality. A rowdy public gallery let councillors know what it thought about the rate rise. Representatives agreed to increase savings within Council and reduce the rate rise for residents.

**Duration:** 1 mins 58 secs

**Interviewee:** Bede Crasnich, Wollongong City Council

**Interviewee:** Gordon Bradbery, Wollongong City Council Lord Mayor

**Interviewee:** Stephen Spencer, Save Our Services Wollongong

**Location:** Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra

**Program:** 08:30 News Producer:

**Aired On:** 18/02/2014 8:30:18 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

Wollongong Council will push ahead with its budget overhaul with eleven councillors voting for and Councillors Vicki Curran and Greg Petty voting against. The Council hope to have IPART approve a 21% rates increase over three years, among other fee increases and service cuts. The Lord Mayor, Gordon Bradbery, says councillors have been engaged in this process for months. Stephen Spencer, Spokesman for Save our Services, Wollongong, says they will write to IPART to oppose this and are calling for an independent review. Illawarra Business Chamber will also oppose the increase.

**Duration:** 1 mins 24 secs

**Interviewee:** Gordon Bradbery, Wollongong Lord Mayor

**Interviewee:** Stephen Spencer, Spokesman, Save our Services Wollongong

**Location:** Wollongong Station: i98 FM

**Program:** 12:00 News Producer:

**Aired On:** 18/02/2014 12:04:55 PM **Compere:** Newsreader

Wollongong Council has voted to increase rates by just over 6% every year for the next three years. Gordon Bradbery, Mayor, Wollongong Council, says the money will be used for various repairs.

**Duration:** 0 mins 43 secs

**Interviewee:** Gordon Bradbery, Mayor, Wollongong Council

**Location:** Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra

**Program:** 07:30 News Producer:

**Aired On:** 18/02/2014 7:30:28 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

Wollongong Council has voted to ask IPART to approve a 21% rate increase over the next three years. Eleven councillors voted for the package with two independent councillors against. Lord Mayor Gordon Bradbery says the plan has been amended slightly.

**Duration:** 0 mins 39 secs

**Interviewee:** Gordon Bradbery, Lord Mayor, Wollongong Council

**Location:** Wollongong Station: ABC Illawarra

**Program:** 17:30 News Producer:

**Aired On:** 18/02/2014 5:31:23 PM **Compere:** Newsreader

Wollongong Council wants assurances from the NSW Government by midday tomorrow that the demolition of the Port Kembla Copper Stack complies with all planning requirements. The resolution passed at last night's council meeting and there were calls on the Government to ensure residents won't be exposed to asbestos fibres and that all hazardous material is removed properly. Gordon Bradbury, Lord Mayor of Wollongong, says council wants Brad Hazzard, NSW Minister for Planning to take full responsibility.

**Duration:** 0 mins 39 secs



**Interviewee:** Gordon Bradbery, Lord Mayor of Wollongong

**Location:** Wollongong **Station:** i98 FM

**Program:** 09:00 News **Producer:** Ms Nicole Charlton

**Aired On:** 18/02/2014 9:03:57 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

Wollongong Council is set to introduce a 6.63% annual rate rise until 2017.

**Duration:** 0 mins 11 sec

**Location:** Wollongong **Station:** i98 FM

**Program:** 12:00 News **Producer:**

**Aired On:** 18/02/2014 12:04:55 PM **Compere:** Newsreader

Wollongong Council has voted to increase rates by just over 6% every year for the next three years.

Gordon Bradbery, Mayor, Wollongong Council, says the money will be used for various repairs.

**Duration:** 0 mins 43 secs

**Interviewee:** Gordon Bradbery, Mayor, Wollongong Council

**Location:** Wollongong **Station:** WAVE FM

**Program:** 09:00 News **Producer:**

**Aired On:** 18/02/2014 9:04:54 AM **Compere:** Newsreader

Wollongong Council has applied to IPART for approval of rates rises of 21% over three years.

**Duration:** 0 mins 08 secs

**Location:** Wollongong **Station:** ABC Illawarra

**Program:** Breakfast **Producer:**

**Aired On:** 17/02/2014 7:39:07 AM **Compere:** Steve Parsons

Interview with Stephen Spencer, convenor, Save Our Services, about possible rates increases in Wollongong. Parsons says tonight the Wollongong City Council will finally be voting on whether rates will go up and by how much, and what local services may have to go. Spencer says he has been banned from speaking on the issue at tonight's meeting because he has already spoken, and says the stark choice the council is presenting between service cuts, fee charges and a rate rise is not telling the full story. He says Council is not explaining where the money has gone and is going in future, which is unfair.

**Duration:** 4 mins 25 secs

**Interviewee:** Stephen Spencer, convenor, Save Our Services