



BRRAG

Belmont Resident and Ratepayer Action Group Inc.

“To provide an effective voice for the people of Belmont”

27 March 2020

Dear Councillor Wolff

Many thanks for taking the time to respond to us. (attached below) This is the first time in 18 months of letters you have responded. You are obviously clearly passionate about this issue.

The announcement by Mayor Marks clearly indicated a rate freeze was on the agenda. Cr Cayoun it would appear wanted it formalised as she has a clear understanding of how much Belmont residents are suffering at this time with many losing jobs. If this intent indicated by the Mayor was genuine as opposed to a promise that would not happen why not formalise it?

The past rate increases with City of Belmont is quite irrelevant at this time. We are looking at times not seen anywhere in Australia or the world. Belmont people deserve support from the City of Belmont not merely being told by a South Ward councillor “ Given the average rate bill is about \$1400, that would amount to a \$14 saving for the average rate payer, and that won’t be till September, when this pandemic is likely to be over.” You are clearly out of touch if you think that is what people want to hear right now.

I would be interested are you taking some sort of pay cut during this time? You still have your position many others dont even have jobs.

You have pointed out the council might be able to come up with a better solution. I asked how much the council has saved in event costings until the end of the financial year. The figure was around \$120 000 for memory. Therefore I can only assume you would support immediate relief by giving back this money to all ratepayers in Belmont by way of cash response? That would therefore comply with your idea of immediate relief and would be a welcome relief for the ratepayers of Belmont.

As for the “herds” you refer to I would liken the “herds” to leaders who are in touch with their communities and are very aware of the suffering their residents are now facing. It is unfortunate that our leaders (Mayor and Councillors) dont share the view of the “herds”

Please be advised this letter and any response will be made available to the Residents of Belmont on the BRRAG website.

Kindest regards

Lisa Hollands
President BRRAG

Dear Ms Hollands,

For the last 10 years at least, the City of Belmont has kept its rate increases very steady and close to CPI.

(Unlike other councils where rate increases are up and down like a yo-yo.) Given this pandemic, I'd suggest to you that the CPI forecast may be quite low. Let's assume 1.0%. Given the average rate bill is about \$1400, that would amount to a \$14 saving for the average rate payer, and that won't be till September, when this pandemic is likely to be over. Perhaps with a bit of thought and discussion (if that's o.k. with you), the Council could come up with a better solution with more immediate and effective impact, – rather than following the herd and freezing rates, as you suggest.

Regards,

Cr Steve Wolff