



BRRAG

Belmont Resident and Ratepayer Action Group Inc.

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

23 August 2020

Mayor and Councillors
City of Belmont

Dear Mayor and Councillors

At the July Ordinary Council Meeting, many questions were either Taken On Notice or as correspondence. When residents listen to the recording and then have to go back to the written minutes scrounging to find out the answers to questions asked, this can be time consuming and potentially they may not follow it up.

It was particularly disturbing that questions that were related to finances were taken as correspondence. According to the CEO the difference between questions taken on notice and those taken as correspondence, is that if taken as correspondence they will not appear in the minutes. The recording has the question being asked, then nowhere of finding the answer. When questions are related to the finances and the spending of the City of Belmont, it does not demonstrate the City wanting to be transparent with the residents. Why hide the answer, why not just take it on notice and then it goes in the minutes?

It has also been noted by regular members of the gallery who ask questions, there is no benefit to them in submitting them prior to the meeting. I submitted questions previously a day and a half before the meeting and they were taken on notice. In July my personal questions were in by lunch time and most were either taken on notice or as correspondence.

In assisting the residents to easily find the answers to the questions the residents ask and which they hear on the tape without the answer, BRRAG has decided we will make it simple for them. We will do their own recording of the question and the response all in the one tape. We will put it alongside the link to the council tape and explain that in listening to our recording they will hear the questions and the response in the one spot rather than sifting through written minutes. I am sure you would agree, that residents will really appreciate such an easy way to find the response, not to mention the transparency.

Please be advised this letter and your response will go on the BRRAG website for the purpose of transparency for the residents of Belmont as will the response. This letter will be widely circulated.

Lisa Hollands
President BRRAG