



**BRRAG**

**Belmont Resident and Ratepayer Action Group Inc.**

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

13 May 2020

Mayor and Councillors  
City of Belmont

Dear Mayor and Councillors

At the last council meeting, BRRAG submitted questions for Public Question Time. They were not accepted due to being late and presumably the councillors did not see the questions. They were subsequently done as correspondence all nicely packaged so they did not appear in the minutes.

Our questions related to staffing measures with the closure of many services, due to COVID-19. Nothing regarding measures to reduce staffing costs was included in the report for this item for the April meeting. There was no mention of what the CEO was doing in this regard.

The council at the Town of Cambridge, has instructed their CEO to reduce staffing costs by 20% across the board. Councillors do not want staff filling meaningless positions during this time for the sake of keeping staff employed. According to their report on the item, they have also consulted with unions. I believe something similar has also occurred at the City of Fremantle.

Have our councillors requested the CEO provide a report of what he is doing to reduce staffing costs at this time? Has any staff had hours cut back, taken pay cuts etc? Most residents across the country are impacted one way or another by reduced income. People losing jobs, owners of commercial properties giving free rent and residential property owners making agreements with tenants that cost them financially.

Residents and business in Belmont is doing it tough and the expectation is that our council will make sensible decisions and look at all ways to cut costs. Any savings could be passed on to residents at this time or in the bigger picture ensure that financially the City will not be trying to catch up any expenditure for COVID 19 in the future with increased rates or decreased services.

Under the **2.7 of the Local Government Act 1995**

**Role of council**

(1) The council

- (a) governs the local government’s affairs; and
- (b) is responsible for the performance of the local government’s functions.

(2) Without limiting subsection (1), the council is to—

- (a) oversee the allocation of the local government’s finances and resources; and**
- (b) determine the local government’s policies.

On this basis we ask the council to request from the CEO full details of staffing costs and what reductions if any he has made. We believe this falls within your responsibility given the money belongs to the ratepayer and staffing costs is probably one of the highest costs associated with the budget.

I have had correspondence with Cr Andres **Timmermanis** from the Town of Cambridge in respect of what they have done. He has advised that he would be prepared to speak with any councillor from the City of Belmont on what has been done there. Whilst you may argue that you don't want comparisons to Town of Cambridge and the differences between them and Belmont, but they have fantastic leadership under Mayor Keri Shannon. Residents were so satisfied that no one ran against the councillors at the last election and they were elected unopposed without an election.

We hope that our councillors will take the opportunity to speak to Cr **Timmermanis**. **It is very apparent they are all clear on their responsibilities and the role of the Council versus the Administration.**

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.

Lisa Hollands  
President BRRAG