

To: localgovernment@esc.vic.gov.au

Date: 15/05/2015

Subject: Comments on Rate Capping Framework Review

I apologise for the lateness of my submission but only received information today of the framework paper and that the closing of submissions is today 15/05/2015.

I am very supportive of this review and the decision of the Labour Government to cap rates to CPI?. I am a ratepayer of Bass Coast Shire Council and have been objecting to high rate increases for more than 15 years. Cumulative rates and charges over the past five years total 46.2% yet the cumulative increase in the CPI over the past five years was only 12.6%. Also the cumulative increase in employee costs over the past five years was 51.5% and CPI over the same period was 12.6%. I have recently renewed my activity , writing to Council and articles and letters in the local press," The San Remo and Phillip Island Advertiser."

This Council recently issued a Long Term Financial Plan in March 2015 showing rate increases for the next 10 years of 4.7% per year despite knowing of the future cap on rate increases to CPI.

My faith in the Councillors ability to control budgets and set strategic directions and to control the CEO is nil. The LTFP was passed by Council despite containing conflicting information in addition to unrealistic rates for 10 years.

The draft budget this year shows residential rates/assessment rising by 8.9%, 7.9% .When garbage charges are included,the total rate increase for 2015/16 is 6.3% and the budget shows rate rises for the next three years of 4.7%.

I believe that the proposed framework is excellent and it has my strongest support.

An investigation into Bass Coast Shire Council is needed to confirm my investigations and the need for control of excessive rate rises. We have a CEO whose office has employee costs of \$487,000 for two people,we have more than 50 employees greater than benchmarks Gippsland Councils adding more than \$4,500,000 to employee costs and expenditure of more than \$1,000,000 on consultant fees. Comparison of rates and charges are meaningless when the services are not compared. We have no green waste collection no hard rubbish disposal no transfer station on Phillip Island despite the Council knowing they had sold the transfer station land in 1994.

I look forward to observing the progress of the framework.

John Swarbrick