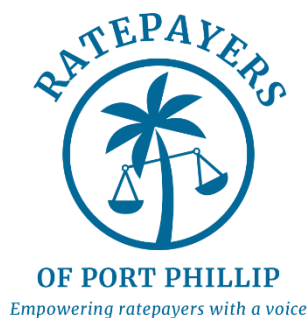


Newsletter 5 October 2018



Welcome

Thank you for joining the Ratepayers of Port Phillip, a community action group to stop the wasteful spending and never ending property rate increases by our local council members.

Your support is vital in being able to bring these issues to the attention of local ratepayers and to make the necessary changes within the council to reduce your rates.

Our small group has just started and when we have enough members we will start putting pressure on the Council through community meetings, petitions and identifying Councillors and candidates who support our objectives and values. It is evident that the majority of Port Phillip Councillors do not represent the values of our community group.

Huge response to our launch campaign

We have received a huge response from ratepayers and have over 200 members after a few weeks of distributing flyers to only a small area of the Port Phillip Council. People are furious about their rate increases and we have learnt that some residents' rates have increased by up to 35%. Our members want to stop this inequitable and unsustainable attack on home owners in the City of Port Phillip. We have heard many stories of residents' futile attempts to stop the Council from imposing surging rate hikes. People are telling us it feels like the Council is bullying them, rates are not fair and equitable and the Council is out of step with the community when they are slugging ratepayers with massive rates notices when salaries or retirement incomes are either not growing or constrained to 2-3%.



As individuals our complaints have little or no impact, but as a community group we are confident that we can change the way this Council operates or we will influence who is elected to Council.

We have dropped off flyers in Middle Park, Albert Park and a small section of Port Melbourne and still need to cover South Melbourne, St Kilda, Balaclava, Ripponlea, Elwood, Beacon Cove, Garden City and remaining sections of Port Melbourne. We hope that the flyers are not overlooked and thrown in the bin along with "Junk Mail." Please talk to your family, friends and neighbours that our community group are trying to stop excessive Council rates and spending. The more residents that sign up, the louder our voice.

Port Phillip councillors lead the way in waste

The rate rises are hard to swallow when we discovered Port Phillip Councillors have the largest out-of-pocket expenses of all Councils in Victoria. There is little or no accountability on the control of those expenses and the ratepayer is the one who has to pay. The following article appeared in the Herald Sun newspaper this week. Please note the link will only open if you have an account with the newspaper.

<https://www.heraldsun.com.au/leader/news/what-melbourne-councillors-claim-as-expenses-funded-by-ratepayers/news-story/4c1fc9a3f4611f7d9e969ec0694ae4d6>

Port Phillip Council's nine councillors claimed almost \$100,000 in out-of-pocket expenses in one year — more than 31 times Monash Council, whose 11 councillors claimed just over \$3000. The City of Port Phillip, one of the smallest councils by geographical area, claimed \$98,750.48 in the year to June 2018.

More than \$23,000 was claimed by three Councillors for child and family care; Port Phillip Mayor Bernadene Voss claimed \$10,593.48, Cr Tim Baxter claimed \$5,536.84, and Cr Marcus Pearl claimed \$6,894.50.



Photo of Port Phillip Mayor Bernadene Voss and Cr Katherine Copsey who have made substantial claims for child care and conference expenses.

There was also more than \$16,000 claimed for conferences and training; Cr Katherine Copsey spent \$8,017.18 between July and September last year, and Cr Ogy Simic spent \$8,421.73 between October and December. We understand that professional development payments for Cr Copsey and Cr Simic primarily related to an Australian Institute of Company Directors course.

Ratepayers Victoria Vice President Frank Sullivan said "There's little to no accountability on the control of those expenses. At the end of the day the poor old ratepayer is the one who has to pay."

Any icebergs in Port Phillip?

You would think not. But when governments treat tax payer money like their own and have an indifference for their public financial responsibilities, there is likely a lot more waste that we can't see. Eliminate the waste and you can reduce the rates.

What is RoPP doing?

The Ratepayers of Port Phillip (RoPP) aim to ensure that rates are fair, affordable and sustainable for property owners in the City of Port Phillip by influencing Council to control spending and/or find a better way to calculate rates. We plan to achieve these objectives by:

- 1) Representing ratepayers in the CoPP;
- 2) Holding Councillors accountable for fair, affordable and sustainable rates by cutting wasted Council expenditure;
- 3) Electing Councillors who represent the views of this association; and

- 4) Finding more equitable and sustainable way to calculate rates.

2020

The next Olympic Games and the next Council Elections are scheduled in 2020. When the latter is completed we want to have a majority Councillors who share our values and the desire for prudent financial management focused on the key responsibilities to ratepayers. Like winning Gold this will take a lot of effort, commitment and focus, but Gold can be won by those with passion. Are you one?

Volunteers wanted

Please contact us if you would like to help distribute flyers and we will arrange to provide you with the flyers. You can contact us via our website:

www.ratepayersofportphillip.org

