

ROPP comment on the bin tax

By Campbell Spence

ROPP agrees with Cr Bond's comment that rubbish collection is a core function of local government and should be funded through rates rather than an additional charge. But it is false to say that Councillors voted to separate the cost of waste collection last week. That happened one year ago and ROPP Councillors voted against the decision. See Council Meeting minutes from 29th June 2022 below.

ROPP seeks to correct the public record regarding the false claim in TWiSK (25 June 2023) that ROPP Councillors broke a promise to oppose a separate bin tax during the 2020 election campaign. The TWiSK article incorrectly reports that Cr Clark and Cr Sirakoff voted in support of a separate waste charge last week.

Cr Clark and Cr Sirakoff, both ROPP members were amongst the four Councillors who opposed the introduction of separate waste charge in last year's budget. The motion was to introduce a bin tax voted by up with five votes (from Cr Heather Cunsolo, Cr Louise Crawford, Cr Tim Baxter, Cr Katherine Copey and Cr Peter Martin) to four against on 29th June 2022. ROPP does not support a separate levy being used to fund our Municipality's waste services.

ROPP was very supportive of the 2023/24 budget for rates being set at 2.8% instead of the maximum allowed under the State Government rates levy of 3.5%. The rates reduction was tied to the modest increase of the waste charge. To suggest that you can remove the waste levy and have lower rates does not make sense.

For the first time in a very long time, the Council was proposing to not increase the rates to the maximum. This is a win for residents who get a smaller rate increase. In a cost-of-living crisis, any money that is given back to residents is a great outcome and helps to reduce the excessively high rates that are charged in this Municipality, particularly when compared to other Municipalities.

In order to achieve the lower rate increase, Cr Sirakoff and Cr Clark voted to support the proposed Budget. The waste levy battle was concluded in June 2022 and not at the recent council meeting as postured by TWiSK. To that end, ROPP Councillors, voted for a lesser rate increase as a fantastic outcome for residents.

MINUTES - SPECIAL MEETING OF THE PORT PHILLIP
CITY COUNCIL - 29 JUNE 2022



MOVED Crs Martin/Cunsolo

PART 2

That Council:

- 3.3 Adopts the Rating *Strategy 2022-25* (Attachment 2).
- 3.4 Notes the *Rating Strategy 2022-2025* includes the following rating structure changes to be included in Budget 2022/23 for adoption:
 - 3.4.1 Shifting the rating system from Net Annual Value (NAV) to Capital Improved Value (CIV).
 - 3.4.2 Introducing Differential Rating at the property class level (Commercial, Industrial and Residential).
 - 3.4.3 Separating the cost of private benefits/direct waste services (Kerbside Bins Collection, Communal FOGO & Glass, Hard & Green Waste, and Resource Recovery Centre) from General Rates to a waste charge structure.
 - 3.4.4 Implement a tiered waste charge structure including rebates to ensure a fairer fee structure based on user-pays principle.
- 3.5 Notes that Report 3.3 on tonight's agenda (*Council Plan 2021-2031 Year Two – Municipal Health & Wellbeing Plan, Financial Plan, Revenue & Rating Plan and Budget 2022-23: Adoption*) includes consideration of a 1.75% average rate increase for 2022/23, despite inflation forecast at 4.5% (likely higher) and new waste services and related waste cost increases of 14%.

Cr Pearl called for the vote under a DIVISION.

FOR: Crs Baxter, Crawford, Cunsolo, Copsey and Martin

AGAINST: Crs Bond, Sirakoff, Pearl and Clark