

# **Deputation to Holdfast Bay Council on the 2024/5 draft Annual Business Plan and Long Term Financial Plan**

Mayor, Councillors and Council staff,

The focus of my deputation is Council's inadequate consultation on the proposed funding model for the Transforming Jetty Road Glenelg project.

## **1. Consultation?**

The scale of this project and the requirement to raise additional rates to repay the proposed \$30M loan requires Council, under the SA Local Government Act, to consult with ratepayers on the proposed funding model.

My key question for you, the Mayor and Councillors is, has Council properly consulted on the proposed funding model??

**Has Council been open and transparent as required by legislation and your own Consultation Policy.**

**WE SAY "CATEGORICALLY 'NO!'"**

For example: **on your council website** on the project.

The only reference to how this is being funded is in the last sentence -

*Council will allocate \$30 million to the project along with a \$10 million commitment already secured by the Australian Government for the Coast zone.*

If you are being open and transparent:

Why is there no mention that Council will be required to raise a \$30M loan over 15 years to undertake the project?

Why is there no information on the funding model.

Why is there no mention of the opportunity for residents to provide feedback on the funding model?

And this is the same in **your brochure on the project.**

**IS COUNCIL BEEN OPEN AND TRANSPARENT - CLEARLY NO!**

**Let's look at the Intuito Market Research**

**Only one question out of the 21 questions** addressed the funding.

Question number 16 was:

“Council is proposing an increase in rates of 2.3% next year (\$41 for the average household) to **specifically** fund this project. Council anticipates an increase at this similar level for two more years to fund the Jetty Road project. How supportive are you of this?”

Nowhere in the Intuito market research work does it mention that the total increase in rates, amounting to approximately 7% over the level of rates which would be charged in the absence of the project (**namely about \$120 for an average ratepayer) would then apply each and every year into the future.**

**We contend that the vast majority of respondents would understandably have thought that these extra rates payments were only for 3 years?**

**And nowhere in the Intuito market research was it mentioned that Council's overall debt would double to \$59M.**

**And yet, even with these serious omissions, only 49.2% of residents were supportive of the proposed rate increase!**

**HAS COUNCIL BEEN OPEN AND TRANSPARENT IN THE INTUITO MARKET RESEARCH? ABSOLUTELY NOT.**

## **2. Our community outreach**

So, since Council had not consulted in an open and transparent manner, we as concerned members of the community had to fill the void. We produced a flyer and letterboxed over 12,000 ratepayers. Voluntarily. In this flyer we provided a QR code link to a Survey Monkey question, and asked residents if they supported Council's funding model.

To date we have had over 1300 responses and 93% are opposed to the funding model.

The Mayor, and some other members of Council, have implied that this was mis-information. We totally refute this.

Our flyer says the debt will rise to \$60M. **This is correct.**

Our flyer says the cost to an average ratepayer will be \$120 per year. **This is correct.**

(Note, Survey Monkey provides inbuilt security so that only one response can be provided from each surveys can only be answered once from each electronic device!)

## **3. Finally I turn to the Mandatory Principles in the Code of Conduct for Councillors in the SA Local Government Act:**

*I'm sure you know them by heart, but I'll read one key one:*

*Council members must uphold the values of honesty, integrity, accountability and transparency, and in turn, foster community confidence and trust in Local Government.*

## **4. Appeal to Councillors**

I ask each and every one of you to think deeply about whether your Administration and your Council have lived up to this mandatory Principle in respect of the funding model for the Transforming Jetty Road project?

***Whatever your own personal views, will you respect the wishes of 93% of your community? After all, it is their money you are planning to use.***

***We ask you to rethink your Annual Business and Long Term Financial Plans, which are not required to be approved under the Act until 31st August?***

***We ask that you approve the Coastal stage of the project, which has a \$10M contribution from the Federal government; and develop with the help of the community a fairer funding model for the rest of the project.***

**David Cruickshanks-Boyd  
President, 5049 Coastal Community Association  
25th June 2024**