

Rec 3/6/16

Mrs Adele Taylor

Confidentiality not required.

2nd June 2016.

To the
Parliament of Victoria
Legislative Council
Standing Committee on Legal and Social Issues (Legislation & References)

Inquiry into the Retirement Housing Sector

Terms of Reference:

".....with the aim of identifying opportunities for improvement and reform, and, in particular, the Committee should consider -

(5) the impact of local government rating on retirement housing."

Residents of Retirement Villages (who are mainly Aged Pensioners) need further reductions in the cost of Local Council rates due to the current injustices in the system.

The Cardina Shire Council website offers the following information as to how it uses of the rates we pay, but major points do not apply to residents of Cardinia Waters Village (CWV) and residents of other Retirement Villages:

Please note *italics* and red type are my comments.

"Where do my rates go?

Rates revenue is used by Council to maintain local infrastructure, assets and to provide services to our community, such as

- Roads and footpaths - *Council does nothing about our Village Roads. Our Village budget has to maintain our concrete roads, constructed by the Owner as the planned Village grew, but the road construction was substandard according to investigations conducted and the reports we have. What will happen in the years to come? I doubt the Council will assist us.*
- Community infrastructure - *necessary.*
- Garbage and waste management – *we pay over \$200 per year for weekly rubbish, fortnightly recycle and Hard waste collection twice a year, the cost negates the Pension concession discount that some Retirees receive.*
- Maternal and child health services – *not applicable to retirees*
- Libraries – *we also have our own Library on site, so Community Library may not be greatly used by our residents. Depends how mobile they are to reach the Council Library.*
- Community services – ?
- Parks and gardens – *Yes, we can enjoy these, but often a residents state of health means they are unable to physically go or walk in same.*
- Planning services – *no longer needed by a completed Retirement Village*
- Recreation reserves – *rarely used by most of the over 65 y.o. population*

- Youth services – *not applicable to Retirees*
- Children's services – *not applicable to Retirees*
- Local laws and health services – *Necessary*
- Support for senior citizens – *yes, sometimes I feel this happens*
- Arts and cultural services – *yes, these are provided, but naturally we share with the productions for other age groups.*
- Emergency and environmental management – *Yes, is needed and happens*
- Economic development - *??? Our Village (and every other Retirement village) provides large income \$\$\$ to the Council, but I cannot see the Village has any benefit from Economic development provided by the Council."*

As set out above in red type, there are 6 major areas that are of no benefit to residents of CWV in Cardinia Shire. Another 3 areas provide, perhaps, minimal benefit to the over 65 age group.

Therefore I request that your Inquiry consider that residents in Retirement Villages receive a reduction in their Council rates. Even an extra \$200 reduction for each Unit per year would, for CWV, merely reduce Council's income by some \$33,600, a miniscule amount when considering the Council's total Rate income, but this reduction would be beneficial to Retirement Village residents.

Some Victorian Councils (possibly 3) have set a special reduced rate for Retirement Villages, but this is in no way consistent across the State. Individual Councils need to attend to the needs of Retirees in their locality.

In view of the above, I suggest that the Inquiry decide that local Council rates for Retirement Villages need to be calculated on a lower special formula compared to that for other housing in the Locality.

