

***“An open letter to the elected Councillors of Cardinia Shire:  
Please note - There is to be NO increase in Council rates this year”***

**To Cardinia Shire Councillors**

**PLEASE NOTE** – there is to be **NO** increase in Council rates this year.

Cardinia Shire ratepayers have had enough and will not tolerate any further increase in Council rates and charges. A review of the rates set in 2012 should be undertaken to see if it is possible for a reduction in this year’s rates. No commitment towards future rates increase should be made until improvement in the financial situation is evident.

You are currently engaged in the work of assessing spending options for the 2013-2014 financial year. The Cardinia Shire Council Budget is based on the formation of a forward plan for 4 years. The Local Government Act makes provision for community input during the formation of a Council Four Year Plan. Ratepayers are interested to take up that opportunity during current budget preparation rather than after the draft document is completed.

Please take control of your budget responsibility, review spending priorities in order to fortify Cardinia Shire against possible risk of financial downturn and take credible action to reduce the current level of Council debt.

It is time to focus on consolidation of Council assets and efficient maintenance of existing infrastructure. Please resist pressure to launch and fund new major projects and instead concentrate on completing existing projects, township strategy commitments and local community projects.

The high cost of additional staff must be avoided, as there are outstanding staff costs as yet unfunded.

Please advise the State government that there there is need for a moratorium on the present pace of growth and development in Cardinia Shire because Council has to run a conservative Budget this year to serve the interests of existing ratepayers who are under pressure from a variety of increased living costs and cannot afford to absorb any further rates increase in their household budgets. Therefore it is not possible to continue to subsidise the cost of required government infrastructure and services.

**For and on behalf of Cardinia Ratepayers & Residents Association Inc.**

**Gloria O’Connor, President.  
2013.**

**14<sup>th</sup> January**