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To: [SAPC](#)
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South Australian Productivity Commission

Local Government Inquiry

Terms of reference- Submission for Terms of Reference for
"Methodology Paper

Submission from : Martin Morris


19/06/2019

General

The Yankalilla Council is a small inefficient council with extremely high rates and unfair methodology in setting of rates. It requires high staff levels and infrastructure to serve a small population. It sets its rates for residential properties differently from other local councils such as Victor Harbor and Alexandrina.

Yankalilla Council : Differential rating system based wholly on the property value . No fixed rate.

Victor Harbor and Alexandrina : Cents in dollar on property value and a fixed rate.

This is an extremely unfair method of setting rates and assumes the greater your property value ,the greater your assessable income. It penalizes those who invest their life savings in their properties often forgoing other luxuries. Many in this situation are asset rich but income poor. We all receive the same services.

Council rates in country areas are generally much higher than those of metropolitan Adelaide along with all other services and products and urgently needs addressing.

Solution :

Expand council boundaries or amalgamate with other councils to increase population served and rate-able income whilst maintaining staff levels and infrastructure thus increasing efficiency and lowering of rates.

Example:

A comparison and example of gains from expanding boundaries can be made with York Peninsula Council which in 1997 amalgamated with four local councils and now has much lower rates than Yankalilla.

Yankalilla York Peninsula

Area Served 750sq kms Area Served 5,899 squ kms

Population 5,159 Population 11,061

Roads 544 kms Roads 3,890

Rate-able properties 5,529 Rate-able properties 13,981

Rates 0.52995 c/\$ No fixed charge Rates 0.2780 c/\$ Fixed rate of \$410

Therefore on a property with a value of \$490,000 Rates in Yankalilla are \$2596 in York Pen. \$1772

Summary / Conclusion

Review rating methods and standardize all council rating methods

Examine why country council rates are much higher than metropolitan Adelaide

Review council boundaries with view to expansion or amalgamation.

Force councils to submit surveys/questionnaires to ratepayers when considering large expenditure on new projects and publish the findings.

Review staffing levels and salaries paid. Ie Yankallila Council : Total operating income \$15,124,000 / Staff wages \$5,114,000.