

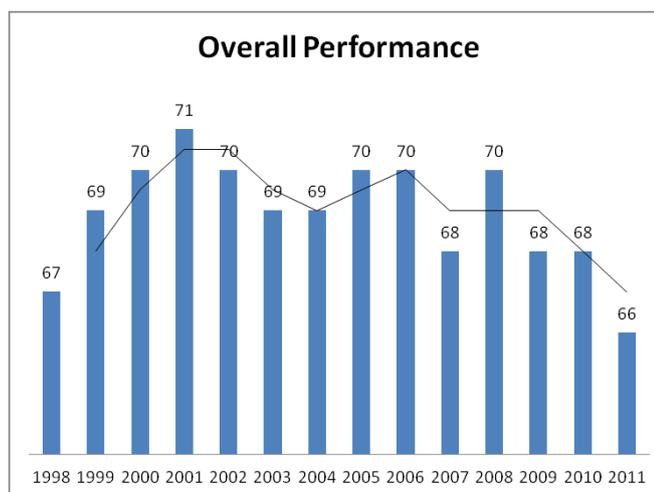
The Monash Budget Case Conclusion

Monash ratepayers are very disappointed with their Councillors who showed no empathy on pensioners and struggling ratepayers when they approved the strategic resource plan and annual budgets this week. They refused to consider the 5 submissions and agreed to take Council Officer's advice on the earlier proposed budget drafts. Council Officers advised Ratepayers Victoria that Councillors can change their mind and instruct them to amend the budgets and hence rate increases if they choose to do so.

Based on anecdotal sources, Councillors have already pre endorsed the draft budgets before community submissions and review. Tokenistic community inputs were sought primarily to show procedural compliance to Local Government Act requirements.

What this also means is that in 4 years time, future rates would have gone up by 30% compounded and provided actual spends then do not exceed planned forecasts. We hope the public realises the accumulative effects of annual 6% rate increases over the next 4 years and this is our Councillors' consensus decision impact on everyone.

In addition to this irresponsible rate increase decision, Monash performance (as recorded by DPCD) is not good news. Last year, overall performance has dropped below that of 1998! Hence ratepayers are paying escalating high rates for many years and with no performance improvements!



The ongoing practice of high cost and declining performance is a breach of the Local Government Act that says:

Each council is accountable to its local community. "The Local Government Act 1989 (the Act) reinforces this by establishing the primary objective of each council as endeavouring to achieve the best outcomes for its local community and having regard to the long-term and cumulative effects of decisions"¹.

The performance analysis findings raise questions about Council's capacity to demonstrate transparency and accountability to local ratepayers and residents that it has delivered value for money, achieve its objectives based on measurement

¹ <http://www.audit.vic.gov.au/publications/20120418-LG-Reporting/20120418-LG-Reporting.pdf>, page 1

evidence, ensure the community's equitable access to service and affordability, that the services delivered are appropriate, of good quality and cost effective.

Ratepayers are perceiving that Monash Councillors are very inexperienced and to use diplomatic language, naïve. Their decisions can expose Council to not comply with the Local Government Act. The greatest irony is that no one can hold Councillors or Council to account even when they breach the Local Government Act in regard to the requirement above.

After the budget approval, there is a change of mind - the Mayor is now publically saying state levies are causing the rate increases (given that the Federal Government has instructed people to start selling the benefits of carbon tax). Consideration for funding the Waverley Gym Centre's expansion is now open. Waverley Gym Centre is one of the 5 budget submitters and Councillors concluded to disregard the 5 submissions when they approved the proposed budgets this week.