



Porirua City Councillors need to exercise prudent financial control

There are no excuses for not addressing the issue of high rates.

- The Ratepayer's Union has published a summary of all local body rates based upon the expenditure to 30 June 2018. PCC is classified as one of 6 urban cities so I have done my cost comparisons against these cities.
- A simple analysis of the numbers shows that our rates on a population basis are 13.7% higher. This clearly makes a joke of the excuse that rates are high due to the high population.
- Our staff costs per ratepayer are 32.2% higher. Even on a population basis these costs are 10% higher and operating expenses per ratepayer are 15.3% higher.
- We have the highest population density and that means our water, sewage and roading costs should be lower on a population basis.

It is the job of our Councillors to see that costs are managed.

- The Porirua Adventure Park has had some negative publicity recently with good reason. I have reviewed the economic assessment that was used for the proposal and cannot understand why councillors supported this project as there was no independent assessment of the visitor numbers – merely numbers provided by those seeking the funding. A clear conflict of interest.
- I am astounded that the children's playground in Cobham Court was agreed to. Why waste money for a playland at this location? If we did need to further develop play options then surely Aotea Lagoon is the place for ongoing improvements.
- There has been no comment about PCC settling significant claims for delays or leaky building issues. If council has incurred liabilities then they need to front up and explain or state that no such claims exist.
- Why are councillors unwilling to debate such issues publicly, especially when they may look to stand for re- election.

We need councillors who will manage our rates to ensure poorer homeowners can still live in Porirua

- The high level of new home building should enable further development of existing parks and sporting facilities. If we have fewer of these but develop sports facilities for different codes to a national standard then we can staircase local youngsters into

these sports codes and bring opportunity to those not so well funded.

- We should not divide our communities into ethnic groups with separate facilities everywhere but bring us all together in central facilities where regardless of ethnicity, people can play sport together. A cultural centre should be assessable to all and allow each culture to showcase themselves to the rest of Porirua.
- We need to aim to do a limited number of activities to the highest standard. It is not more playgrounds or more community centres we need but sports and cultural facilities where all residents regardless of financial ability can share the challenges of healthy development for our youth.
- Our Long Term Plan does not clearly prioritise such issues. Rather it concentrates on rates increasing to further disadvantage us all but in particular those poorer residents.

Porirua is already a fantastic city but we need the highest quality of leadership and this is missing.

- In Porirua we have very good teachers and a great education system through to tertiary level. In particular I believe that our low decile schools bring excellent levels of education to our community. The New Zealand Initiative report on schools highlights the great work being done in education.
- We have very good voluntary organisations bringing focused support to our community. So many volunteers bring help to where it is needed and work alongside those that are struggling. We need to support and value their work at every opportunity.
- To get the best for Porirua we need much better, more focused and research based decision making from our councillors. In my view they are presiding over our largest employer – PCC, and not providing leadership and direction to ensure our services are competitive with similar city councils in New Zealand.

I have set up a web site www.iloveporirua.nz. I am happy to talk to residents' associations, church groups, marae, city councillors about improving our choices. You can email me on: chriskb@iloveporirua.nz

Chris Kirk-Burnand

