



Nice while it lasted: WCC lifts kindergarten fees after C19

## **Description**



### **Carol Altmann – The Terrier**

Reality bites: the Warrnambool City Council has written to families with kids in kindergarten to say the fees are going up for the next two terms.

Take that, families with young children, a nice big slice of cold fish across the chops! C19 be damned!

Letters were sent out to families last week saying the new fee would be \$340 per term, up \$8, “as reflected” in the 2020-21 budget.

That’s odd, because the WCC Budget for 2020-21 hasn’t been passed.

In fact a special council meeting will be held next Monday (June 15) so people who have taken the time and effort to write a submission can be heard.

Too bad if you planned to object to higher kinder fees – it’s a done deal!

And what a deal.

For the sake of raising, what, an extra \$10,000 or \$20,000 toward the bottom line of a \$73 million budget, they are kicking young families right in the crayons.

If the WCC can’t absorb that sort of cost as a goodwill gesture to young families as they emerge from C19, then its priorities really are broken.

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Perhaps the CEO could defer his automatic pay rise and any bonuses for 2020 indefinitely – I reckon that would cover the cost of the fingerpaints.

Or maybe we could cancel the delayed trip to Sweden to look at hydrogen fuel cell prototypes, which seems a little excessive when we are apparently struggling to fund morning fruit and milk.

**For those who listened to the outpouring of self-congratulatory twaddle from the Mayor and councillors during last week's meeting about the WCC's “wonderful” response to Covid-19, this fee rise is a slap back to earth.**

**Fee rises hurt. Rate rises hurt.**

**And they hurt some families even in the “good” times, let alone when the ass has just fallen out of the national economy.**

This kinder fee rise may also not be the last, but the first, for 2020-21, because hidden in the DRAFT budget is a line showing the fees for Term 1 and 2 next year.

It has three little letters: TBC.

To be confirmed.

We will watch with interest to see if any of the seven councillors stand up on 6 July, when the budget is due to be passed, and put a line right through any kindergarten fee increases for the next 12 months.

*That* – not self congratulation – is the kind of practical help our community needs right now.

### **Category**

1. Opinion

### **Tags**

1. C19
2. Covid-19
3. fees
4. fees and charges
5. increase
6. kinder
7. kindergarten fees
8. Warrnambool City Council

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