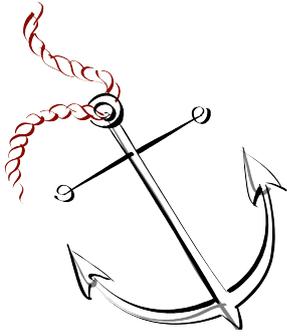


PORT GEOGRAPHE LANDOWNERS ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED



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Chief Executive Officer
City of Busselton
Locked Bag No 1
BUSSELTON 6280.

Reference letter dated 26 Jun2017 Cliff Frewing payment \$300.000 from the Waterways Reserve Fund

Dear Sir,

Your reply to our original letter of 26th March has not allayed our long-standing concerns over the abrogation of responsibilities that prevails within your administration when dealing with Port Geographe landowner's funds.

We have been briefed by Cr Gordon Bleechmore who informs us that the entire \$300,000 charged against the Waterways Reserve Account in 2016-17 was for dredging the entrance channel to Port Geographe.

Port Geographe is a designated port (see attached Department of Transport Navigation Map). The cost of maintaining the entrance channel and the navigation lights is a Department of Transport obligation.

Our original request did not ask for the actual cost per cubic meter in dollar terms, which we acknowledge will be commercial in confidence. We simply wanted to know where the \$300,000 was spent. Your administration declined to give this information. This is an insult to the more than 700 ratepayers on the SAR collection area. We again ask for the release of invoices to PGLOA so that the information can be given to all interested parties.

As for your statement that the invoices are carefully scrutinized, we doubt this as the City had no staff overseeing the dredging. Obviously the City has just accepted the invoices presented by the Department of Transport.

We also point out that the enlarged coastal management area set by the EPA, and which is subject to our SAR funding, was set before the entrance reconfiguration took place. There was no objection by the City to these extended boundaries, which now stretch from Morgan Street to Baudin car park. There was no consultation with Port Geographe land owners, who are now liable for extended coastal maintenance.

Please advise me where is the evidence that the reconfigured groynes will, or has, created a greater impact on coastal features.

If the City saw no objection to the boundary extensions set by the EPA, they should have extended the SAR paying area to include all lots between Morgan Street and Wonnerup Town site. The SAR boundary is now largely irrelevant and arbitrary.

We do not contest your statement that the previous Deed between the then-Shire and Government created a precarious financial obligation for the City. But we contest your solution to the problem.

In the new agreement, City has clearly taken steps to protect itself. But this now leaves the land owners of Port Geographe financially exposed, with only a “gentleman’s agreement” on the limit to be drawn each year from our funds.

Let me remind you again that land owners of Port Geographe are currently the only ratepayers in Western Australia contributing to the maintenance of a coastal public asset.

The matching 25% of the annual SAR rate, previously contributed by Council, needs to be reinstated to give some semblance of fairness. If the City abrogates any responsibility for waterways and foreshore maintenance, it should advise us so we can convey this information to interested parties.

There is now growing discontent especially with dry-lot owners with this unfair system. This situation will be compounded by the future addition of about 600 dry lots. The amount of SAR collection will substantially increase as titles are issued to the new dry lots.

We require an amendment or side agreement with the Department of Transport to establish a limit on the draw-down from the Waterways Reserve Fund. We propose this be limited to the annual amount collected by the SAR plus any interest received by the City.

Finally we register our disappointment that despite frequent requests, we are not informed of any medium or long-term policy on the ongoing operation of the Port Geographe Waterways Reserve Fund.

Regards

Kevin Strapp.
Chairman
Port Geographe Land Owners Association Inc
1 August 2017