

FOOLS

C/- Oberon Library
Corner Dart & Fleming St
Oberon NSW 2787



07/06/11

CC to all members of Library 355 Committee

Friends of Oberon Library Inc. request the Library 355 Committee pursue with Council, on our behalf, the following matters.

It has been noted that in the 2011/2012 Draft Budget it has been proposed that the Oberon Library, Book/DVD/Talking Book purchasing budget had been cut by a massive 50% that's \$10000 with only minimal increases proposed at least until 2015/2016. For a library the size of ours this will make a broad and drastic impact on the amount of new material that can be purchased over not only the 2011/12 budget period but during the next four years. As will the cuts in staff training, whereas we can see that such cuts have been made generally across the board, we would like to highlight the fact that in a regional library especially, training is of vital importance, not only as a networking tool but to keep up to date with current library trends that will keep our library vibrant.

The residents of Oberon have a right to an up to date collection of both reference and general reading and other visual material being available at their library and we feel it is incumbent upon Council to provide the funds and maintain the level of service to facilitate this.

Whereas we can understand the need for budgetary restraint at this time and that no increase in the library book budget is feasible, we cannot understand how such a huge cut as this can be justified? We do not feel that the proposed budget cuts have been made fairly across the board. As an example, it can be seen in the Draft Budget paper that council has continued to budget for donations to two stand alone interest groups within the community of \$14000 and \$6000 per annum respectively and has budgeted for the same or increasing amounts to be donated until 2015/16. While we appreciate the value of these and all groups to the fabric of the community and fully support their aims etc. surely the pain can be more evenly spread.

Friends would like to respectively request an explanation as to how the figure of a \$10000 cut from the 2011/12 library budget was arrived at or how it can be justified; we understand no consultation with the Library Manager was undertaken in respect of the amount to be cut!

At the last council meeting, during discussion in regard to this budget cut, the GM stated that she was sure there were ways to achieve the same amount of book purchases at much lower cost and that between herself and Corporate Services Director John Chapman, (I assume in consultation with the Library Manager) a plan to achieve this outcome would be implemented. A motion was put and passed that this plan be trialled and if the outcome not achieved the matter of the library budget cuts would be revisited at the next quarterly review (this wording may not reflect the motion wording exactly, but portrays the intention). Can council inform us how this plan will be put into action and how it is progressing?

Kathy Sajowitz - President Friends of Oberon Library Inc.