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From: Malcolm Graham [mailto:Kadeema@bigpond.com]

Sent: Thursday, 16 June 2011 12:03 PM

To: Oberon Council

Subject: Draft Budget - comments re library

Oberon Councillors

Attached for your consideration are some comments on the apparent cut in funds to maintain the current standard of operation of the library.

Yours faithfully,

Malcolm Graham

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Oberon Councillors

I am writing as a past member of the library Committee and a user of the library.

I am concerned to see that the budget allocation for regular material “culling/replacement” has been halved by Council. I trust the Council has taken advice on the impact of this measure on the usage of the library, and the resources available for current and potential users.

As you would be aware, the library is used by many sections of the community

- Pre school – basic literacy and exposure to books and reading
- School age – as a source of source of information relevant to their curriculum, and general knowledge; and for pleasure
- Adults – as an information source (relevant to work, or interests/hobbies) ; and recreation reading. It is also a great repository for locally written books, and local history sources.
- Elderly – As for adults, but also sometimes a social activity.

The library provides access to not only books, but also, for example, talking books -for travellers who live in Oberon, and visually impaired. Magazines, DVD’s etc are all a widely accepted part of the library resources of today’s world .

Over my period of involvement with the library, I have always found the staff to be helpful, welcoming and professional – an asset to the Council and the Community it serves.

I appreciate that these are challenging times for Oberon Council. I cannot be overly specific on comments on the entire budget because I found the draft budget papers somewhat difficult to follow with not a lot of explanation with the figures (eg I am not certain what the library “Building Capital Works” refers to (Community Centre?); mixtures of cash and in kind funds interspersed; etc.

However, I trust Councillors will seriously look at the options and ensure they fully understand the implications of decisions on the community’s use of the various services, such as the library, before accepting these apparently significant changes in funding.