

ELISE GORE REPRESENTING KARRATHA COMMUNITY HOUSE (KCH), DEPUTATION IN RELATION TO AGENDA ITEM 17.1 COMMUNITY LEASING OF LAND POLICY – KARRATHA COMMUNITY HOUSE.

Good evening. I'm Elise Gore, and I've had the privilege of being the chairperson of Karratha Community House for the last 4 years.

Tonight, after 2 and a half years of mismanagement, you have the power to correct these wrongs, and let us move forward with certainty and a fair, sustainable outcome.

It's a decision that has a minor impact on the City's budget – \$3,000, less than 0.003% of last year's revenue – but for us, it'll put us in the red this year.

Until now, you've given *some* data (out of context), which has disempowered you from making informed, FAIR decisions.

Firstly, at the three Council meetings I've attended, I've heard Councillors be reminded that you are "using rate-payers money" only with reference to KCH, and yet that has been said every time KCH has been discussed.

In January, you were given incorrect data about hire fees earned from Wanslea. You were also told – without context – that Pam Buchanan made a sizeable loss last year. KCH holds one of six tenancies at Pam; 3 of which have been vacant for 2 or more years. You want to know why the facility's losing money? We need to look more broadly, not simply to KCH. We've spent \$265,000 in lease fees, rates, utilities, cleaning, gardening and maintenance, and over \$110,000 in capital upgrades to fixed assets, since we moved into Pam.

Secondly, we believe it has been misrepresented that \$3000 is what KCH wants to offer. We have *always* asserted that peppercorn is our preference and the most sustainable outcome. KCH has been on a peppercorn lease at the Pam Buchanan Family Centre since 2012: a facility that was funded by Royalties for Regions to be a community space, not a commercial space. Our volunteer board at the time invested hundreds of hours of FREE consulting on the design and build. We are simply asking for continuation of this long-standing peppercorn.

Not a significant change. Not a major policy decision. Just to uphold the status quo.

So where did the \$3000 come from?

Our original tender offer in November last year was for \$585. Not because that's what we wanted or could afford – but because we were encouraged by the City to offer as much as we could, in light of competing bids.

That \$3000 is the culmination of several rounds of counteroffers after we were advised we were the successful tender applicant, as we were pushed by the City to offer up every last cent we could afford within our very tight budget.

Over the last 5 years, we have made a cumulative net profit of only \$1,814. We're not here to make money. We're here to deliver our services as cheaply as possible so they're accessible to those who need them most.

To be clear: peppercorn is essential to ensure our sustainable provision of critical family services.

Let's also explore the socio-economic value that KCH returns to the City. Again – context that was absent from previous deliberations.

To do that, I'd like you to imagine, just for a moment, that KCH didn't exist. 25 years of impact just disappeared.

1,062 of our children would have started kindy, without having the amazing head-start of our Ready, Set, School program. Ask any kindy teacher the impact that makes.

This year alone, working primary caregivers would have 6,120 less opportunities to work a shift, without our drop-and-go programs.

18 employees – mainly working mums – would be without an irreplaceable job, because we enable staff to bring their children to work with them for free.

And, the social network that sustains over 2000 parents and children per year, living in isolation from their families, would disappear.

The value that KCH contributes through liveability, wellbeing, education and employment cannot be quantified in dollars. But if it could, it would be orders of magnitude greater than \$3000.

Finally, we understand you want fairness amongst community groups... as do we! There are numerous organisations that are on a peppercorn lease right now. Furthermore, the draft Policy that will come before you in October will put KCH in a category that's eligible for a peppercorn, anyway. But *please*, don't make us wait months more for that inevitable outcome.

We urge you to take this opportunity *now* to re-set the bar for how you treat community groups; for the value you place on child development. **You determine where that bar gets set, tonight.**

Please, stop squeezing us for every last dollar, stop this insane waste of our resources spinning the wheels on this decision. **Grant us a long term, peppercorn lease** and let us finally be able to budget, plan, and get back to our mission of connecting families, through play-based learning.