

Kiama Greens

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Selling the Family Silver of Kiama LGA

Greens Kiama Council candidate Andrew Sloan has urged residents to take a close look at the comments made by opposing candidates who seem determined to sell off many of the community's income producing assets.

The Kiama Independent last week published interviews that show some of the Independent Group candidates will pursue a path of privatisation of Council assets including the Leisure Centre, Blue Haven Retirement Village, the holiday parks and community transport services.

"I find the comments made last week by some of the Independent Group candidates astonishing." Mr Sloan said. "These community owned assets provide valuable services and a good income for our community, and I am sure the vast majority of Kiama residents don't want them to be sold off." "It has taken our Council decades to build them, and to now sell out to private interests where profit inevitably overrides service to the community would be catastrophic" Mr Sloan said.

"The idea of privatising community transport coming from a group endorsed by the Liberal member for Kiama and which includes people who are in competition with the community transport service is particularly worrying and is a potential conflict of interest. Such ideas won't go down well in our ageing community which relies so much on these services, nor will it go down well with residents who are justifiably proud of their Council's untainted record of governance".

"I believe that the problem for Kiama voters who want to see these facilities and services remain in community ownership will be the severely limited choice among the candidate groupings that have nominated for Council so far.

Two of the five groups have the endorsement of the Liberal member for Kiama. A third group is led by a councillor with Labor connections who has indicated an interest in privatising the Leisure Centre. What is more confusing for voters is that all these groups are presenting as 'Independents', he said.

Mr Sloan expressed concern that Council may face a dramatic change in direction after the upcoming election. He said: "While the Kiama Greens have strong support in the community they have never had more than two councillors in any council term, and with Sandra McCarthy's team not running, everything that Council has stood for over the past 20 years is potentially at risk. The Kiama Greens don't want to see major urban expansion into our farmlands and we don't want to see Blue Haven and our other assets sold off.

I am concerned that based upon the comments from other Group candidates so far, voters may have a very limited choice if they wish to maintain the unique direction this Council has taken over the past 20 years, something that has helped make our area such a special place to live and to visit."

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