

# Kevin Brooks to run for Council

**Kevin Brooks has announced he will stand as a candidate for the September 14 Central Coast Council election.**

Brooks made the announcement at the public forum prior to the June 25 Council meeting.

The forum was familiar territory for Brooks, who has made about 20 speeches in the past three years opposing excessive rate hikes and representing community concerns.

He announced his intention to run at the end of a speech responding to Council's Operational Plan incorporating a 4.8 per cent increase in general rates and an 11.9 per cent increase in water rates from July 1.



Kevin Brooks

Brooks is a former elected Council Leader from the UK credited with turning around a struggling council's financial position and performance.

He is currently a retiree, having held senior positions in the public and private sectors including global banks.

In his public forum address, Brooks said ratepayers are not getting value for money from recent rate hikes.

"Three years ago, Council told the community it must choose between higher rates or worse services," he said.

"We have ended up with both.

"Despite increasing revenue from rates by 39 per cent in just four years, priority services continue to decline.

"The average time for determining development applications has more than doubled.

"Seventeen per cent of our roads get the lowest possible one-star AusRAP rating.

"Over 30 per cent of customers surveyed did not

think Council's response was 'empathetic'; a terrible indictment on customer culture."

Brooks highlighted problems within the Council that he said needed to be addressed.

"Ratepayers are paying more for less because Council has still not addressed underlying problems within the organisation, in management, efficiency, productivity, prioritisation and above all culture," he said.

"Instead, during four years of taxation without representation, an unaccountable bureaucracy has put its own interests above those of the community.

"For too long we, the humble and blameless residents of the Central Coast, have been

paying the price for poor leadership, mismanagement and dysfunction in Central Coast, Gosford and Wyong Councils."

Brooks said it is up to the community "to be the change we want to see" and urged residents to join his campaign.

"A fresh approach is needed," he said.

"But if we want change, it is up to all of us in the community to be the change we want to see.

"I hope that by working hard and using my skills and experience (I can) make a difference for the community."

You can join his campaign by contacting him at [ratepayerschoice@gmail.com](mailto:ratepayerschoice@gmail.com)

## Second candidate announced for Council election

**Stephen Sizer has announced he will stand as a candidate in the September 14 Council election, joining Kevin Brooks on the Ratepayers' Choice ticket.**

Sizer currently works as a senior manager for the NSW Government at Transport for NSW.

He has worked in both public and private sectors including large organisations such as Rolls-Royce and Unilever.

Sizer has experience managing multi-million dollar



Stephen Sizer

budgets and delivering efficiencies and has worked on multi-billion-dollar infrastructure projects.

He has a master's degree in engineering management and a first-class bachelor's degree in engineering, design and innovation.

He has lived on the Central Coast for 14 years with his wife and two children.

"I'm pleased to join Kevin Brooks to offer ratepayers a real choice in this election," Sizer said.

"Kevin has been a consistent voice advocating for reforms within Council to deliver better value for money services for ratepayers.

"I have also been frustrated with the lack of transparency and that the community has been denied a voice.

"I am prepared to ask difficult questions on behalf of the community.

"I do not agree with Council CEO David Farmer that the temporary special variation rate increase should be extended as it was only intended for short term purposes such as repayment of the emergency loans."

Sizer said he was passionate about driving efficiency and value for money, but was also

aware that Council exists primarily to provide services to the community to improve quality of life.

"The recent issue of not putting shade cover over child play areas, and Council's response when this was raised by the community, is an example of how Council has lost touch with the community," he said.

"Being an engineer, I have experience identifying flaws and anomalies in systems and I think this will help me in reviewing Council processes including accounts

and financial plans.

"Above all, I am aware councillors are community representatives and we need to ensure we get the best outcomes and value for money because at the end of the day it is community money that is being spent."

Brooks said Sizer was a first-class candidate and would make an excellent councillor.

"Stephen's qualifications and experience in management, engineering, infrastructure and budget management will be a real asset in the Council chamber," he said.