

Ticket to ride gravy train

Councils snub Minns plea to scrap controversial (and lucrative) parking fine system

EXCLUSIVE
David Barwell

Councils are defying calls by the state government to revert to issuing old-school parking tickets, preferring instead to pocket millions from the controversial ticketless system.

Liverpool, North Sydney and Lane Cove are among those refusing to follow an edict by Finance Minister Courtney Houssos to revert to providing written notifications for parking fine offences.

More than 50 local councils are using the ticketless scheme

that involves parking fines sent via mail rather than a physical ticket left on a vehicle.

The ticketless system has faced community backlash due to concerns it can take weeks for fines to be received via mail, therefore reducing the ability for motorists to gather evidence to contest a fine.

Ms Houssos said the ticketless system has “eroded trust” in how parking fines are issued and called for councils to address the shortcomings by providing physical notifications.

Ms Houssos said community feedback has

been “overwhelmingly in favour of councils providing drivers with on-the-spot notification of parking fines”.

“People just want transparency and I don’t think it’s reasonable for councils to stand in the way of common-sense solutions,” she said.

But Liverpool council claims reverting to hard copy fines would add “significant risk” to the safety of its rangers.

A council spokeswoman said parking rangers are even having to “work in pairs throughout the Liverpool CBD” in

response to “ongoing threat of abuse” from drivers issued with paper fines.

North Sydney also has “no intention” to move back to the paper ticketing system.

The City of Sydney – which issues the most parking fines of any council in NSW – has yet to commit to reverting back to paper tickets and is currently “reviewing” the request.

Northern Beaches Council – which has faced significant community opposition over the ticketless system – is assessing “the feasibility and legal implica-

tions” to revert to paper fines.

Georges River councillors will also consider a motion by local councillor Ash Ambihai-pahar next week for the council to revert to issuing written parking fine notifications.

State government figures show parking fines made up a staggering 45 per cent of all penalty notices issued in NSW in 2023.

Asked whether the government would force councils to revert to paper tickets, Ms Houssos said: “It’s only proper that we give councils the opportunity to fix this

for their residents before considering legislation to address the shortcomings of the system”.

North Sydney resident David Davie – who chairs a local community group – labelled the ticketless scheme an exercise in “revenue raising”.

Motorist group NRMA has also opposed the “unfair” ticketless parking system.

TAKING A DUMP
A RUBBISH CRISIS
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The Kearney sisters Taylor, 12, Maddison, 11, and Miranda, 11, will all be competing at the rodeo tomorrow. Picture: Max Mason-Hubers

Get into some bucking good entertainment

Mitch Fink

Some of the best cowboys and cowgirls in southern NSW will be in action tomorrow in bull riding, barrel racing, bronc riding and more.

It is the Australian Bushmen’s Campdraft and Rodeo Association Southern Zone final and it will be

hosted by K Ranch Arena at Mount Hunter, southwest of Sydney.

“It’s a great action-packed family fun day,” said K Ranch owner Mick Kearney. “There will be stuff for all the family to do.”

The event holds some extra significance for Kearney, who will watch his three daughters take part

in the competition. His oldest, Taylor, will compete in the U14 barrel racing, and his twin daughters, Madison and Miranda, will be featured in the U11 barrel racing.

The rodeo will be an all-day affair, kicking off at 9am and lasting until 10pm, with the adult events starting about 4pm.

Why dad drowned baby

A coroner has recommended improved co-operation and communication between police and child protective services after a nine-month-old baby was drowned by her psychotic father, who thought she was “evil”.

On Thursday, Deputy State Coroner Harriet Grahame concluded that she was unable to determine whether the infant had drowned or been smothered before she

was thrown in the river.

A key focus of the inquest was to learn why the safety net of police, child safety agencies, and homeless agencies had failed in their duty to care for the nine-month-old girl and her sibling.

The homeless family had interacted with police and child protective services in NSW and Queensland on multiple occasions in the months before her death.



Natalie Barr at the service.

Sunrise presenter ‘farewelled’

Luke Griffiths

Former Sunrise presenter Nathan Templeton was yesterday farewelled at a moving celebration, as TV stars from across the country said their final goodbyes to the man who “always wanted to give back”.

The father-of-two was found dead on a walking track near a park on the Barwon River in Victoria on April 10, after suffering a medical epi-

sode. At the service at GMHBA Stadium’s President’s Room, Templeton’s wife, Kate Coghlan, said he had a strong sense of community and always wanted to give back.

“Nath saw the Salvos as a gold standard of serving the community,” she said.

“So volunteering quietly for the Geelong Salvos’ outreach van was a modest way he felt he could help folks in the com-

munity doing it really tough, through no fault of their own.”

Among the hundreds of people in attendance were several former colleagues, including Sunrise co-host Natalie Barr and Channel 7 news presenter and Geelong Cats AFL team number one ticket holder Rebecca Maddern.

Salvos volunteer Bradley Ogle said Templeton was a much-loved member of the outreach van family.