ND 2821 K-P 31

Blackburn Ratepayers' and Citizens' Severance Committee

RATEPAYERS OF THE BLACKBURN RIDING—

This Committee now working for the establishment of the

BOROUGH OF BLACKBURN

Urges every Ratepayer to Vote Yes on the 27th August, 1938

and presents the following reasons for a YES Vote—

1. Unequal representation—Blackburn raises 45 per cent. of the revenue and has only 33 per cent. representation.
2. Blackburn is paying Redemption and Interest on Loans for which it has received no benefit.
3. Riding Accounts showed that Blackburn always had a surplus while Mitcham and Tunstall had deficits.
4. The Council will not now restore Riding Accounts to let the people see where the money is being spent.
5. Blackburn will be better off as a separate Borough without any increase in rates.

VOTE YES TO GIVE BLACKBURN FREEDOM AND SELF GOVERNMENT

COMMITTEE.

Cr. F. E. PAICE, Chairman; Cr. W. B[illegible]EPPNER, Mrs. H. W. MULL, Messrs. GEO. BENSTEAD, A. N. BURNS, D. H. CRAIG, A. G. FURNESS, V. T. GLADSTONES, T. B. GOODALL, H. JACKMAN, A. A. JAMIESON, G. C. KARNAGHAN, H. E. P. MOORE, CHAS. WEIR, J.P., H. L. YUNCKEN Miss G. M. JONES, Hon. Sec.

A PUBLIC MEETING of the Ratepayers and Residents of the Blackburn Riding will be held in the Blackburn Hall, on Tuesday, 23rd August, at 8 p.m., to thoroughly discuss all aspects of the question.

A Referendum will be held on Saturday, August 27th, 1938, at which the Ratepayers of the Blackburn Riding of the Shire of Blackburn and Mitcham will be asked to vote on the question whether or not Blackburn shall become a separate Municipality, to be called the Borough of Blackburn.

The Committee which is working to bring about a separate Municipality submits the following statement showing the unfavorable treatment which has been received by Blackburn since the inception of the Shire in 1925 and urges you to VOTE YES at the polling on the 27th AUGUST, 1938, in order to put an end to this intolerable position.

1. The present Shire of Blackburn and Mitcham comprises the three Ridings of Blackburn, Tunstall and Mitcham. Blackburn raises approximately 45 per cent. of the revenue, Tunstall 18 per cent. and Mitcham 37 per cent. Each Riding elects three Councillors, so that, although Blackburn provides 45 per cent. of the revenue, it has only one-third of the voting power.

2. During the three years ended 30/9/37, the overdraft of the Shire has increased from £1,011/7/9 at 30/9/34 to £7,788/14/4 at 30/9/37, while the Municipal Fund has declined from a credit of £2,804/4/5 at 30th September, 1934, to a debit of £5,014/13/5 at 30th September, 1937.

3. The Severance Committee has carefully examined the position and is satisfied that Blackburn as a separate Municipality could avoid this financial drift and carry on satisfactorily on the present rates.

4. Up to 30th September, 1933, the accounts of the Shire showed separately the revenue and expenditure in each Riding. These showed that Blackburn consistently had a credit, whereas the other Ridings showed debit balances.

5. The following figures are taken from the published accounts of the Shire for the three years ended 30th September, 1933:—

	Ridings								
Year ended	Blackburn			Tunstall			Mitcham		
30th September, 1931	Cr. £1,061	1	6	Dr. £70	19	7	Cr. £417	10	0
30th September, 1932	Cr. 201	6	8	Dr. 797	13	5	Dr. 1,061	8	0
30th September, 1933	Cr. 1,251	19	0	Cr. 79	15	5	Dr. 359	3	0
Total for 3 years	Cr. £2,514	7	2	Dr. £788	17	7	Dr. £1,003	1	0

Since the inception of the Shire the balances on the accounts of each Riding at 30th September, 1933, when separate Riding accounts were abolished, were—

Blackburn	Credit	£3,046 19 1
Tunstall	Debit	£4,007 18 8
Mitcham	Debit	£1,080 17 0

6. In these Riding accounts, Blackburn shows these credits after having been charged with 45 per cent. of the Administrative costs. The total Administrative Expenditure of the Shire, for the year ended 30th September, 1937, as shown by the Annual Accounts, was £3,906, of which Blackburn's 45% share would be £1,756. The Committee has made very careful estimates and is satisfied that the Administrative expenses of Blackburn as a Borough would be approximately £1,800. This slight increase in amount for administration will be offset to our advantage when we consider the fact that £500 per year is saved on Interest and Redemption of Loans. Last year the Administrative expenses of Ringwood, which has approximately the same revenue as the Borough of Blackburn would have, amounted to £1,903.

7. At its inception the Shire took over Loans from the Shire of Nunawading to the extent of £14,023/9/5, which had been spent approximately 37 per cent. in Blackburn, 33 per cent. in Tunstall and 30 per cent. in Mitcham.

8. The Shire has raised further loans totalling £32,500 since its inception, which have been spent as under:—

No. 1.	£2,500	Purchase of Park at Tunstall.
No. 2.	10,000	Purchase of Plant, Depot, Offices, etc.
No. 3.	4,500	Erection of Municipal Offices.
No. 4.	15,500	Works, etc., in Blackburn, £1,188; Tunstall, £2,771; Mitcham, £11,541; Total, £15,500.
	£32,500	

9. When Riding accounts were kept, the Interest and Redemption charges on the Severance Loans taken over from Nunawading and the No. 4 Loan were

charged against each Riding in the proportion of the money spent in each Riding. The Interest and Redemption on the No. 1 Loan was debited equally to each Riding, while the charges on No. 2 and 3 Loans were debited to each Riding on a valuation basis.

10. Since the abolition of Riding accounts, Interest and Redemption become general charges in the accounts of which Blackburn bears 45 per cent.

11. In 1933, the last year of Riding accounts, the total charge for Interest and Redemption of Loans was £3,823/13/10. The following is a comparison of the correct charges on the basis of money spent in each Riding and the charge under the present basis of accounting:—

	Under Riding Accounts as charged in 1933	Under Present Basis
Blackburn	£1,210 15 4	£1,720 13 0
Tunstall	822 1 0	688 5 0
Mitcham	1,790 17 6	1,414 15 10
	£3,823 13 10	£3,823 13 10

12. It will be seen, therefore, that at the present time Blackburn is paying more than £500 in each year for Interest and Redemption charges on money of which Tunstall and Mitcham have had the benefit and for which they themselves should pay. As the result of abolition of Riding accounts, which was carried on the motion of Cr. Claringbould, of Tunstall, this position is not readily apparent from the accounts. During the last two years, the Blackburn representatives have twice sought to have Riding accounts restored, so that everyone could see exactly what expenditure was taking place in each Riding, but the Blackburn Councillors were outvoted on each occasion.

13. In the event of Severance, Blackburn would be freed of this additional expense of £500 per annum. Blackburn would also get some relief in respect of the debt charges on the No. 1, 2 and 3 Loans, but as this cannot be accurately calculated at present the Severance Committee has not taken this saving into account in its estimate that Blackburn could carry on satisfactorily as a separate Borough.

14. It has been stated that the fact that Tunstall and Mitcham have received too great a proportion of the Loan expenditure has been off set by expenditure on private streets which has been heavier in Blackburn than in the other two Ridings, but this has no bearing on the position. The interest and redemption on money spent on private streets do not become charges on the Shire, but are paid for by the people who receive the benefit as opposed to the Shire loans where Tunstall and Mitcham receive the benefit and Blackburn pays.

15. The Blackburn Riding is within the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works metropolitan area and as a separate Borough it would, therefore, automatically be eligible for the Board Rate of 7d. in the £ instead of the present Shire Rate of 10d. in the £. The Shire of Blackburn and Mitcham cannot come under the Metropolitan rate without an alteration of the present Act by Parliament.

16. In 1933, the Blackburn Riding had the opportunity of obtaining a 6d. Water Rate instead of the 1/3d. rate then being paid. In order to assist the Shire as a whole, however, the Blackburn Riding agreed to continue on the same basis as Mitcham and Tunstall, and as a result of their action in this connection, the rate was reduced to 9d. throughout the whole Shire. Thus Blackburn has given a very substantial help to Mitcham and Tunstall during the past five years in the matter of charges for water.

17. The Council has recently purchased extensive reserves in the Mitcham Riding and has future commitments of over £2,000 in this respect. This amount will be met out of revenue, of which Blackburn will provide 45 per cent.

The areas of Parks in the Municipality are approximately: Mitcham, 34 acres; Tunstall, 15 acres; Blackburn, 15 acres. Blackburn Councillors have been unable to persuade the Council to purchase reserves in the Blackburn Riding.

BLACKBURN AS A BOROUGH

18. If Blackburn were a Borough it would have the **second highest valuation** of any Borough in Victoria, being headed only by Shepparton. The Borough of Ringwood has a lower valuation than Blackburn and carries on with a lower rate. Freed from providing money for the benefit of Tunstall and Mitcham, Blackburn as a Borough could establish itself satisfactorily and give better service on the rate we now pay.

19. **Do not be misled by biassed statements that Blackburn could not carry on as a Borough. This Committee has gone exhaustively into the whole position. All the figures and estimates have been very carefully checked and the Committee is convinced that Blackburn can carry on successfully as a Borough without any increase in rates.**

20. WE URGE EVERY CITIZEN WHO HAS THE INTERESTS OF BLACKBURN AT HEART to VOTE YES on 27th August. It is most important that an overwhelming Yes vote should be polled in order to convince the Minister for Public Works that the people of Blackburn are strongly in favor of Blackburn being a separate Municipality, controlling its own finance and affairs, so that it can develop this beautiful district into a thriving and prosperous community.

By Order of the Committee,

F. E. PAICE, Chairman.
GWEN M. JONES, Hon. Secretary.

POLLING FROM 8 a.m. to 7 p.m., SATURDAY, AUGUST 27th, 1938

Polling Booths: Blackburn Hall and Salvation Army Hall, Middleborough Road

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If you want—1. Severance 2. Separate Riding Accounts.
3. Greater Representation. 4. Lower Water Rate.
5. Loan Relief.

VOTE THUS:

ARE YOU IN FAVOUR OF THE PROPOSAL?

YES

~~**NO**~~

Should you reside five miles or more from, or if you will not be within five miles of the nearest Polling Booth on Election Day, 27th August you should use a Postal Ballot Application Form, so that you may exercise your franchise.

If you have any difficulty in getting to the Polling Booth on the 27th inst., and desire to vote in favour of Severance, ring the Organising Secretary, Alex. A. Jamieson, Parkside Street, Blackburn, WX 2007, on or before August 26th, when we shall arrange on Polling Day for one of the cars kindly supplied by our supporters, to bring you along and take you home again.

T. J. HIGHAM Pty. Ltd., Printers, 14 Blackburn Road, Blackburn.—WX 1287