

INDEPENDENT COMMISSION AGAINST CORRUPTION

RECORD OF INTERVIEW BETWEEN INVESTIGATOR ANDREW BROWNING AND  
KHODR (KARL) SALEH AT SYDNEY ON 4 MAY 2017

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**TIME:** 14:04  
**PRESENT:** ANDREW BROWNING  
LISA STOCKLEY  
KHODA (KARL) SALEH

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BROWNING: It's Thursday the 4<sup>th</sup> of May 2017. The time is 2:04pm. We're currently in the office of the Independent Commission Against Corruption, Level 7, 255 Elizabeth Street, Sydney. This is an interview with former Canterbury City Councillor Karl Saleh, with the last name spelt (spells) S-A-L-E-H and Karl's with a K. Present is Mr Saleh, Investigator Lisa Stockley and myself, Andrew Browning.

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Just for the purposes of the recorder, Karl can you just say your name and spell, spell it please?

20

SALEH: Yeah, my name is Karl Saleh and (spells) K-A-R-L, Saleh (spells) S-A-L-E-H, and I've got another name, it's Khodr (spells) K-H-O-D-R, but they call me Karl.

BROWNING: (Spells) K-H?

SALEH: (Spells) O-D-R.

BROWNING: Okay. Is that the name that's on your licence?

25

SALEH: Yeah.

BROWNING: Thanks, okay.

SALEH: Yeah.

BROWNING: Lisa can you just for the recording can you say your name please?

STOCKLEY: Yeah, Lisa Stockley (spells) S-T-O-C-K-L-E-Y.

30

BROWNING: Okay before we commenced recording I asked you if you were prepared to have your voice recorded and the interview recorded.

SALEH: I have –

BROWNING: Is that correct?

SALEH: - I have no issue.

BROWNING: Okay.

SALEH: No.

5 BROWNING: Now you understand that you're here on a voluntary basis and you're free to leave at any time?

SALEH: Yeah I understand that.

BROWNING: Okay and you don't have to answer any questions unless you want to.

SALEH: Yes.

10 BROWNING: Okay.

SALEH: No worries.

15 BROWNING: However I have to let you know, and we tell everyone this, so please don't think that I'm going – that I think you were going to lie to me, but it's just something I say to everyone – pursuant to the Independent Commission Against Corruption Act it is a criminal offence to deliberately provide false or misleading information to an officer of the Com, officer of the Commission exercising their functions under the Act, as Lisa and I are. Any information you provide in this interview needs to be true and correct to the best of your knowledge and belief, do you understand that?

20 SALEH: I understand it totally.

BROWNING: Okay, now as I explained to you prior to recording, there's three allegations we're looking at. [REDACTED]

30 The second allegation is between November 2014 and January 2015 Michael Hawatt and Pierre Azzi engaged in conduct that adversely affected or could have adversely affected, either directly or indirectly, the honest or impartial exercise of official functions by Jim Montague, the former General Manager of Canterbury City Council, by expressly or

impliedly threatening to cause the termination of Mr Montague's employment. Their intention was to influence the exercise of Mr Montague's public duty in relation to the appointment of Spiro Stavis as Director of City Planning.

- 5 And the third allegation is linked to the first one, and that is that on the same dates between September 2014 and January 2015, Mr Jim Montague partially exercised his public official functions as General Manager of the former Canterbury City Council by appointing Spiro Stavis as Director of City Planning.
- 10 SALEH: I don't understand what's the, the first, first paragraph, officially exercised –
- BROWNING: It's just a legal - basically what we're saying –
- SALEH: Yeah.
- BROWNING: - is that they didn't act impartially.
- 15 SALEH: Alright, yeah.
- BROWNING: Okay and they favoured the appointment of Spiro Stavis –
- SALEH: Alright.
- BROWNING: - being employed.
- SALEH: Uh-hmm.
- 20 STOCKLEY: The official functions is that what you mean, the bit that you –
- SALEH: Yeah.
- STOCKLEY: So you as a Councillor have official functions –
- SALEH: Alright.
- STOCKLEY: - in, in your official role. So Jim Montague, part of his official function was to appoint Spiro, to appoint a Director of Planning, that's part of his official role. So what the allegation is, is that the conduct of Michael Hawatt and Pierre Azz, Azzi influenced Jim's official functions in his role as General Manager appointing the Director of Planning.
- 25 SALEH: Fine.

- STOCKLEY: Yeah.
- BROWNING: Karl, what qualifications do you have?
- SALEH: Well I've got a Diploma of Interpreting and NAATI, I'm a NAATI accredited. I've got a, I've studied one year in Sydney – that is a long  
5 time –
- BROWNING: Yes.
- SALEH: - but that's a qualification I've got at the moment.
- BROWNING: Okay, yep.
- SALEH: Yeah.
- 10 BROWNING: Okay.
- SALEH: From, from Australia here. I do lots of courses (laughs).
- BROWNING: Yes.
- SALEH: I don't have to you know –
- BROWNING: Yeah.
- 15 SALEH: - like yeah.
- BROWNING: And when did you arrive in Australia?
- SALEH: I arrive Australia in '85 actually and I granted a permanent resident in '86 and yeah.
- BROWNING: And which country did you come from?
- 20 SALEH: Lebanon.
- BROWNING: Now you were a Canterbury City Councillor.
- SALEH: That's right.
- BROWNING: And how long were you a Councillor for?
- SALEH: I ran for 2004 election and two-thousand (laughs) no luck. I, I'm not good  
25 for the date actually.
- BROWNING: So you were –

- SALEH: Like I ran for two three term –
- BROWNING: Okay so you're –
- SALEH: - but since 2004.
- BROWNING: So you were a Councillor from 2004 unt –
- 5 SALEH: And 2008 and the last one 2011 or '12.
- BROWNING: Were you a Councillor between –
- SALEH: 2004.
- BROWNING: Yeah okay so up until the Council was amalgamated.
- SALEH: That's right.
- 10 BROWNING: So continuously from 2004 up until amalgamation -
- SALEH: That's right, yep.
- BROWNING: - which I think was the 12 of –
- STOCKLEY: 12<sup>th</sup> of May.
- BROWNING: - May last year –
- 15 SALEH: Yeah, yeah –
- BROWNING: - 2016.
- SALEH: - that's right, May yeah.
- BROWNING: And what positions in Council did you hold?
- SALEH: Well I hold several position. I hold Deputy Mayor for you know like  
20 about three or four term and I'm actually the chairperson of  
(unintelligible) committee and I'm actually vice or per – vice chair for  
traffic committee and for safety committee. But mainly I'm the  
chairperson of the multi-culture committee, since actually – this is my  
favourite part actually of Council.
- 25 BROWNING: Yes multi-cultural.
- SALEH: Multi-culture yeah, 'cause I call myself multi-culture advocate (laughs), I  
have to.

- BROWNING: Yes.
- SALEH: Yeah.
- BROWNING: Now apart from being a Councillor –
- SALEH: Yeah.
- 5 BROWNING: - what, what jobs or career did you have or do you have?
- SALEH: Well, well I had you know like as all migrant actually, we start from scratch and my wife and I and, and something I now work different, different job. Currently actually I work as a journalist and media advisor.
- BROWNING: And who's that for?
- 10 SALEH: For Saudi Press Agency.
- BROWNING: Saudi.
- SALEH: Press Agency yeah. And different agency in Lebanon and, and in Middle East.
- BROWNING: Okay and how long have you been there for?
- 15 SALEH: Well long time actually. I'm not sure you know like how many, how many years but I actually as a, as a you know like when I came to Australia I just try to, oh as a NAATI accredited actually, I use my NAATI in different way.
- BROWNING: Yep.
- 20 SALEH: And actually in journalist –
- BROWNING: Yeah.
- SALEH: - a point, point of view. And since you know like yeah for 20 years I've been freelance and correspond and, and a few thing.
- BROWNING: So what, would you call yourself a journalist?
- 25 SALEH: Yeah.
- BROWNING: Is that what your occupation –
- SALEH: Freelance, freelance.

- BROWNING: But you'd say –
- SALEH: Yeah, freelance -
- BROWNING: - your occupation was journalist?
- SALEH: - journalist and interpreter.
- 5 BROWNING: Okay.
- SALEH: An interpreter. Interpreter and, and freelance journalist. And yeah, and I work as a community, community worker.
- BROWNING: Yep.
- 10 SALEH: And a, in (unintelligible) Community Centre you know, on a project actually for multi-culture project for about six, seven years.
- BROWNING: Yep.
- SALEH: All, all come together actually you know, like interpreter, journalist, community worker. That is my, my field of work.
- 15 BROWNING: Yep. Okay great. Okay, as a Councillor can you tell me what your role was, so your day-to-day role as a Councillor?
- SALEH: Well as a Councillor actually, I just day-by-day, I'm not, I'm not full-time actually –
- BROWNING: Yes.
- 20 SALEH: - as, as you know. I do my work and I got phone call from resident and I try to you know like address the issue and also I got the business paper and I got the meeting and I try to understand it and I vote you know like in, in Council on merit.
- BROWNING: Okay. And Ward did you represent?
- SALEH: West Ward.
- 25 BROWNING: West Ward.
- SALEH: Yeah where I live. I live from '88 actually, since I came from Australia, to Australia, me and my wife and I still, I still there.
- BROWNING: Must like it.

SALEH: Yeah.

BROWNING: As a Councillor, what were your role or duties when it came to development applications?

5 SALEH: Well to be honest for, for myself I didn't see myself in, in this field. I see myself as a community person, community worker and sometime you know, like they actually call me anti-developer or something but, but I'm not actually. I try to spend my time, more time about a project benefit the community, not benefit the personal interest. That's what's it. When I got actually application, any application, especially if we got something, I first, first things I, I seek if I didn't understand it, I seek advice from the planning department and, if I'm satisfied, I vote for it accordingly. Mainly, mainly you know like I have to you know, like mainly we – well I'm not an expert for planning. I'm just you know like, it's not a lie, I seek advice from the planning. If the report been actually adopt I would endorse by planning department, our planning department or IHAP, and I think I, I go for it, I go for it.

10 I welcome actually the idea to get IHAP in Council when they first started, first initiated by Robert Furolo, the former Mayor. I welcome this because I see, I see this as a process fair and is not – is, is, it's, it's something like we need it, we need it because Councillor is not, we're not actually architect, we're not you know like something, especially for me you know like I never build any, anything in my life. I still got a mortgage for me house since I started -

20 BROWNING: Yes.

25 SALEH: - since I come here. Just you know like I feel this independent hearing committee, this is a good, a good, a good thing. Sometime as I said, I see, I see this report to be honest and straight forward.

BROWNING: Yep. So as a Councillor, no doubt you would have various people want to lobby for a DA, either for it or against it.

30 SALEH: Uh-hmm.

BROWNING: How did you manage that process?

35 SALEH: Well first of all I can't stop people to ring me alright, I can't stop people to ring me. I, you know like people you know like try to ring you, but as I said you know, like I always be careful, I always act in a professional way. I haven't and ever disclosed my what, what I'm going to do in the Council



Chamber, only if, if the developer come to me and said oh we want you to support it. I said alright we'll see the report and I take that idea of him and I disclose my position in Council Chamber during the discussion.

5 BROWNING: And I'm assuming that would also be the case if you had an objector come and see you, someone who objected to a DA?

10 SALEH: Yeah, yeah, but to be you know, like to be frankly I, I you know like I try to not – actually I'm you know like not to engage in this area alright. I try to – because it's not like my, my interest. I always – as, as I said, you know like I'm a community worker. I work on – I'm a president of the Harmony Group in our area. I got lots of thing to do you know, like I try to you know like make a distance but, as a Councillor, I have to do my job. I have to vote for, for the, the DA.

BROWNING: Yes.

15 SALEH: And as I said to you before, I'm always I see, I, I see the report for, from to party and if I got questions I ask Jim, our General Manager, or I ask the planning department, which actually is Robert Davison and, and we got the other guy, I don't know what's his name actually, before Spiro.

STOCKLEY: Marcelo Occhiu –

SALEH: Marcelo yeah, Marcelo and yeah.

20 BROWNING: So you would talk to the Director of Planning.

SALEH: Oh, or yeah. If, if I got a question –

BROWNING: Yes.

SALEH: - if I got questions I don't understand –

BROWNING: Yes.

25 SALEH: - if I, I got a doubt or something you know like I, I ask him and I seek his advice.

BROWNING: Yep.

SALEH: Yeah.

30 BROWNING: So you would be, you would intend or generally you would vote by the recommendation that the planners made.

- SALEH: Most of the time.
- BROWNING: Most of the time yep.
- SALEH: Yeah.
- BROWNING: Now I go into, I go into that a little bit later.
- 5 SALEH: Yeah, yeah, yeah of course.
- BROWNING: I just want to firstly explore, and I'll guess we'll talk about the developers, now it seems to me that they always want to have meetings with Councillors, the developers, the big ones, or they seem to want to sell their idea to the Council staff.
- 10 SALEH: Yeah.
- BROWNING: No doubt you'd be under pressure to meet with developers.
- SALEH: Yeah but I can yes, I can say no -
- BROWNING: Yes.
- SALEH: - but most of the time I say no and most of the time you know, like people  
15 said don't waste your time with Councillor Saleh because he's (laughs), he's not interested. Or sometime they said you know like oh, you know they think I'm, I'm, I'm actually stupid you know like to not engage with this you know. I, I'd rather be you know like that than, than, than do, than engage with this, with these people because – well I don't want to say  
20 actually my, my opinion, my opinion as a, as a migrant come to this country and they know what's important for people in our community, the infrastructure. Always I've got an idea before I come to Council, this is big developer come and put a building in a place and go, and we have to handle all this, all this issue, the traffic, the something and all this issue we  
25 have to handle as a, as a, as a community.
- And that's why I'm, during 13 years of my work I don't have this motivation. Of course I have no regret actually if we have a community project, I fight for it. I make sure the projects for community done and yeah and this is most of my request in the –
- 30 BROWNING: Yes.
- SALEH: - in the Council.

- BROWNING: If you did meet with a, a developer, where would you have that, hold that meeting?
- SALEH: Mostly in Council Chamber with the, yeah, mostly in Council Chamber. Or, or if I meet you know like I didn't –
- 5 BROWNING: Yes.
- SALEH: - I didn't recall I, I have you know like official meeting or something but sometime you know like you know, the developer they didn't come to you, they'd – after they'd sent someone else and to meet with you and all I can do, I try you know like to for my, myself to ask the planning
- 10 department to be with me in the, in the –
- BROWNING: So if you did have a meeting, you'd get someone from the planning department –
- SALEH: Yeah.
- BROWNING: - to come with you?
- 15 SALEH: Most, most, most of the time.
- BROWNING: So a planner, was it either – could it be just the planner who was looking at the matter or Director –
- SALEH: No, no, no – well we can actually as a Councillor we can actually go to the Director. We can go to the staff. We have to go through Director of
- 20 Planning.
- BROWNING: Yes, yeah.
- SALEH: I only knows actually who the senior staff. I don't know anything (laughs).
- BROWNING: Yes.
- 25 SALEH: Yeah. I avoid, avoid actually the communication.
- BROWNING: And would you take any notes of these meetings or would it, would the, anyone else take them?
- SALEH: I, I suppose you know like the Department of Planning take notes yeah.
- BROWNING: Yep.

- SALEH: If, if, if got meeting but –
- BROWNING: Okay.
- SALEH: - I prefer not.
- BROWNING: Yeah and I'm only talking about –
- 5 SALEH: Yeah.
- BROWNING: - times you had meetings.
- SALEH: Yeah.
- BROWNING: If you did meet with a developer would you then declare that in the Council Chamber later on –
- 10 SALEH: Of course.
- BROWNING: - that you'd been lobbied?
- SALEH: Well yeah, yeah of course. If, if I have actually satisfied, if I have any interest and non-pecuniary interest or pecuniary interest I disclose it.
- BROWNING: Yeah.
- 15 SALEH: Yeah no like –
- BROWNING: But I guess I'm just, I'm asking if, would you say oh look that developer he did come and see me?
- SALEH: Well –
- BROWNING: Not necessary.
- 20 SALEH: - well, well to be honest sometime if I see it actually myself I should disclose it, I disclose it. But I didn't disclose everyone who called me 'cause I don't remember sometime.
- BROWNING: No I'm, I'm meaning more if you had a meeting.
- SALEH: Yeah if, if we have a meeting I ask the General Manager normally, I ask  
25 General Manager this meeting we should be disclose it or, or not. If I go according what General Manager advice, if, if we have to disclose it. But you know like I don't recall, I recall actually you know like a, a meeting for school, for community –

- BROWNING: Yeah.
- SALEH: - school or something, that is where, where I go. And I don't re, recall I go to discuss any, any of, of, of project or building or –
- BROWNING: Okay.
- 5 SALEH: - or, or something like that.
- BROWNING: I, I want, I want to now talk about how the last Council worked. So from the previous, from the last election, which was 2012 I think, to 20 – to when the Council was amalgamated. Now are you – what, what party do you represent in Council?
- 10 SALEH: Labor.
- BROWNING: Okay. Where Council voting patterns along political lines when it came to development applications?
- SALEH: No, no.
- BROWNING: Okay.
- 15 SALEH: We can caucus on, on development but we discuss it –
- BROWNING: Yeah.
- SALEH: - of course we discuss it with all Councillors –
- BROWNING: Yeah.
- 20 SALEH: - you know like we have in Council you know like in, in our Council or how I will practice actually, we have lu – we have a dinner every Council meeting, we have a good dinner.
- STOCKLEY: Is this prior to the meeting?
- SALEH: Prior to the meeting, and always I complain about this. Why should (laughs) get all, all this expensive, expensive dinner, expensive alcohol.
- 25 But nevertheless yeah we, we sit down, we talk. Normally we talk about – we don't talk about anything about a DA, about issue you know happening in, in the Council. After the Council meeting as well we have a drink (laughs). We have a drink and we talk about it you know like, talk about it different actually to have a decision for, for a, a you know like to go
- 30 yeah.

BROWNING: So, and I'm talking about the big developments now so the – as you drive along Canterbury Road you've got all those –

SALEH: Yeah.

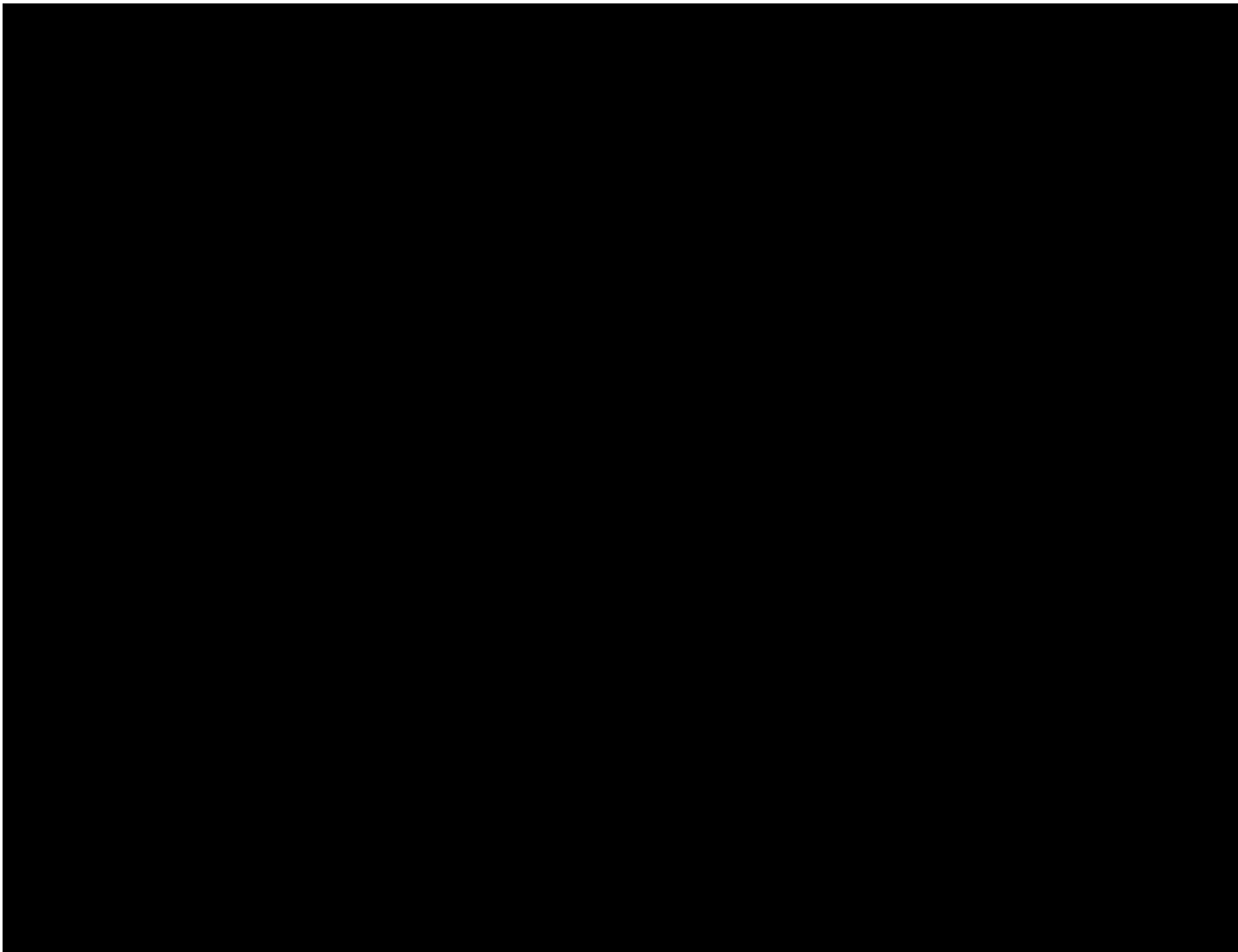
5 BROWNING: - all those unit blocks getting built or being built or DAs have been approved. How were decisions made on how they can be voted for? Or how were decisions made on whether they should be approved?

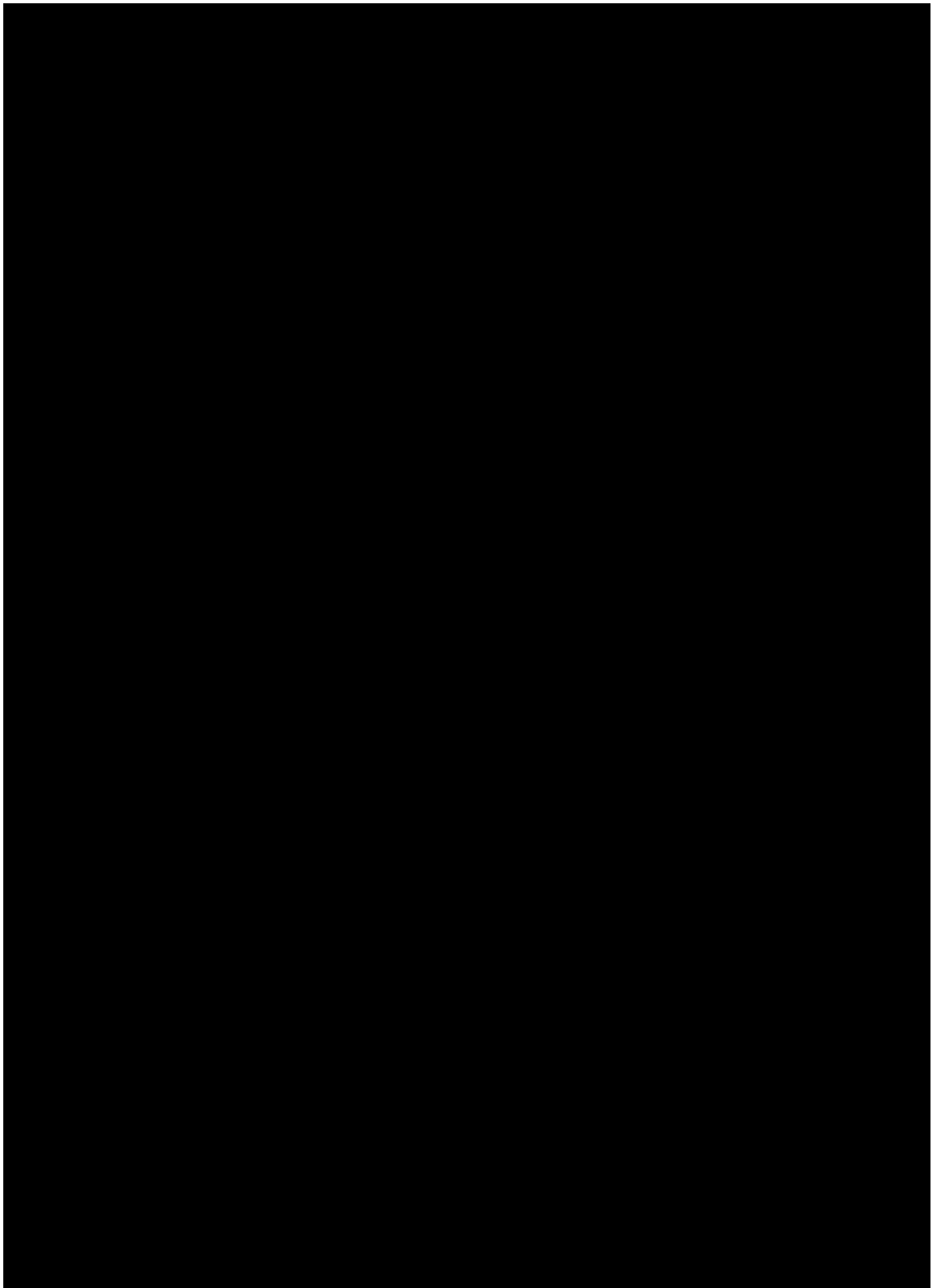
SALEH: [Mobile rings] (Unintelligible) this call. Sorry.

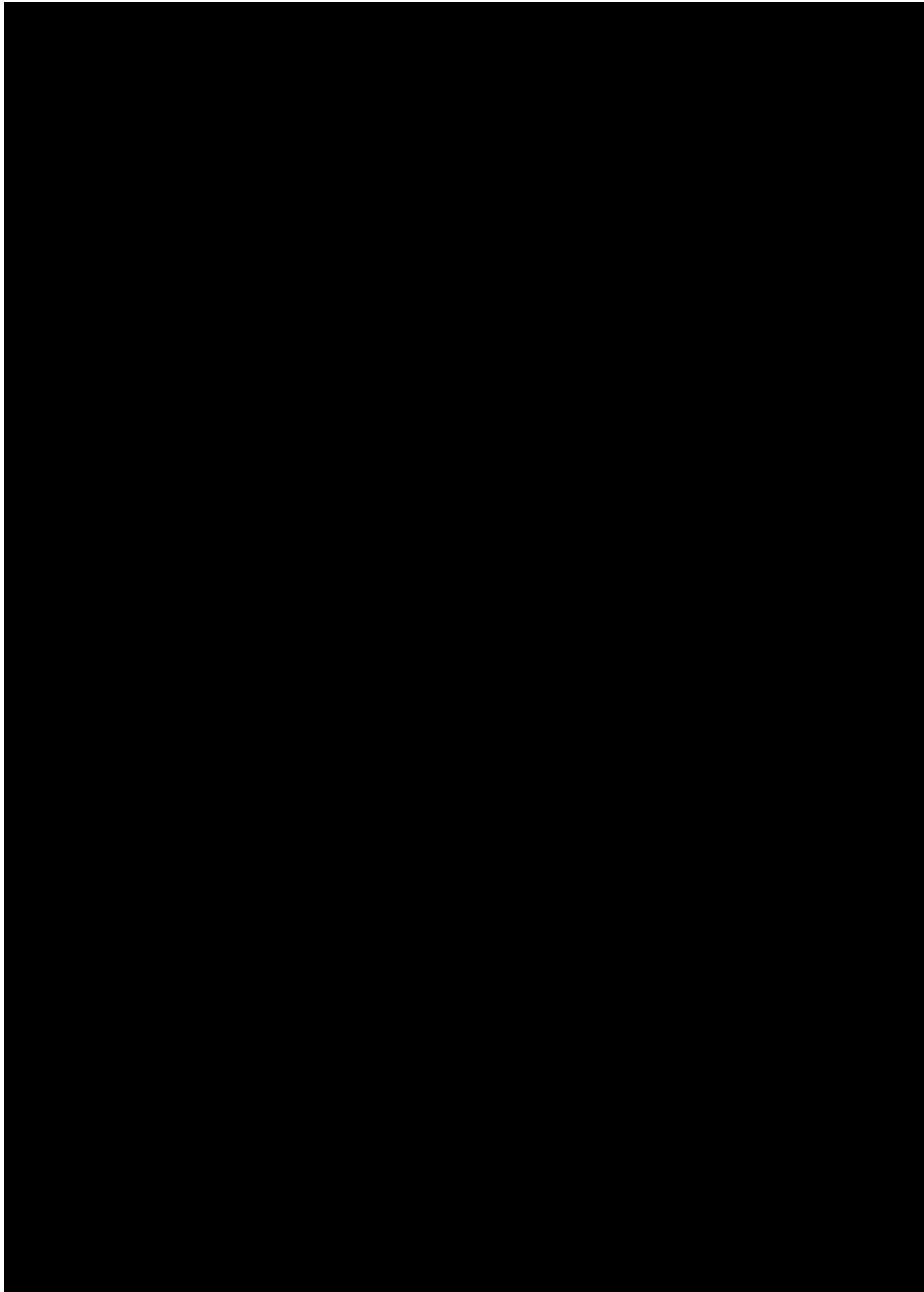
BROWNING: That's okay.

10 SALEH: How this decision – oh well as I said to, as I said to you Andrew, it's something like for me, for me I got you know like the business paper and I got in the planning, in the planning I'm – yeah no in, in, in the planning, in DA, in rezoning and something, I'll always I seek advice from the, the something.

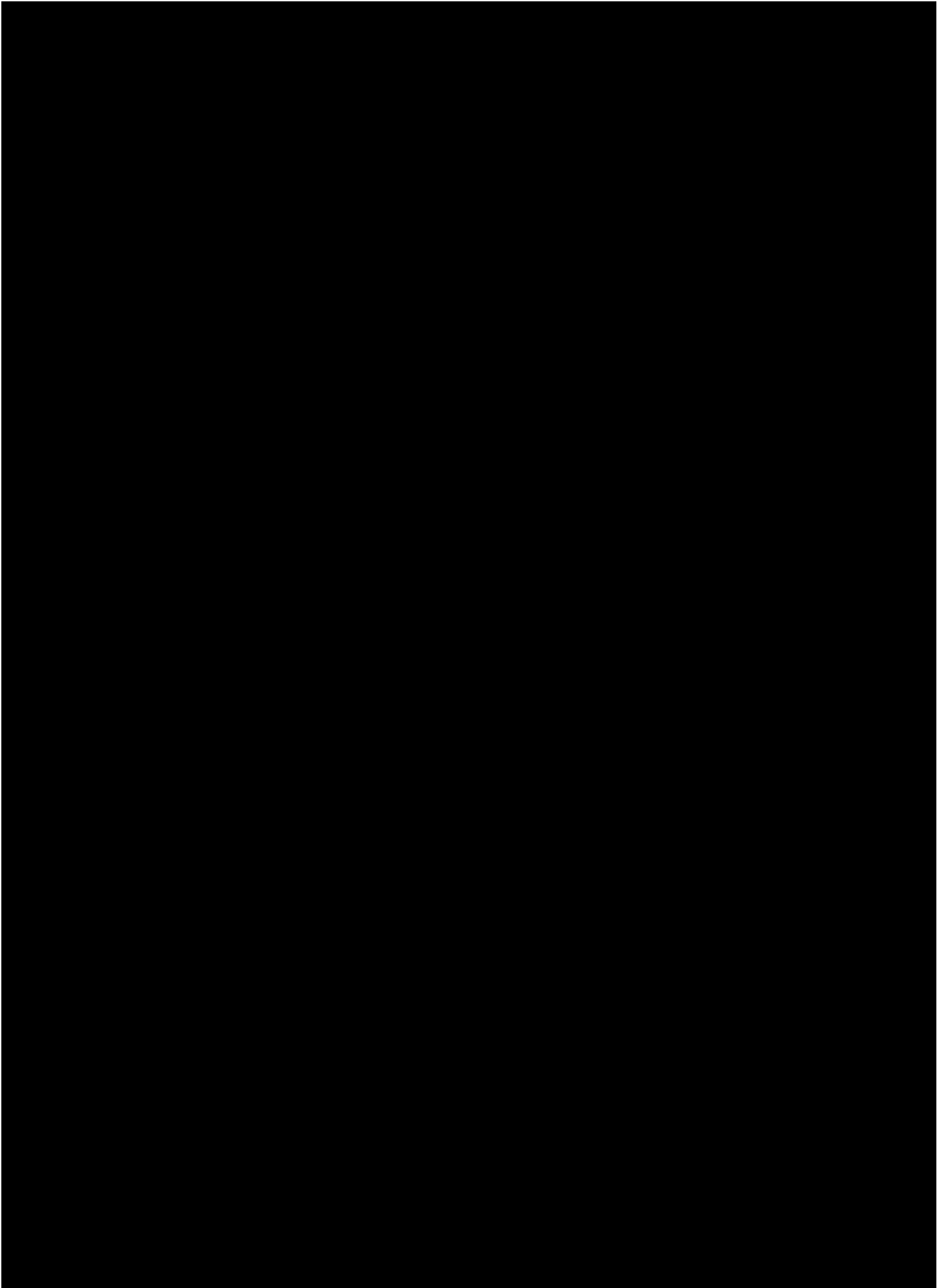
BROWNING: Yeah.

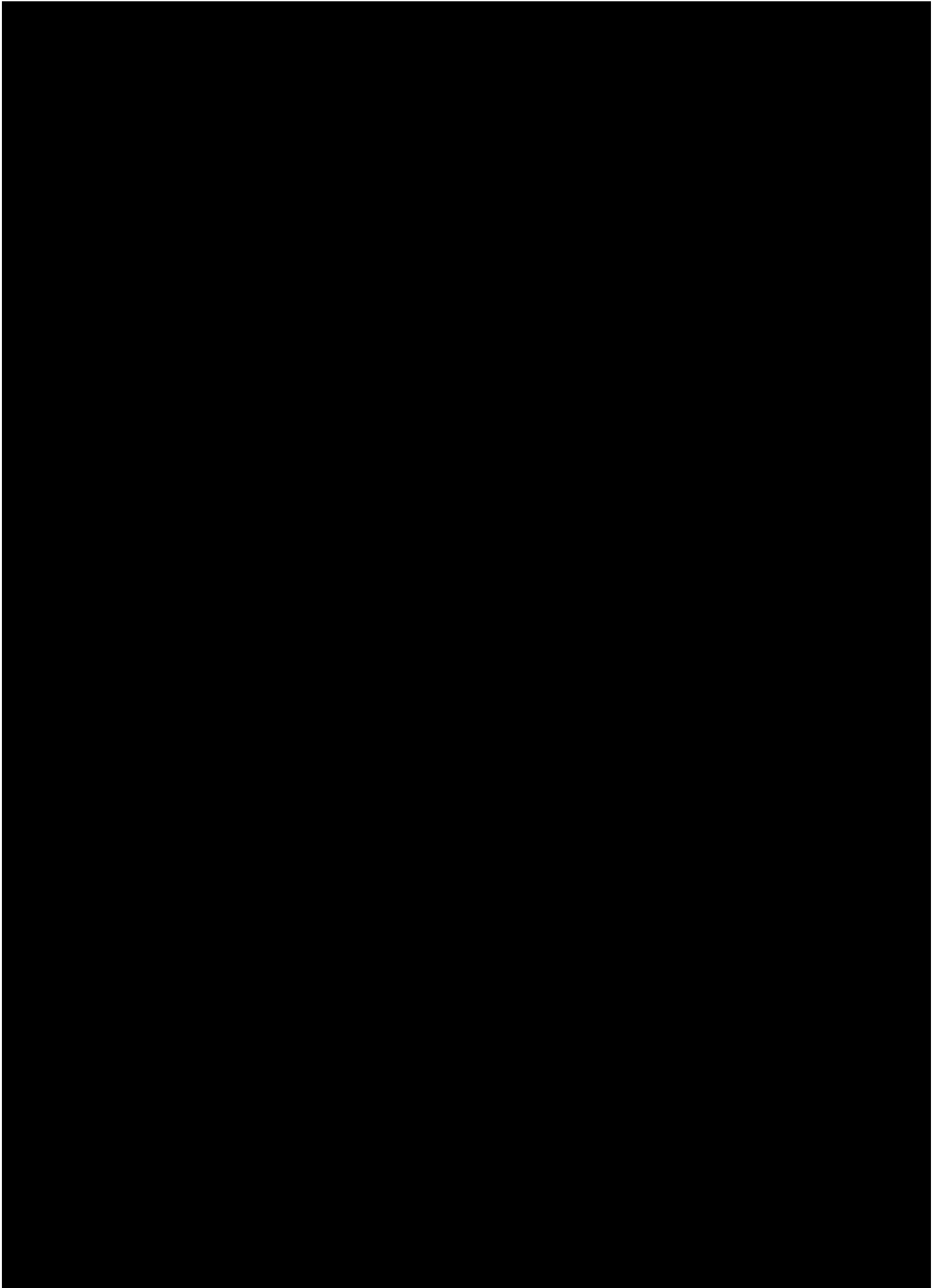












- 10 SALEH: [REDACTED]. You asked me before, you asked me before how you feel the, the environment in the Council at last term. Is more challenging. Is it challenging for me? For me, for me as a community minded person, I come to Council to make a difference to the community.
- BROWNING: Yeah.
- SALEH: I'm not going to Council only to have a challenge about certain DA or about certain DA. Sometime we have to make a decision alright, to build, do something.
- 15 BROWNING: Yep.
- SALEH: But you know like why is it actually only we want to focus to, to, to this. And, and I don't want to jump from, from issue to other issue you know like seem to be by this question do you, you jump from, from this issue to the Jim Montague issue.
- 20 BROWNING: No I'm go – that's going to be separate.
- SALEH: Yeah.
- BROWNING: We're going to talk about that –
- SALEH: Yeah, yeah.
- BROWNING: - separate.
- 25 SALEH: Yeah.
- BROWNING: I mean I know it's –
- SALEH: It is (unintelligible).
- BROWNING: - probably linked but I want to talk –

- SALEH: Is a challenging, is a challenging and for me, it's frustration to be honest. It's not like a Council I want to be you know like –
- BROWNING: So you've been on Council for a long time.
- SALEH: Yeah.
- 5 BROWNING: A lot of those Councillors have been on for a long time as well. Well Michael –
- SALEH: I don't think so.
- BROWNING: - Michael Hawatt had been.
- SALEH: Yeah, yeah Michael yeah. He's a, he's a Liberal –
- 10 BROWNING: I think –
- SALEH: - he's always yeah.
- BROWNING: - I think Mr Azzi had been on Council –
- SALEH: No once.
- BROWNING: Oh only once.
- 15 SALEH: Yeah.
- BROWNING: What about Mr Adler?
- SALEH: Adler long time.
- BROWNING: Yeah, so a couple of them have been there –
- SALEH: Before, before me.
- 20 BROWNING: So a lot of them have been there a long time.
- SALEH: But Azzi is just this term.
- BROWNING: Right. Had, had previous Councils been like this?
- SALEH: I don't think so.
- BROWNING: And who's – in your opinion you don't think so?
- 25 SALEH: No, no. Actually I, I said that in, in Sydney Morning Herald actually when I, Kate McClymont asked me I said it, you know like how I feel.

BROWNING: Okay so why do you think that happened in this Council?

SALEH: (Laughs) Well people, people just you know like probably lost the plot or something you know like yeah, probably you know. Again in, you know like always, of, you know like when I come from Council meeting I thought oh well this is not why I'm there.

BROWNING: Yes.

SALEH: You know this is not why actually, we need actually to do something else and, and the, the challenge is actually, especially when, when being actually this first page on, on Sydney Morning Herald about Jim and about Brian, about this alcohol –

BROWNING: Yes.

SALEH: - about this lunching for \$50,000 and something. It's make me feel alright, we actually not doing the right job.

BROWNING: Okay. Alright I'll move on.

15 SALEH: Yeah.

[REDACTED]

30

		[REDACTED]
		[REDACTED]
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SALEH:

[REDACTED]. I don't have you know like good friendship with, with Michael. Always I have tension with Mi, with, with you know like –

STOCKLEY:

Yeah.

SALEH:

- because he got his own agenda.

15

STOCKLEY:

Yeah.

SALEH:

I never, I never recall - his, his actually office in Lakemba.

STOCKLEY:

Yes that's right.

SALEH:

His office at Lakemba. I go to Lakemba certainly every week about six time alright. I visit the shop near to him or the butcher. I never attend his office.

20

STOCKLEY:

Yeah. So all I'm asking you –

SALEH:

In 12, 15 years.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

BROWNING: I've just got a, on this matter I've just got a couple of other questions. Prior to going into the Council Chambers, would you tell the other Councillors how you intended to vote?

20 SALEH: No way. (Laughs). No way, you know like –

BROWNING: I just wanted to clarify.

SALEH: - I want to tell you. This is happened for me about, about not for one time, you know like this – oh I don't want to say that.

BROWNING: No say it.

25 SALEH: This is fun, yeah. This one is he come to me and oh you want to support it something. I said alright we see, we'll see in, in Council Chamber you know.

- BROWNING: So who came to you for that one, to lobby?
- SALEH: Who's this?
- BROWNING: For that one you just said he came to you and –
- 5 SALEH: No, no, no the, the people you know, like the Councillors, when the Council Chamber. They say oh we want your support.
- STOCKLEY: Okay.
- 10 SALEH: I said alright, we see, we see in – you see in the Council you know like. It's, it's – this is you know like it's not normal. That's is what's obviously do you know like, Azzi come to me, Hawatt come to me, come to other Councillors, oh we want you support for this, you want to support for this. I said alright we see, we see what's the application said.
- BROWNING: So it's fair to say then that there were Councillors who were very pro-development, who were pro-development?
- 15 SALEH: I can tell you myself I don't pro (laughs) development. I pro the plan, the planning according what the planning in, in our Council. That is how, how I can speak.
- BROWNING: But there were Councillors who would lobby for developments to be approved.
- 20 SALEH: Well everyone accountable what he did about, about what, what to (unintelligible).
- BROWNING: But you would be lobbied by Councillors?
- SALEH: Well as I said to you, in, in, in the dinner alright, people talk about, about, about different issue alright. But I do the homework before –
- BROWNING: Yes, yeah.
- 25 SALEH: - I come to the, to the Council. And always I laugh if people ask me, if people ask me about my decision and, and they – mostly, mostly they surprise –
- BROWNING: Yeah.
- SALEH: - they surprised about my decision.
- 30 BROWNING: Yes.

- SALEH: (Laughs).
- BROWNING: Well, was there a controlling group of Councillors within Council?
- SALEH: Well controlling, well you know like I can, I can tell you myself is actually I act independently.
- 5 BROWNING: Yes.
- SALEH: I, I act according what I believe and well if you can see if you tell the grouping, I'm a Labor person. Pierre Azzi is in my, in my Ward. He run number two in my, in my ticket and I vote against him for most of the DA. (Laughs). Where, where are the grouping then.
- 10 STOCKLEY: (Unintelligible).
- BROWNING: Who, who would he vote with?
- SALEH: Well normally he align with Michael.
- BROWNING: Okay.
- SALEH: You know like that's his, that's his, he's not like me assuming, that is how  
15 -
- BROWNING: And why would he do that?
- SALEH: I'm not sure -
- BROWNING: Okay.
- SALEH: - I'm not sure you know like (laughs).
- 20 BROWNING: Did you know a George Vasil?
- SALEH: I, I know him yes. I know him but I know him as a, you know like, in a function, something. That's his, John, that's Con, Con person or Con father. I know him, he's a developer. I know him he's a yeah, but I didn't have any, any association with him.
- 25 BROWNING: Yeah.
- SALEH: I never met him, I never visit him.
- BROWNING: Oh so you've never met him?

- SALEH: I never, I never, I never. You know like I never you know like come to the room with, with him and discuss any, any Council issue because, as I said to you, always I have to protect –
- BROWNING: Yes.
- 5 SALEH: - my duty. Always I got – maybe the, they better than me (laughs) but for me I didn't see any, anything to discuss with him.
- BROWNING: Yeah.
- SALEH: Anything to discuss with him.
- BROWNING: Bechara Khouri, did you know that person?
- 10 SALEH: Yeah Bechara Khouri, yeah he's a Labor person.
- BROWNING: Was he a lobbyist as well?
- SALEH: Well as – you want to say – I, I don't say his, his title, but the rumours say you know like people say he's a, he's a lobbyist, the people say he's lobbyist. That is how he get the, he do the living. But as well, I want to tell you, Bechara I, I, I never discuss, I never discuss, I never met with the
- 15 Bechara. He never actually you know like call me for any development –
- BROWNING: Yep.
- SALEH: - or ask me.
- BROWNING: Okay.
- 20 SALEH: Because frank, frankly I want to tell you, you know like people in Council, people in the community they said oh don't worry about the car (unintelligible). Don't try to do it because he's not up to this you know, people. That is what I hear, that's what people said yeah.
- BROWNING: Okay.
- 25 SALEH: Yeah.
- STOCKLEY: Just on Bechara Khouri, do you know whether he had any relationships with anybody else at Council?
- SALEH: Well I think it's, a report in Sydney Morning Herald said sometime you know they have a meeting in the, in the, in the Pierre Azzi place. That's



Sydney Morning Herald or something, is this, is this right or? That's is what I –

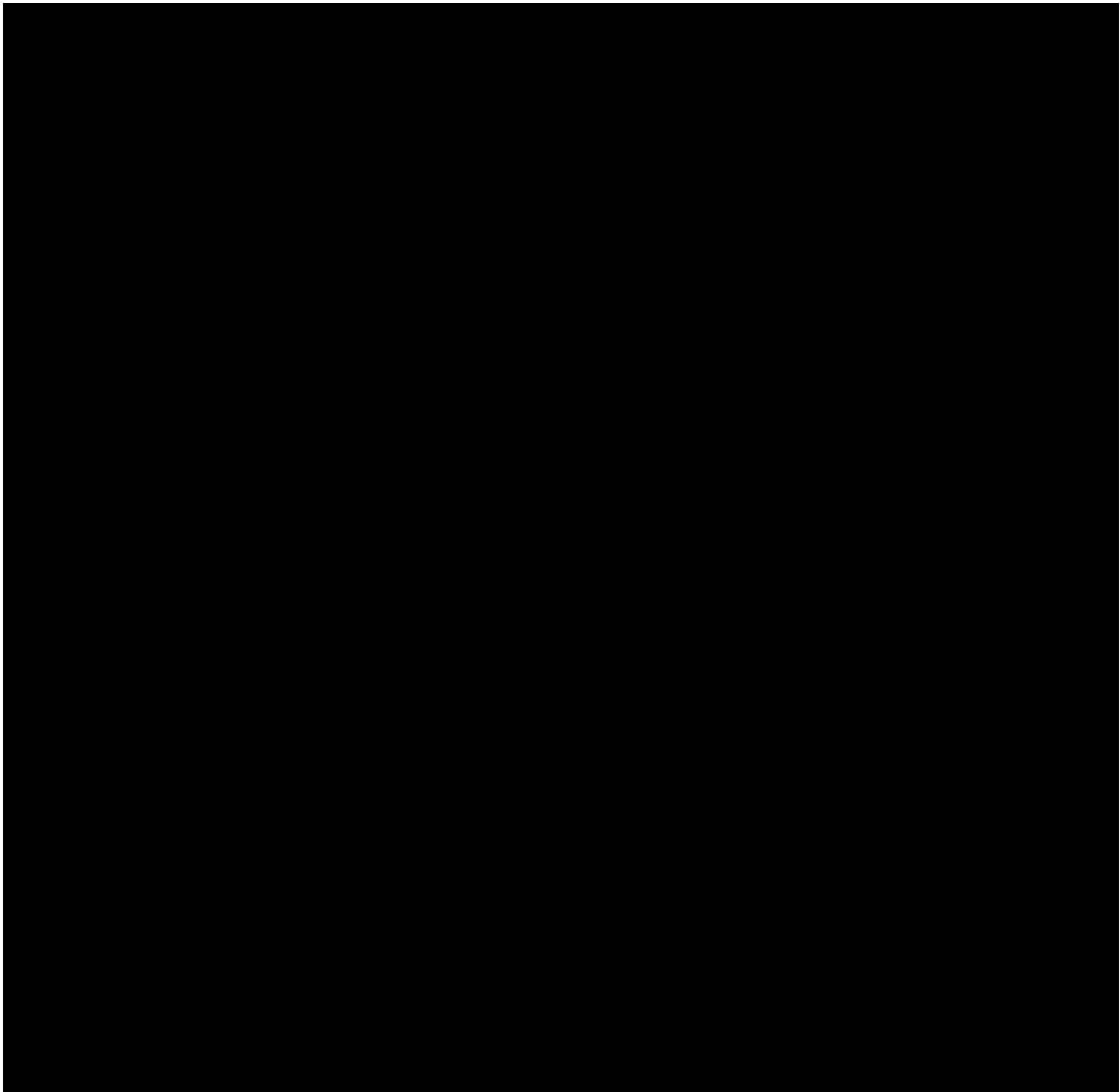
BROWNING: We're asking you.

SALEH: Yeah oh well ask me, I'm (laughs) like I'm not friend with him –

5 BROWNING: Yeah.

STOCKLEY: Okay.

SALEH: - actually. I never met with him. I didn't something and he, he actually I didn't ask him you know like to do me any favour and yeah.



- [REDACTED]
- BROWNING: [REDACTED] Okay. I want to ask, I want to move on now -
- 5 SALEH: Yeah.
- BROWNING: - to the Montague and Stavis matter okay, back in December '14, January '15, around that period there. Can you tell me about your knowledge of the employment of Spiro Stavis?
- SALEH: Well I first of all when the other guy he told me about it, the former -
- 10 STOCKLEY: Oh Mar, Marcelo Occhiuzzi.
- SALEH: Marcelo yeah, he resign. They advertise the job and when they advertise the job I got, I don't know what's happened, how the process is. You know like we got Jim, Jim always you know like he's the - we rely to Jim to be honest with you, Canterbury Council always you know and like Jim has been, has been long time in the Council and I you know like we leave it to Jim, you know like to deal with it. This is not like up to us. And, until I got a phone call from Brian Robson, he tell me what's happen, you know like he's the Mayor, he tell me what's happen, tell me oh you know like the - yeah probably, probably - oh, I don't want to say something I'm not sure about it. I'm not, I'm not sure, but to something like I know the trouble, there's trouble happened after the - in a panel. I didn't been invited to the panel, I didn't been invited to the panel.
- 15
- 20
- BROWNING: Do you know who was on the panel?
- SALEH: Yeah, yeah I know after, you know like I know Michael, Pierre Azzi, Brian and Jim. And who choose this, Jim choose them. They never actually asked me to be in the panel.
- 25
- STOCKLEY: Sorry, can I just clarify, do you know whether Jim asked any other Councillors? Did he put the offer out there to any other Councillors?
- SALEH: No, no - oh, oh I don't know, but he didn't ask me.
- 30 STOCKLEY: Okay.
- SALEH: I just find, find out about the problem, I was in Melbourne or was somewhere and, and Brian Robson he just tell me oh this is what's happen and I said oh well, you know like I get surprised to be honest with you.

5 Why is actually, you know like why actually Jim he wants, you know like he should come to the Council and vote if he want to choose the Councillors and do it in the right process. And they, you know like he pick these people. He got a policy, he got something and, and I expressed this with him and I said Jim you know like, you know like, why you choose this panel, me you don't choose another one because maybe I'm not, I'm not good for planning you know like he think, no, no it's, it's you know like it's not like good.

STOCKLEY: What did he say to you when you spoke to him about that?

10 SALEH: Well I, I don't remember what, what he, what the answer is. I don't remember, but I, I know in this issue I, I was you know like, you know like when I know, when I heard about, about the panel you know like and who choo – what's happen in the process I'm not sure, I'm not sure what's happen.

15 BROWNING: Okay. Do you recall Michael Hawatt or Pierre Azzi calling for an extraordinary meeting?

SALEH: Yeah, of course.

BROWNING: Okay and what was that about? Or how did that -

SALEH: To -

20 BROWNING: - come about?

SALEH: - to, to sack Jim Montague.

BROWNING: Now -

SALEH: And, and yeah but -

25 BROWNING: Just for your own memory, that - my, our - I believe that occurred the day before Christmas on the 24<sup>th</sup> of December, 2014.

30 SALEH: I'm not sure you know like to, what, about the date to be honest with you. I'm not like, this is long time ago. I'm not, I'm not sure but I, you know like I recall they calling for the meeting, for meeting to, to, to something. Not because Spiro or Vasils or you know like something, not because the, the something, they want to sack Jim because what's happen in Il Buco, in, in the restaurant, spend \$50,000 in, in lunching in, in, you know like. And, and personally, personally I express this before the extraordinary meeting actually when, when this happen, I'm not sure but I got it here.

Yeah oh yeah, that's the 29<sup>th</sup> of January in Sydney Morning Herald actually. I express my view if you want to, if you want to see it. Yeah.  
[Produces document] This is, this is –

STOCKLEY: Okay.

5 SALEH: - how yeah.

STOCKLEY: So I'll just read it for the record. So – are we able to keep these or are these –

SALEH: Yeah, yeah.

STOCKLEY: Yeah, okay so I'll just –

10 SALEH: Of course this is an internal, (unintelligible) from there.

BROWNING: Oh we'll call –

STOCKLEY: Well just mark –

SALEH: I just, I just –

BROWNING: We'll mark it 'KS1'.

15 STOCKLEY: Yeah, 'KS1'. So Mr Saleh has shown us a document that is titled 'Sydney Morning Herald January 29, 2015' and there's a highlighted passage. '*Of the remaining two councillors Esta*' – how do you spell that, pronounce that?

SALEH: (Unintelligible) for me yeah.

20 STOCKLEY: Oh you want the whole –

SALEH: Yeah.

STOCKLEY: Yep. So '*Canterbury Council is in chaos after a majority of councillors voted to sack the genera*' – I assume that's general manager that's missing. '*The fiasco at Canterbury Council is a headache for Sussex Street as Labor has six of the ten councillors. Cr Robson is now at war with Mark Adler, Mr Azzi and Fadwa Kebbe, his three colleagues who voted with the Liberals to get rid of Mr Montague. Of the remaining two councillors Esta Paschilidis-Chilas*' – is that – I'm not sure how to pro –

25

SALEH: Chilas yeah.

- STOCKLEY: - yeah – *‘did not turn up for the crucial meeting and Karl Saleh announced he wanted a full investigation into Mr Montague before any decision was made to sack him. Mr Saleh said that he was “deeply shocked and outraged” by Fairfax Media’s revelations that the cash-strapped council had forked out \$50,000 over a four-year period for Mr Montague’s lunch bills at the Il Buco restaurant. “I think we should have a thorough independent and professional investigation into this matter to ensure that justice is, is in place and corruption is quashed” said Mr Saleh’.*
- 5
- 10 BROWNING: Thanks Lisa.
- STOCKLEY: So –
- SALEH: Yep.
- BROWNING: Okay what I might do, I might show you some other documents that I have to help refresh your memory because that’s, that’s sort of at the end. Now the first document I want to show you which will be marked ‘KS2’, it’s dated the 18<sup>th</sup> of December 2014 and it’s an extraction report – and I think just about all these documents are extraction reports – taken from the mobile phone of Michael Hawatt. And if you go to the second page and document, paragraph number four –
- 15
- 20 SALEH: Did you say 14?
- BROWNING: Yeah if you turn it over, next page –
- SALEH: Alright.
- BROWNING: - and go down the bottom where you see on the left hand column the number 4.
- 25 SALEH: Yeah.
- BROWNING: Okay you’ll see that it’s your name there okay -
- SALEH: Yeah.
- BROWNING: - and then across –
- SALEH: My name.
- 30 BROWNING: Okay. In – just there Karl, that’s your phone number.
- SALEH: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

- BROWNING: That was your phone number?
- SALEH: Yeah, yeah, yeah (unintelligible) yeah, yeah.
- BROWNING: And it's got your name and then across on the far side is a message. Now that's an SMS message that was sent to you from Michael Hawatt's phone  
5 okay.
- SALEH: But he said here dear Councillors, it's not like address it to me.
- BROWNING: No, it's a group SMS.
- SALEH: Group SMS.
- STOCKLEY: But it also went to –
- 10 SALEH: Yeah, yeah alright one -
- BROWNING: But it went to you okay.
- SALEH: - one yeah, yeah, yeah.
- BROWNING: So the reason I'm showing that to you –
- SALEH: We go '*liable [mispronounces as label] for you action, I suggest to you  
15 don't make any one information decision which might make council legally liable. You should call an extra' – yeah – 'meeting ... the appointment of the director and your new decision [says direction] to reverse that appointment'* financial – I, I couldn't, I couldn't –
- BROWNING: I, I'll read it to you.
- 20 STOCKLEY: It's very small font.
- SALEH: Yeah.
- BROWNING: It's very tiny. I'll read it to you.
- SALEH: Yeah.
- BROWNING: '*Hi Councillors. We have a serious issue that needs councils intervention  
25 before it's too late.*'
- SALEH: Yeah.,
- BROWNING: '*See below text message sent to the GM. Hi Jim We are liable for your actions. I suggest you don't make anymore irrational decisions which*

*might make council legally liable. You should call an extra ordinary meeting to discuss the appointment of the new director and your new decision to reverse his appointment after the offer was finalised. I am very concerned by whats happening on this matter.'* Signed Michael Hawatt.

- 5 Now the reason I've shown that to you –
- SALEH: Yeah.
- BROWNING: - because it suggests that the very first issue –
- SALEH: Yeah they're go, going lob, lobby us – yeah.
- 10 BROWNING: Yeah, the very first issue that they wanted to remove, used to remove, remove the General Manager was the fact that he'd overturned the original decision to employ Spiro Stavis as the Director of Planning at Canterbury City Council.
- 15 SALEH: Well yeah I, I don't deny that actually. It's, it's – Michael he tried to lobby every, everyone in Council actually to sack Jim and I'm one of them actually because he knows actually I'm not happy with Jim, I'm not happy with Brian Robson about the allegation for, for – not for the allegation, but this (unintelligible) things –
- BROWNING: Yeah.
- SALEH: - you know like, like this is before?
- 20 BROWNING: No –
- SALEH: No.
- BROWNING: - this happens before (unintelligible) become (unintelligible) –
- SALEH: This is before 29<sup>th</sup> of January –
- BROWNING: Yes, this is –
- 25 SALEH: - this one?
- BROWNING: Yes, this is –
- SALEH: If it's before the –
- BROWNING: - in December.
- SALEH: - the newspaper, the Canterbury –

- BROWNING: Yeah this is all before the newspaper articles.
- SALEH: I'm not sure you know like I didn't recall to be honest with you. I, I, I – when, when the newspaper article is happen you know like and –
- BROWNING: They happened later in January.
- 5 SALEH: Yeah, later in January or – and, and this is where, where this?
- BROWNING: This was the 18<sup>th</sup> of February –
- STOCKLEY: No.
- SALEH: 18<sup>th</sup> –
- BROWNING: No 18<sup>th</sup> of December -
- 10 STOCKLEY: 18<sup>th</sup> of December.
- BROWNING: - 2014.
- SALEH: Yeah, yeah.
- BROWNING: Okay and, and the issue that it appears that Michael Hawatt was upset about was that the General Manager, who's just overturned his, a decision to employ Spiro Stavis as the Director of Planning.
- 15 SALEH: Well yeah, well that is a good reason for me to not vote to sack Jim. (Unintelligible).
- BROWNING: Yes but you don't recall, do – you don't recall this?
- SALEH: I don't recall this.
- 20 BROWNING: Okay.
- SALEH: To be honest with you I, I may – it, it's happened you know like –
- BROWNING: Yes.
- SALEH: - I'm not sure, sure. Maybe it's happened but I don't recall. But I recall what's actually the conclusion, how I've heard alright. In, in this (unintelligible) I attend the meeting and, and, and, and when it is the meeting that's happened, the extraordinary meeting?
- 25 BROWNING: That's happened on the 27<sup>th</sup> of January.



SALEH: I was in Canberra.

BROWNING: 2015.

5 SALEH: Yeah I was in Canberra. I make myself, as actually I come from Canberra on that day because I thought you know like I should, and they try actually you know like I want to tell you, I got too many phone calls from Azzi, too many phone call from Mark Adler, from Michael, try actually to you know like – but all the discussion about, about you know like we have to get rid of Jim, Jim this, Jim that and something. My position on that, my position on that, if you want to sack Jim you have to get investigation first and, and after that investigation we can, we can make, make a, make the decision.

10 And they try actually to get my vote, but they fair. I'm only – I'm actually only Labor Councillor whose vote, who not attend the meeting in support to, to Jim you know and, including the Mayor. The Mayor was one of the issue but, but with, with Jim. But I'm only Labor Councillor who attend the meeting in supporting to Jim. When they actually decide to, to continue with the meeting and that night I, I go.

15 BROWNING: Okay I've got another SMS that you sent -

SALEH: Yeah.

20 BROWNING: - okay on – just a second. Okay it's sent on the 7<sup>th</sup> of January 2015 and this will be 'KS3'. Right it's an SMS from you to Michael Hawatt and I'll read it to you.

SALEH: Yeah.

25 BROWNING: *'Your attention and advice on the below motion would be most appreciated. That Council request an independent review by the Office of Local Government of the General Manager's performance in the selection process for the position of Director of City Planning. Further, the report of this review process and outcome be presented to the first available Council meeting to enable Councillors to determine an appropriate response'.*

30 SALEH: This is my, my yeah.

BROWNING: He, Michael replied back.

SALEH: Yeah.

- BROWNING: *'Food for thought. I will call you tomorrow. I am reviewing my position as I am not getting the genuine support from some Councillors in regards to this matter. I am promised one thing and then change of mind. Your right about some people.'* So that – even though you don't recall it now –
- 5 SALEH: No, no, no, no just, just, just list – this is as actually. This is my position actually.
- BROWNING: Right.
- SALEH: This is my position always. I said to him this is my position. I don't actually go, go – this is my position actually. I ask for, for investigation actually. He can't, he can't sack the General Manager without a proper investigation and he frustration for that and what I can do for him. You know like even, even if, if I'm upset with Jim, I'm upset with Brian, you know like –
- 10
- BROWNING: Yep.
- 15 SALEH: - is, is, is no secret. It's – but can use my authority to do, to do something it's not good, it's not real good –
- BROWNING: Yeah.
- SALEH: - you know like that is how, how I see it.
- BROWNING: Okay so you, you wanted a review and to make –
- 20 SALEH: Yeah this is what I said –
- BROWNING: - to make your decision based on –
- SALEH: - in the, in the newspaper.
- BROWNING: Yes.
- SALEH: That is if, if you see, if you see the conversation between me and Kate McClymont. Kate is very hard you know like and, and in the end of conversation she congratulate me you know like, she said oh mate you're, you're right. And, and I probably I recall maybe I send, I send her a same, a same position as well.
- 25
- BROWNING: Okay. I want to go to the extraordinary meeting now on the 17<sup>th</sup> – sorry the 27<sup>th</sup> of January.
- 30
- SALEH: Yeah.

BROWNING: Business papers, and I'll read them. The *'Motions of which due notice has been given. General Manager's employment and Director City Planning Appointment'*. So this is the, this is the sole motion for the extraordinary meeting. It was *'Councillors Azzi and Hawatt to move THAT*

5 *(A) The General Manager's (Jim Montague) contract of employment and the General Manager's employment be terminated immediately under Clause 10.3.5 and 11.3 of the contract of employment.*

*(B) Council comply with the matters outlined in the confidential motion relating to the contract of employment and the deed of release.*

10 *(C) The General Manager's office (which will fall vacant) be filled immediately by an acting General Manager to be determined at the meeting.*

15 *(D) Pursuant to the Office of Local Government guidelines and the Local Government Act, a selection panel be formed at the meeting for the purpose of interviewing and recommending to Council a person to fill the position of General Manager.*

*Then part 2, 'We discuss our position in respect of the appointment of the new Director City Planning, Mr Stavis and the subsequent withdrawal of his appointment by the General Manager and take the necessary actions.'*

20 I'll mark that 4 I think.

STOCKLEY: Yep.

BROWNING: 'KS4'. So that business paper indicates that the meeting was going to be solely about removing Montague and Stavis' employment. The minutes of the meeting, which I'll show you and I'll mark those 'KS5', show that  
25 you attended that meeting.

SALEH: Yes. Meeting I, I come from Canberra.

BROWNING: Yes and the meeting lasted all of about three minutes -

SALEH: Three minutes yeah.

BROWNING: - roughly.

30 SALEH: And, and I ask yeah, yeah – and when, when the Mayor adjourn the meeting or, or said you know like what he said, Linda Eisler and I we just, we just was – I, I'm personally, personally when Brian he adjourned the

meeting or his said there's no meeting, I go, I ask the security to escort me and escort me to be outside.

STOCKLEY: Why did you do that?

5 SALEH: I do that because the, the – I feel the, Brian he's right actually to, to close the meeting.

STOCKLEY: But were you concerned for your safety or was that why you asked -

SALEH: I concern – of cour –

STOCKLEY: - for security?

10 SALEH: - you know like that day, that day you never know how people in, in Council Chamber alright.

BROWNING: So was there a crowd in the Council Chamber?

15 SALEH: Oh there about a 100 people and security is there and, and, and it's something like, like – but I, I go there because I want to show a support for my – I can say something in the newspaper and I come and I didn't do, I didn't do my, my work. This is my position. The SMS, this is my position. I want to tell him this clear you know. My position we need investigation before I, we take any, any decision about, about Jim, about you know like something. And that is my, my position. I feel myself you know like if I didn't do it I, I been, I been guilty. That's why I do it and no  
20 one, I do it voluntarily actually. As I said, I'm only Labor Councillor (unintelligible) mmm.

BROWNING: Okay.

SALEH: And, and yeah the security escort me, escort me to the, to the carpark and I know the security.

25 BROWNING: So, so you agree with what the Mayor did in closing that meeting?

SALEH: Of course.

BROWNING: Okay, now I don't know if you've seen this or not, but are you aware that another meeting was held immediately after you left and a few of the other people left –

30 SALEH: I heard yeah, I heard, I heard. And, and, and the Deputy Mayor, Fadwa, she is, chairs the meeting, chairs the meeting.

- BROWNING: And what's your view of that meeting?
- SALEH: I think, I think is not legitimate, is not, not – they have no base to do it.
- BROWNING: Okay. Have you ever seen minutes of the meet -
- 5 SALEH: If, if – no, no. I, I don't know, you know like it's – I, I – if, if I thought this meeting is legitimate, legitimate, I would stay.
- BROWNING: Okay.
- SALEH: I would stay.
- BROWNING: Okay so you've seen no paperwork in relation to –
- SALEH: No.
- 10 BROWNING: - to that one?
- SALEH: No, no, no. After that I don't know. I, I – not I'm not sure. I didn't see.
- BROWNING: Do you know if Council or some Councillors referred a complaint to the LGA, Local Government, about the meeting?
- SALEH: About this meeting?
- 15 BROWNING: Yes, or the process?
- SALEH: Well about, about which process, how much –
- BROWNING: I'll show, I'll show an issues document that we have and we'll mark it 'KS6'.
- SALEH: Yeah.
- 20 BROWNING: Can you –
- SALEH: But it something, something related with me or just –
- BROWNING: Oh, Council action.
- SALEH: Yeah.
- BROWNING: Can you have a look at that, and tell me - if you want me to read it let me  
25 know – whether you've seen that before?
- SALEH: No that's first time.

- BROWNING: Okay.
- SALEH: [Reads document]. Yeah our boss.
- 5 BROWNING: Okay so that's exhibit 'KS6', which is titled 'Issues'. It's two pages and it's, starts with '*The Mayor opened the meeting*' is issue 1 and then it, on the back page it has a list of documents that were provided to the Department of Local Government by Councillor Fadwa Kebbe. You haven't seen that in –
- SALEH: I haven't seen it actually.
- BROWNING: And you weren't aware of her going this, of them sending –
- 10 SALEH: Nah.
- BROWNING: - stuff to Council.
- SALEH: It's, it's – you know like it – aft, after that actually you know like because I'm, you know we - actually, I, I got my position and I told them my position alright. Then (laughs) they, they know.
- 15 BROWNING: Yes.
- SALEH: I'm try hard actually to, me to do something but I, I just you know like feel – not because, you know like only because they know I'm with Brian, is not a good mood, I'm with Jim. Jim is, is actually you know like – if you know like is not, is not mood, but he, they think because of my you know like a relationship with Jim and, and something to, to, to make me to, to, to do something I don't believe on it. I think the process, I think the process of in sacking Jim Montague in this way is wrong, is wrong and I support the process.
- 20 BROWNING: Okay.
- 25 SALEH: That is my position on that. And I think the way they conduct in this meeting and before, it no good way. They should do, they should actually call for the meeting, call for – and depending investigation, regarding everything and then Council can make decision. We can't make decision like this, that is, that is, that is my position. Exactly what's the, the SMS.
- 30 BROWNING: Okay so, so you believe that there should've been evidence of reasons why?

- 5 SALEH: Of course. I said it, I said it everywhere. I said it in, in SMS. I said it in a newspaper. If you got, you know like if I can recall, I got the conversation between me and Kate McClymont, I can, I can send it to you. This is my position. Maybe I'm only one because who do that you know like because everyone. I, I, I did that because I believe this good for Council.
- BROWNING: Looking back now, do you think the reason that they went after the General Manager was because they wanted Spiro Stavis employed as the Director of Planning?
- 10 SALEH: That is, that is what, what's you should actually prove it, what you should – I can, I can tell you about myself –
- BROWNING: But looking back do you think that –
- 15 SALEH: I can (unintelligible) myself, I can, I can, I can, I can you know like speak about myself. Myself is actually, until now I ask for the investigation. That investigation has not occurred and then everything come you know like you know – I don't know how, how, how this has happened. How this problem solve, I don't know. Suddenly, suddenly we got, we could come to the meeting, you know like that is what's happened. This two group, if you want to say they're two group, Jim Montague and Brian Robson and Michael and this something. This is where, where the group.
- 20 I'm out of this two group, I'm out of this two group. Two group is actually they can do what, what they like to do you know like they can make a deal between themselves, they can do, do well like themselves, but for myself actually you know like we come to the Council, alright and we see, we see Spiro as a, a – he's, he's planning director. How this come,
- 25 what's this, this happen and I don't know you know like.
- BROWNING: You were surprised to see him in the position.
- 30 SALEH: He's not, it's not like surprise, it not like surprise. It's, it's something like for me you know like any, anyone to say oh well what's happen, what's going on, you know like what – I, I need, or we need to know how this has happen you know like why, why this has happened. But it's happen, I don't know you know like I have, have no authority to you know.
- STOCKLEY: Karl are you saying that because you weren't in one or the other camp, you weren't in the Brian, Jim Montague camp and you weren't in the Hawatt, Azzi and other people camp. That you were excluded from –
- 35 SALEH: Put, put (unintelligible).

STOCKLEY: - information about, about the recruitment of Stavis or these other issues.

5 SALEH: You know like all I, again, again you know like I don't want to say. We in, in, in very, very high and very respectful commission. I don't want to assume, I don't want to assume. But this is obvious alright. When is actually the two group, two group fight together, when they're friend they actually ask you know they recruit people together.

STOCKLEY: Yeah.

SALEH: When they actually split, actually I'm out of this two group.

STOCKLEY: Yeah.

10 SALEH: You know like even, even Brian I remember, just, just I refresh my memory, Brian he, he start, he, he try actually to find out if I come to the meeting and how I want to vote. That is happen on Australia Day in Gough Whitlam Park. You, I know, I know –

BROWNING: The day before the meeting.

15 SALEH: Yeah. The day before the meeting I said Brian I'm in Canberra and he got a heart attack 'cause I don't want to tell him. You know like I said – he said oh mate how come, you have to, you have to come. And I said I'm, I'm you know like I don't know, I want to make – you know like he tried to find out because as I said, as I said there's two group, is actually I'm  
20 out of this two group. They actually, they invite each other to recruit Stavis or, or who, who is it. And then the split and then become friend and then something – I don't know anything. But I'm still, I'm still thinking you know like why we shouldn't investigate the issue. We should investigate the issue. I said it publicly. I said it to them. I said it  
25 in SMS. I said it everywhere.

I think the way Brian and Jim go to this Il Buco and spend \$50,000 from the ratepayer money, this is you know like ridiculous. Is not, like I got shocked you know. I never been in this Il Buco, not because I am, not invite me. Every Councillors been in Il Buco alright, been in, in

30 BROWNING: Except for you.

SALEH: Except for me. I, I, I never been – I been Deputy Mayor, I never been invited there. Not Jim invite me, not everyone invite me because maybe I didn't eat only, I don't know says something. But this is what's happened.



There's two group, two group is actually something when they need me alright –

STOCKLEY: Yeah.

5 SALEH: - everyone try to get me on his side. But I, I think I got experience, I got my dignity in my, in my record in the community is very, very liable to me you know like people have look to me and my family.

BROWNING: After all this happened and Jim was re-employed – they, they kept Jim, was there –

SALEH: Sorry.

10 BROWNING: That's alright Karl. Was there ever an inquiry into the Il Buco?

SALEH: No. Until now there's no inquiry about Il Buco.

STOCKLEY: So they were wanting to sack him over the Il Buco, Il Buco, but then they whole issue just got dropped?

15 SALEH: It got drop. They – no one want to, want to you know like something. You know like this is for god sake, you know like it's something like they speaking about four, four star or five star hotel actually, they using five star hotel and, and the ratepayer money. They speaking about this and that is why they use this with me because they know I'm, I'm bit you know like with this issue I, you know like I'm you know like not, you know I  
20 can say my, myself is very clean, but just, just I feel, feel why they want to spend this money and then ratepayer, they want to actually people with housing commission, with the housing department, if they want to ask for \$1,000 assistance, for financial assistance, they want to have big problem.

BROWNING: Yeah.

25 SALEH: Yeah no like that's is my, my position on that.

STOCKLEY: Karl can I ask you do you think that they used the Il Buco issue in relation to Jim Montague to try and get you –

SALEH: Of course.

STOCKLEY: - on side because they knew you would respond?

30 SALEH: That is all because I'm not you know like I'm not with them in a panel.

STOCKLEY: Yeah.

- SALEH: I don't know what's happen in the panel.
- STOCKLEY: Yeah.
- SALEH: I don't know Spiro, I don't know the other one, I don't know  
(unintelligible). Only because they know, I just said to them you know  
5 like we should investigate this issue. We shouldn't actually, we should,  
everyone who attend this Il Buco has to be liable for this, you know like  
we have to know. Why we should actually when we want to meet with  
constituent or with resident, we have to actually invite them to the Council  
and give him tea and biscuit and then they have a meeting with them in  
10 Il Buco.
- BROWNING: What – did Council have a policy about meeting people?
- SALEH: Well not as such.
- BROWNING: Or was it, or was there a general accepted –
- SALEH: No, no general, general accepted but you know I want to tell you  
15 something. For me, for me if I want to meet with constituent actually, I  
meet with him in the Council. I ask him coffee or tea and biscuit, that's,  
that is where, where – or water alright. This is, is not the Council practice  
to go to Il Buco to have good wine. You know like if you go to the, to the  
20 newspaper you see the wine actually, they about \$50 or a \$100 or \$150.  
And, and Councillors use this, a few Councillors is went there and then,  
there, and use this (unintelligible) and send the, send the bi, the invoice to  
the Council and that's you know, yeah.
- BROWNING: I guess, I just want to go back very briefly generally about meetings that  
Councillors had, not at the Il Buco but –
- 25 SALEH: Yeah, yeah but that's, that is the issue actually –
- BROWNING: But I guess that –
- SALEH: - where um –
- BROWNING: - I guess the same issue applied though. Would it be acceptable to meet a  
developer or a lobbyist in a coffee shop or a, or at their business premises?
- 30 SALEH: I don't think so.
- BROWNING: Okay.

- SALEH: I don't think so.
- BROWNING: And were there rooms where the meetings could occur at Council Chambers for Councillors?
- SALEH: Well in Council Chambers or you know like yeah, should be, should –  
5 where, whereabouts, what's this?
- BROWNING: Well if a Councillor wanted to meet with, or a developer wanted to meet with the Council, a Councillor, were there rooms available within the Council building for that to occur?
- SALEH: Well of course, of course we have three room for the meeting. We have  
10 meeting in the planning department. I, I want to tell you one example actually. Once is actually I been asked for someone to organise a meeting to see if rezoning something. When I sp, when they speak about rezoning I got headache (Laughs) and I call, I call Marcelo – and I know this is, this is in, in Moxa [?] Road. They want to (unintelligible). I –
- 15 BROWNING: Which Road, Moxum?
- SALEH: Moxa yeah, and I call you know like Marcelo. I ask Marcelo to organise a meeting, not me.
- BROWNING: Yes okay.
- SALEH: I said this is the phone number. Go organise a meeting and if you want  
20 me to be there, I'll be there. If you don't want me to be there don't worry about it.
- BROWNING: Okay. And were Councillors given Code of Conduct training?
- SALEH: I attend a few you know like, I'm still you know like, we, we you know like I attend you know like in local government –
- 25 BROWNING: Yes.
- SALEH: - department I rely to them a lot, but yeah they have a workshop sometime. They have something but –
- BROWNING: Would they have that with newly elected Councillors?
- SALEH: Yeah, yeah.
- 30 BROWNING: So the begin – up to the 2012 election, would've, did the Councillors have to attend Code of Conduct training and other training?

SALEH: Well I attend a few of them in, in Department of Plan and, and Department of Local Government myself actually yeah. And if I have –

BROWNING: Did you organise that though or did Council organise that?

SALEH: I organise it.

5 BROWNING: Okay.

SALEH: I organise it but Council pay. This is, this is where I can say to you the Council pay -

BROWNING: Yeah.

SALEH: - you know the training, not, not (unintelligible).

10 BROWNING: Alright, I've got one last question.

SALEH: Yeah.

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]

25 SALEH: [REDACTED] Actually when they – and, and they have a meeting actually once in, about the amalgamation in, in Pierre Azzi place. You know like I'm, I'm not sure if you're aware about this.

- BROWNING: (Unintelligible).
- SALEH: I, I, I learned from the newspaper.
- BROWNING: You weren't invited?
- SALEH: Well I'm not, I'm not part of the group.
- 5 BROWNING: Right.
- SALEH: Yeah no like even, even the Liberals invited, Michael invited and the, Carlos [?] four and form other Councillors (unintelligible) and, and people. Well why? Jim invite. This is after you know like this is after. Okay. I never, I never you know like this is how, how I act. I'm happy  
10 where, where I am.
- BROWNING: Yes.
- SALEH: You know like I'm happy where I am. I'm not saying that because I'm, I'm in front of you, I'm saying because that is myself.
- BROWNING: Yeah.
- 15 SALEH: You know like.
- STOCKLEY: Yeah I've just got a couple of –
- SALEH: Yeah.
- STOCKLEY: - clarifying questions.
- SALEH: Oh yeah.
- 20 STOCKLEY: So in regards to the recruitment of Stavris, I understand that your evidence to us is that you were really left out of the loop in terms of what happened with that recruitment. Did you at any stage prior to Stavris being recruited become aware of particular Councillors who wanted, who preferred him at the candidate?
- 25 SALEH: No, no, no actually no, no, no. All, all the – when, when they talk to me, they talk to me you know like a, bar this. About the panel, about the panel maybe you know like they didn't talk to me about the panel because I'm not part of the panel.
- STOCKLEY: Okay.

- SALEH: Like I don't know who's who, you know like.
- STOCKLEY: Okay.
- SALEH: It's – but eventually they, they, they know what they're doing, I'm not sure, I'm not sure why, why – if I'm on a panel I can, I can tell you –
- 5 STOCKLEY: No, but that wasn't discussed with you then?
- SALEH: No, no, no, no.
- STOCKLEY: Okay.
- SALEH: All, all he wanted to discuss with me about Jim, you know like always you complain about Jim, you complain about Brian, what did Brian do and something.
- 10 STOCKLEY: Okay. In regards to the extraordinary meeting and the move to terminate Jim Montague's contract, you mentioned to me that – or mentioned to us in the interview that Hawatt, Azzi and Adler spoke to you in terms of trying to –
- 15 SALEH: Yeah.
- STOCKLEY: - encourage you to support their position. What sort of things did they say to you to try and encourage you to support their position is sacking Montague?
- SALEH: About the Il Buco, about you know align with Brian and do what he like to do, what's something. And I know, I know they, they friend. Like you know they used to be friend, now because they got the split, they want, they want me and my vote. I know that –
- 20 STOCKLEY: Yeah.
- SALEH: - I know that, but this is – they, they only, they only try you know like to use, to use this issue, my you know like my challenge or my, my tension between me and, and –
- 25 STOCKLEY: Yeah.
- SALEH: - and something, they only that. Because they know I – if, if they want to actually speak to me about any DA or something, they very careful, they very careful to not speak to me about this. You know like because they
- 30

know, they want to try to win me. If they want to try to talk to me about you know anything else, they know I'll become (laughs) like yeah.

STOCKLEY: Yeah so what you're saying is they think that, that they – or they know that they're not going to be able to sway your opinion.

5 SALEH: Yeah that's right -

STOCKLEY: Okay.

10 SALEH: - because only, the only, only their job but I made my mind and the – I feel I have to stand where I believe. I believe if, if I'm in the same position, I've been accused by wasting ratepayer money, I should be doing the, I should be under investigation. The investigation gets report and then we vote for report. We not vote for someone you know.

STOCKLEY: Yeah.

SALEH: And I got my opinion and, and I want to keep it for myself.

STOCKLEY: In terms of Fadwa Kebbe, she's Labor -

15 SALEH: Yeah.

STOCKLEY: - as well as, she. What's your relationship like with her?

SALEH: I have no relationship with her.

STOCKLEY: Did you ever get along well with her or?

SALEH: No way.

20 STOCKLEY: No?

SALEH: No –

STOCKLEY: Okay.

SALEH: - no, no. It's, it's – yeah she's a, she's a funny you know like she's a one – yeah, yeah – I don't want any (unintelligible).

25 STOCKLEY: Okay.

SALEH: She think yeah.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

10 STOCKLEY: And in regards to the Il Buco issue, obviously the media got hold of that.  
Do you know how the media got hold of it?

SALEH: I'm not sure, to be honest with you I'm not sure how, you know like. Kate has actually called me after, you know like. I, I'm not sure you know like to, to, to date you know like when, when she call. I'm sure she call me after because that is the, 29<sup>th</sup> of January is it?

15 STOCKLEY: Yeah.

SALEH: January after, yeah, yeah.

STOCKLEY: Yeah.

BROWNING: Two days later.

20 SALEH: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. It's a – she called me after, but I don't know you know like.

STOCKLEY: Did any of the Coun – do you – did any of the Councillors who are trying to have Jim Montague sacked mentioned the Il Bucco issue to you prior to it appearing in the media?

SALEH: I only, I only see the, the news in, in, in, in the Sydney Morning Herald.

25 STOCKLEY: Alright so that's the first you heard of it?

SALEH: That is what the first heard of –

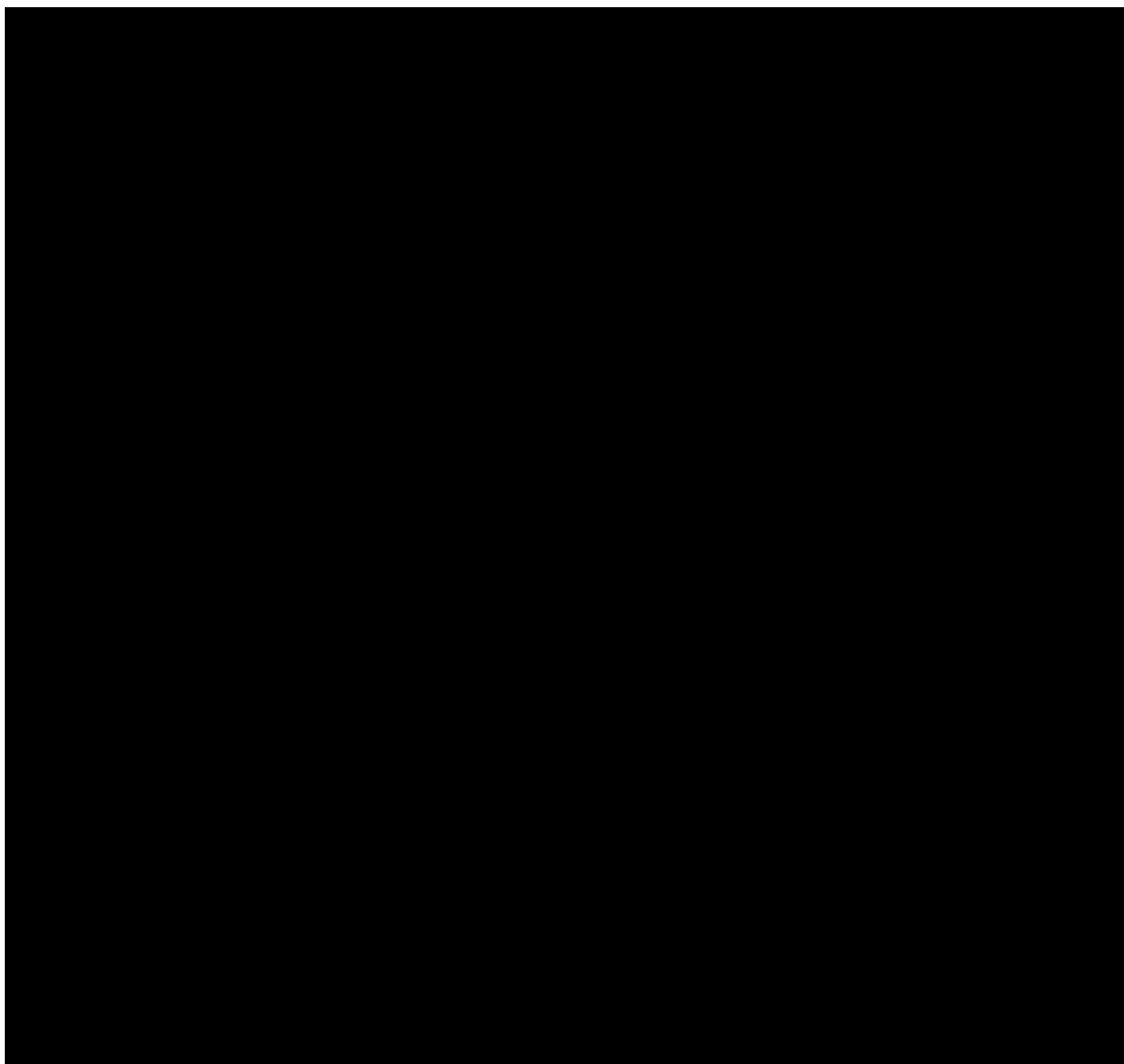
STOCKLEY: Okay.



5 SALEH: - I heard of them. Then I got shocked you know like that's the bit to be honest with you. I remember, yeah I think, I think he should, he should learn, he should know better, he should know better. And, and the – and everything, everything what's, what's the – actually Kate saying something, who attend this, tell, tell you know like. We actually look very bad you know like I come to – this issue's a problem for me you know. 'Cause people think you know like, they, they actually damage our reputation.

STOCKLEY: Yeah.

10 SALEH: You know like they think we only there to, to spend money and to, to get money and that's something. Why we should get, get this you know like because some, some people do, do, do the wrong thing.



- STOCKLEY: Was there any – sorry, just one more question while it pops into my head – was there, was there any particular developments – as you mentioned, that they generally didn't come and lobby you for developments because they knew that you weren't interested –
- 5 SALEH: Yeah.
- STOCKLEY: - but were there any developments that were discussed over those pre-Council dinners or that they approached you about where they, they were you know pressuring, pressuring you or advocating their positions strongly, more strongly than others?
- 10 SALEH: I don't think so, I don't think so. You know like -
- STOCKLEY: Nothing that stands out –
- SALEH: I, I –
- STOCKLEY: - in your mind?
- SALEH: - don't think so. I didn't, I didn't remember you know like, like but, as I  
15 said to you, this is my policy. My policy's actually if I got, if I got the – I don't have you know like any meeting with Councillors. That's just, that's just is very important. I don't have any meeting with other Councillors with a developer.
- STOCKLEY: Yeah.
- 20 SALEH: I, I reluctant if, if they want to do it, they, they don't try you know like to be and that's with you. In – and I never, I never you know like go – because I, I believe this is suspicious, this is suspicious. If we go, if we want to actually see us as a (unintelligible) that's why you know like, when you say about, about this Kourouche and – I, I never you know like I  
25 didn't do that. I'm not a, stupid to do that.
- STOCKLEY: No that's fine.
- SALEH: Yeah. I'm not, yeah.
- STOCKLEY: We're not accusing you of anything, you understand –
- SALEH: No, no, no, no, no, no -
- 30 STOCKLEY: - that don't you?
- SALEH: - I know, I know you know like I know myself.

- STOCKLEY: Yeah we're - what, what the process is with the investigation is we collect information from different people and documents and things and then we need to speak to people and find out what actually happened. So that's why -
- 5 SALEH: Lisa, Lisa -
- STOCKLEY: - all we're asking you.
- SALEH: - Lisa.
- STOCKLEY: Yeah.
- SALEH: Lisa yeah I, I'm actually when, when Andrew ring me, I, I you know like I  
10 would, I would like to come and help you -
- STOCKLEY: Yeah.
- SALEH: - you know like that is my impression. When he call me I didn't get his phone number, I didn't get something you know like -
- STOCKLEY: Yeah.
- 15 SALEH: - and, and I'm happy to be here, I'm happy to put my statement forward and yeah, yeah. I, I know -
- STOCKLEY: We appreciate that.
- SALEH: - I, I yeah, I know your position. You try to do, to do your job in the right way and benefit of our community. Always I, I you know like I consider  
20 this very highly actually yeah and, and, and when - because this, this is what's happened. My wife is actually working community service. I am, I work in community service. I'm part of the board of, of, of few board. When I hear this - and we should have, we should have a clean people in public office. That is where, where we, we stay. And, and I think during  
25 25 years of my community work I'm, I try to do my best, I try to do the right thing.
- STOCKLEY: Yep.
- SALEH: Sometime I rude, I'm not angel you know like but that's something, but  
30 I'm, I'm actually - I don't regret actually come to this meeting and my position for the, for the any, any iss -
- STOCKLEY: Okay.

- SALEH: - that is where –
- STOCKLEY: No thank you.
- SALEH: - where I stay.
- STOCKLEY: No that's it, I'm –
- 5 SALEH: Alright.
- STOCKLEY: So I'll stop bugging you now. (Laughs).
- SALEH: Alright. No, no alright.
- BROWNING: Karl do you have any concern with how Lisa and I have conducted the interview?
- 10 SALEH: I think I'm happy and you do it, you do a professional way and you try to get the information from me and try to do this in my ability.
- STOCKLEY: That's okay, we'll tell our boss we're professional. (Laughs).
- BROWNING: We'll get you, we'll get you to tell –
- SALEH: No, no, no. It's alright (unintelligible).
- 15 STOCKLEY: That's alright.
- SALEH: It's, it's fine, it's fine.
- STOCKLEY: Okay.
- SALEH: It's not like –
- BROWNING: Oh excellent. So the time now is 3.55 and I will cease -
- 20 SALEH: I, I –
- BROWNING: - the interview.
- SALEH: - I ask you for two hours, you said to me no.