

Election spotlight on meters

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Parking meters are promising to be a controversial election issue next year, with Coogee Liberal candidate Jonathan Flegg vowing to launch a parliamentary inquiry into the "use and abuse" of pay parking by councils.

Mr Flegg said the inquiry would also examine the "unethical tactics" employed by parking officers.

"It has been quite clear for some time there has been misuse of parking meter provisions in the Eastern Suburbs and it's causing a large amount

of angst and disharmony in our community," Mr Flegg said.

Maroubra restaurateur Louis Ajaka said parking meters had "devastated" business at his Bronte restaurant.

"RTA guidelines prevent councils from using parking provisions for revenue raising," Mr Ajaka said.

"An inquiry would be able to respond to the community's widespread suspicion that this is currently happening.

Former Randwick mayor and lifelong Maroubra resident Charles Matthews

also launched a similar campaign earlier this year, when he announced the formation of a political party titled the No Parking Meters party.

However, Randwick mayor Paul Tracey defended the council's 162 metered spaces at Coogee beach, which he said were mostly used by tourists.

He said that the council "very rarely gets complaints on its parking meter program".

"Our city has a lot less parking meters than other areas of Sydney and we police our meters fairly," he said.