

Sent: Thursday, 26 February 2015 1:05 PM
To: IPART Mailbox
Subject: Coffs City Council proposed Special Rate Variation

I am a Coffs Harbour City Council ratepayer and I am objecting to the proposed 2015/2016 rate rise Council has asked of IPART.

I say a clear and very loud NO to a 16.5 per cent cumulative increase over two years to be retained permanently in the rates base. This is in addition to 7.9% already approved for 2014/2015.

Last year, IPART refused to permit Council's application for three consecutive rate rises above the pegged limit due to Council's lack of communication with ratepayers of the likely impact. Only one was allowed.

This year, Council's recently completed mail and online survey of residents logged a 71% objection to Council's rebranded rate rise scheme, but Council ignored the survey results and has applied regardless.

In their latest survey to ratepayers, true facts were not revealed and several figures were misleading. The survey itself online could be filled in several times by the same user without IP blocking.

Council has a proven record of waste and mismanagement which includes fruitless legal costs in cases which it lost and incurred massive judgements against it.

Councils who fail to show good governance should be sacked.

Good governance involves reviewing your costs and finding ways to reduce overheads, finding ways to streamline processes to improve service and reduce costs, yet CHCC has not undertaken these measures before requesting the rates increase. Before any increase is granted these measures should and must be done. No need for exorbitant junkets to other countries for research on projects by Councillors and staff, The internet and Skype can give you the same results, the amount of money wasted on these junkets is outrageous.

The [REDACTED] running this council do not have the skill set to be able to conduct good governance and as a ratepayer I should not have to continue to struggle to exist so that others incompetence can be rewarded. If funds are tight then privileges and bonuses and other benefits should be stopped. Why ratepayers have to fund an expensive vehicle and the FBT costs involved for each of the [REDACTED]. They only need a small two door car to travel to meetings anything else is pure greed. They get enormous salaries so they can fund their own luxury vehicles, it should not be a cost the ratepayers should have to cover especially when funds have been mismanaged.

We suffer a high unemployment rate and rising pensioner numbers.

They are now removing penalty rates from workers in the tourism industry so my salary will now drop. How am I expected to pay for these pigs in the trough when my real wage is and has been going backwards every year.

We have a low median income level and the rise will badly affect landowners as well as producing a major flow on effect to renters.

Council has for years been propping up unviable services not benefiting the community in a fair and equally distributed way.

Many of our streets do not have sealed paths or curbing. Yet they can find \$1.4 million to erect a roof over a parking lot. The street I live in is over 15 years old and still there is no footpath on either side of the road to walk on safely, after all the rates money pumped into the council.

It collects nearly a million dollars a year in environmental rates yet has not allocated significant funding to reduce waterways pollution.

Council spends an inordinate amount on 'special events' of a sporting, entertainment and cultural nature yet does not account for the ratepayers portion of these expenditures. The continuing subsidies of these events provide a cushion preventing the incentive of events to raise money through non-ratepayer means.

Businesses's should be supporting and paying for the building and sponsorship of sports and entertainment in this council area, not Council. Sponsorship and Entertainment is not a core function of a council and it should not compete in this area, its limited funds should be used for it's core functions only.

These are several reasons for my total objection to any Special Rate Variation and I wish to have my objection officially registered.

Sincerely