



05/03/21

I am writing regarding the Special variation in rates requested by Liverpool Plains Council.

I am against this proposed increase for many reasons, and must say the money spent by the council to make their case, and the use of outside contractors in its preparation, have not helped convince rate payers that council need or deserve this special variation.

The rate payers are not the councils' fairy godmother. The Council have not behaved in a businesslike manner in regard the handling of quite a substantial amount of Rate Payers and both State and Federal Monies which they have had made available to them.

I would suggest the council, as interest rates are at record low levels, should be required to seek a commercial bank loan to cover the proposed shortfall in funding they suggest they are going to face.

This may make them behave in a more professional manner. The preference they seem to have to subcontracting tasks that could be handled better and cheaper by council employees, suggests a tendency in providing jobs to outside applicants may be because they are using money that does not have to be accounted for. Or it isn't closely monitored for, *value for money*, as it's either State or Federal government funded or they have had the opportunity to get more from ratepayers than originally agreed to.

Whilst I am not suggesting corruption in the handling of outside contracts, it is something that would not be as inviting if they actually had to account closely for and repay the borrowed funds used outside of the yearly running expenses.

It becomes apparent when those chosen as managers feel their work is not appreciated or feel they do not have the necessary input to improve efficiencies in the workflow. This comes about often when owners tend to micro manage or in more complex chain of command situations, such as council and similar organisations an Elected Representative may tend to improperly influence decisions better made by council staff and management. Whilst the intent may be perceived as helping, this influencing must be avoided.

Should IPART feel that this particular request by council has merit, then I **suggest it should be contingent on the inclusion of a pre-arranged repayment plan** for the Council to repay Ratepayers by way of discounts off Rates for the following 3 years. This would then counter the 3-year planned theft of funds from the ratepayers. Otherwise with the compounding effect of the Special Variation increase, the council would in effect be forever well ahead of projected rate increases.

Yours Sincerely,

