

**From:** Amanda Glen [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Thursday, 10 March 2016 11:07 AM  
**To:** IPART Mailbox  
**Subject:** Clarence Valley Council

I am writing in an attempt to show you the seemingly ineffectual workings of the Clarence Valley Council.

I have been a welfare worker/counsellor working in private practice in the Clarence Valley for almost 20 years (I hold the relevant degrees for my employment) and am in touch with the day to day workings of residents that seek assistance through either counselling or in need of welfare intervention. I am a Salvation Army Chaplain, a Justice of the Peace and also a ratepayer in the Shire.

This correspondence is a request for a higher Government body to investigate the workings of this Council.

I am concerned with the financial impacts this mismanaged Council will have on welfare recipients who valiantly try and survive on the less than poverty level of income per fortnight.

Councils ongoing mismanagement and recent submission of a 37% SRV will bring further poverty to families and children. The social ramifications of increased poverty bring community increases in crime and other social problems as people endeavour to survive on very little.

I understand that Council is a business that is run for the betterment of the community and are supposed to listen to their constituents. This is not happening, and it would appear that they operate as a law unto themselves, with little regard with whom they are serving.

The debt that this Council has incurred and the relevant backlash to residents insofar as increased costs and debts, will have a detrimental impact on a good majority of the people who live here.

Prior to amalgamation with Grafton City Council, Maclean Council was in a very healthy financial situation and should have been left as a stand alone Council. This, however, is my own personal opinion.

Council documents and minutes of their meetings can be accessed online at their website.

I list below my understanding of the Clarence Valley Councils workings over the last 10 years.

1. Lead us into \$70M dollars debt, and owe the now failed European Bank, Dexia Clarence Valley Councils total debt is in the vicinity of \$150M.

2. Ignored public requests in regard to McLachlan Park in Maclean and wasted \$250K.

3. Council wants to build an industrial depot in a residential area and processed the Development Application during the school holidays when a good majority of the local ratepayers were away. There has been little, if any, public consultation for this depot with residents in the same street, not aware of the project, let alone the traffic increase, lack of parking, noise, nocturnal lighting etc. Council is also proposing to approve its own D. A. this proposition is opposite an already busy State Public School. It has also come to light, that this proposed site is also on an asbestos dump site which is currently under investigation.

4. There is uncertainty with the cost of this 'Super Depot'.
5. Council dismantled the Award Winning Tourism Association in favour of the contentious hand picked one by councillors. This area thrives on Tourism, and it would seem (to the writer) suicidal to axe this program.
6. Attempted to silence the public with an unjust petition policy.
7. Has so many "commercial in confidence" (secret) deals, including where advertising monies are being spent; Council legal fees; and the mismanagement of our drinking water.
8. Misleading the public into believing that the proposed SRV, was the price of a cup of coffee. The fact now being that Clarence Valley has just passed a resolution to go ahead with a 37% increase. Nominated by the Mayor, Richard Williamson. Craig Howe seconded the motion. For: Williamson: Howe: Lysaught: Hughes: Kingsley: Against: Baker: McKenna: Simmons: Toms:
9. Attempting to sell off assets in a fire sale in an attempt to recoup their finances to cover the huge debt this Council has incurred.
10. Completing invalid surveys and making decision based on them.
11. Attempting to process an unprecedented and exponential rate rise. This rate rise will bring further disparity between the 'haves' and the 'have nots' . It will rise further poverty in the area and cause undue stress to those that can least afford it.

Thank you for taking time to read this application.

Yours truly,  
Amanda Glen .