

Alison Milne
Director Local Government
PO Box Q290
QVB Post Office
NSW 1230



1/3/2014

Dear Ms Milne,

In reply to your letter dated, 16th December 2013, I believe Kempsey council has now submitted an application for a special rate increase.

I would like to put forth my objections to this special increase, these are;

Council has already received a special rate increase last year, and it is ludicrous to think that it is affordable for rate payers to yet again be hit with rate increases for this year and another two years there after.

I am a single pensioner and my pension increases for last year was about six dollars a week, as I told council, my electricity bill, car insurance, house insurance all went up in price, even getting a hair cut went up. My Golf has gone up a dollar every time I play, which is only once a week. I might add I can only afford to go to town twice a week due to the price of petrol, once for golf and once for shopping and to dispose of my rubbish as I do not even get the privilege of getting my rubbish collected weekly by council.

When I go into town I see more and more shops closing down due to the economy and the fact that people have no money. Kempsey has high unemployment with 12% or more.

You said in your letter that council have to show where they are spending their money, I would encourage you to look at the reply council gave, you will see council have three priorities on their list. Firstly the C.B.D, then comes Southwest Rocks , which is a seaside town and then comes ++++ Crescent heads which is another seaside town, the rest of the shire gets the crumbs.

I moved to my present address 7 years ago and it still does not have a tar-sealed road, curb and guttering or town water.

The gravel road in front of my house is unbearable. The tar-seal is 1km away and council had told me it was to be continued for another 2 km's, going past the front of my house, but then the council said they ran out of money and there will be no more tar-sealing of gravel roads. My point being is that I would have not bought my place if council had not told me that the road was going to be tar-sealed.

Last month a councillor came out herself and told me they may be able to do a temporary seal for \$15 000, which isn't much considering some of their roads are costing over \$700 000.

If council is so hard up for money, and with [REDACTED] road still not fully tar-sealed, why has the council given the Slim Dusty Foundation \$100 000? The council have said it was a contingency fund. At the end of the day when it is all said and done, it is still rate payers money and the rate payers who have to foot the bill, and for what? My Grand daughter and Great Grand daughter asked me who Slim Dusty was?

I also have trouble with council over trees from council property knocking over fences on my property. The council have provided no help at all in this matter and insisted I myself go and cut the trees down and clear the land, when I informed them I was ■■■ years old and it was 39 degrees outside, I was told to go pay someone to do it for me then.

You might ask what has all this got to do with a rate increase? It just goes to show poor people on the land are being asked to pay for the rich in town to have a better life, even they at least get their rubbish picked up weekly.

I also do not see why we need 9 councillors for a population of 28 000, in 2011 the council promised a referendum on the issue, which never came because the councillors themselves decided to keep the number at 9 councillors. I won't bore you with all my thoughts but I will say that council has too many chiefs all running around with tax payer funded cars costing thousands of dollars each year and also a lot of broken promises, yet they still want to hit us hard where it hurts our hip pocket..

I will close with a remark from the General Manager, when I asked where will I get the money for the increase of rates from, his answer was "you will just have to find it".

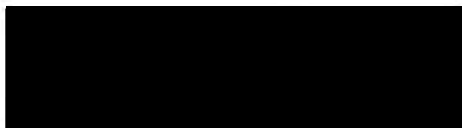
Please, Please NO SPECIAL INCREASE to the rates, do not let council fool you by asking for a big increase, hoping to get a smaller one more often.

Previously council has had 7 meetings regarding rate increases, at which the rate payers were generally not happy about, then the council decided to do a phone survey and I know from experience, you can ask questions in all kind of manners, then say would you mind a small increase in rates and before you know it, it is a done deal.

This is what happened last time, and not what rate payers had said they wanted at the 7 meetings, but what questions were asked on 400 phone calls.

I hope you can take on board what the rate payers are asking for and not what council wants. Please just give the normal rate rise, we simply can't afford any Special Rate Rise.

Your sincerely,



Alfred Hickman



From: [REDACTED]
To: [Local Government Mailbox](#): [REDACTED]
Subject: [REDACTED] special rate rise correspondence from Alfred Hickman
Date: Saturday, 22 March 2014 2:20:08 PM

Alison Milne
Director of local government

21/03/2014

Dear Ms Milne,

Thankyou for your letter dated 12 March 2014, I am a bit worried about your letter, I get the impression that council is giving the wrong idea about rate payers input for the Special Rate Rise.

Yes council do have the people who can make it sound as if they really do need the rate rise. Some of the criteria is summarised namely the integrated planning, \$700 000 for plumers rd, and yet they tell me they have no money to spend on the dust bowl called [REDACTED] road.

Council has also given the Slim Dusty foundation \$100 000 towards building funds and from all reports it will probably never open.

I asked for a temporary sealing of [REDACTED] road but council has said it would cost approximately \$15000 to do this, and they have no money, do u think that council have it right? \$700 000 to tear up Plumers road, a perfectly good road and then re-seal it, against \$15000 to alleviate the dust bowl which is [REDACTED] road.

I did offer a \$1000 towards the cost of re-sealing [REDACTED] road, even though I am a single pensioner, council has stated that no gravel road will ever be tar sealed in the future. My question and argument is this, are we to pay rates as well as the Special Rate Rise council is asking for when we have no water supply, no garbage collection, and council expect us to clear council land when rubbish encroaches on our property namely trees and weeds.

I say again council has not asked the rate payers if they agree to the rise.

I might add, it has been reported on NBN television, channel 8, that 74 people in Kempsey lost their jobs when the Kempsey bypass was completed in March last year. Ask these people if they can afford the increase!

Council should cut their costs and reduce the number of councillors it's also ridiculous that council workers still have a 35 hour working week when others are working long hours just to survive.

I am sorry I cannot be more articulate when putting my case forward objecting to the Special Rate Rise, against a council, who has the means and know how to properly put their case forward and therefore gain an advantage over people like myself.

I saw my doctor 2 days ago and without me mentioning anything about the proposed Special Rate Rise, he started about the increase, he then went onto say that "no-one can beat the council".

All I can say is that I have tried, my only wish is that you, Ms Milne, and others related to this Special Rate Rise, think hard about what I have said and think about the impact and hardships this Rise will inflict upon us rate payers.

It's now up to lpart to support the wishes of the rate payers.

I give lpart permission to publish part or all of my correspondence regarding this matter.

your sincerely,

Alfred Hickman

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]