

**From:** IPART

**Sent:** Tuesday, 18 February 2020 10:32 AM

**To:** Local Government Mailbox <localgovernment@ipart.nsw.gov.au>

**Subject:** ANONYMOUS

**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** Tuesday, 18 February 2020 10:14 AM

**To:** IPART <[ipart@ipart.nsw.gov.au](mailto:ipart@ipart.nsw.gov.au)>

**Subject:** Attached Image

**To:**

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**Subject:**

SPECIAL RATE VARIATION PROPOSED BY LISMORE CITY COUNCIL

As a ratepayer, property owner, business employer and local resident, I wish to lodge my objection to the Lismore Council's application for a SPECIAL RATE VARIATION, with a cumulative increase of 24% Permanent s508A.

Lismore Council thinks this is the only way to cover their costs- hit the ratepayers!! Plus there would be no decrease after this 4 year period!

It has now come to light, in 2020 that the increase from land valuations taken in 2019, added to our rates from July 1<sup>st</sup> 2020. This will be a big increase WITHOUT adding a special variation of 7.5% in 2020/21.

The Lismore community is outraged at the poor governance shown by the Council.

Not only is the Council located in an area above the city centre with its offices and many other community facilities, it is also distanced from what is happening in the CBD and what is needed. A further protectionist attitude which shows the lack of complete community understanding, is employing security guards(funded by ratepayers) to attend Council Meetings. Why is this necessary we ask our selves! Surely the community is SO fed up with the incompetence of the Council and poor decision making that they are sick of the situation. This is the only place they can be heard, as on- line surveys are ignored by the Council anyway!

Get real Councillors and stop wasting collected rates on self- protection, not to mention funds used to refurbish Council offices and give themselves a pay rise as has been the case.

Lismore ratepayers, already pay higher rates than the surrounding shires of Ballina and Casino and are the sixth highest rates in the State. The Lismore area has pot- hole roads, poor road edges, poor drainage, washed out bridges, old sewage systems, filthy streets, need I go on. Unfortunately living in the basin area, not every street even has a footpath, despite being near a major Northern Rivers Private Hospital, adequate lighting, roads that are sprayed with hot mix, that melts and stones fall off the surface! Surely these are just basic facilities a ratepayer should expect! So why has the rate money been squandered over the years?

Poor past decisions on some projects have been a joke-a painted rainbow on a busy one -way street, which quickly lost its colour from traffic and needs maintenance of \$5,000 a year ! An ugly piece of metal art cast as an ark, raising above the flood water, as Lismore continues to go under with heavy rains. To add further insult the artist employed was not even a local! Little if any maintenance made, to keep the open drains clean and pumps serviced for future floods. Rubbish costs a fortune to deposit at the tip and much of it is sent to other locations anyway, surely ratepayers are entitled to better!

Lismore community is struggling, businesses are closing weekly, stagnant wages, lack of any new industries and poor infrastructure, coupled with many residents on support services and pensions. It is not a high socio-economic area ,so to be hit with massive increases in RATES is not advisable. How will people pay as cost of living goes well beyond the CPI ? Many unpaid rates will result, more homeless and destitute people, lack of a vibrant downtown retail sector and disgruntle ratepayers. Natural disasters like floods and fires have cost this community dearly.

The experience of the Council, with the General Manager and two executive directors leaving in the past two years, has left a void of knowledge, understanding and commitment to the town .The voted Council is not a true voice of ratepayers, with unbalanced interests and lack of drive to expand and invigorate business/tourism. How many of the Council workers live in the Lismore region? Ratepayers cannot carry an increased burden of higher rates! The Council has a large work force, which ratepayers question if all jobs are necessary , considering the public outcomes.

The whole submission process for the SRV was rushed and flawed by the Lismore Council. The Mayor pushed through the process from the Extra Ordinary Council Meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> November, with 3 Councillors away. The Mayor used his casting vote rather than wait for the full Council to discuss the proposal in full. The results of all the

consultation processes were never fully released to the public, as the Lismore community said a resounding NO to this rate rise.

The delivery program was on public exhibition for 28 dates up to February 10<sup>th</sup>. Was this a convenient time for the public to view such an important document, over a school holiday period? Is the Council relying on ratepayers lack of knowledge and holiday time to push this proposal?

However an even more important point was the fact that application and submission for the land valuation rise must come BEFORE, an SRV application can be submitted or appeal given. All the more reason to make this SRV totally null and void.

I am totally against the excessive financial burden this present Council is wanting to impart, on Lismore's struggling community. No SRV to be allowed!

