

LG Submission Form 2020-2021

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Question	Response
IPART Special Variation Submission Form	
Industry	Local Government
Review	(LG) Special Variations & Minimum Rates 2020-2021
Document Reference	
Select Council	Lismore City Council

<p>If you have any general feedback regarding your council's proposed SV, please leave your comments in the comment box below.</p>	<p>Lismore Council has reached the current situation as a result of ongoing mismanagement and continued focus of spending on areas beyond it's core business. A continuing focus on the development of sport and art facilities in a misguided attempt to draw people to the City has seen the deterioration of the road system over a long period.</p> <p>We have been rate payers in the Lismore Council Area for some 35 years and over that time have watched the ongoing decline of Lismore as a Business Center, despite vast amounts of council moneys being spent an poorly planned "business development" activities, consultations and physical CBD upgrades, while at the same time effectively pricing business out of the CBD with increasingly unaffordable rate levels.</p> <p>The fact that this Council was deemed "Fit For the Future" can only suggest that the process was a token review of Local Government or that the information supplied by Lismore City Council was inaccurate.</p> <p>This rate increase is not supported by the majority of ratepayers, despite claims of appropriate "Community Consultation", and will not solve the problems of this Council.</p> <p>The numbers supplied simply do not add up, and any rate increase such as that requested, will only serve to cause financial hardship to ratepayers who are already struggling, and postpone the inevitable.</p> <p>The Council should be sacked, and the operations put in the hands of an administrator, with a view to an amalgamation of all Councils in the Northern Rivers Area.</p>
<p>Your comments on Criterion 1:</p>	<p>The Council is relying on broad generalisations to support the application. There is no sound evidence of community need/desire for most service levels/projects proposed by council beyond the satisfactory repair and maintenance of the road system.</p>

Your comments on Criterion 2:	<p>It is clear that the Community is aware of the extent of the proposed rate rise, but not the need.</p> <p>The figures quoted - an extra \$30,000,000 (approximately) over a ten year period is hardly going to have an impact on the CURRENT \$59,000,000 road maintenance backlog, much less the further deterioration which will occur over that ten year period.</p> <p>Amounts spent on vague business development proposals, for which no concrete plans are forthcoming, is simply throwing good money after bad.</p>
Your comments on Criterion 3:	<p>The impact upon ratepayers can hardly be seen as reasonable, given the level of financial hardship that is being experienced by a great many of the residents of the Lismore City Council Areas. This increase will necessarily be reflected in rent increases, in an area where affordable housing is already a major issue, and commercial rentals are already prohibitive.</p> <p>This Council has made much over the years of addressing the affordable housing shortages, but has done nothing but make the establishment of such models increasingly difficult.</p>
Your comments on Criterion 4:	

<p>Your comments on Criterion 5:</p>	<p>Once again, the Council speaks in abstract generalisations.</p> <p>The list of "Cost Containment Strategies" published when the Council was found to have a \$20,000,000 cash deficit, involved scrapping, or deferring, a large range of proposed activities. The majority of those listed were planning activities, involving currently employed council staff, all of whom remain employed - so no actual savings would be achieved. Once again, an exercise in the use of Smoke and Mirrors!</p> <p>The council quarry, which was apparently making substantial losses, was closed down, meaning all road materials now need to be purchased from other successfully run quarry businesses. Obviously a business failed because of bad business management, followed by further poor business decision making.</p> <p>The [REDACTED] responsible for the financial debacle is apparently still employed, as are the Councillors who oversaw the failings of the operations.</p> <p>At the same time as attempting to shift the blame for the financial problems of the council, and convince ratepayers of the need for extraordinary rate increases, those ultimately responsible - the Councillors - granted themselves a pay increase, with the then [REDACTED] publicly attempting to justify the action on the basis of the amount of work they were required to undertake.</p> <p>Council has not put forward any real or believable productivity improvements or cost containment strategies, either past or planned.</p>
<p>If you have attachments you would like to include with your feedback, please attach them below.</p>	
<p>Your Details</p>	
<p>Are you an individual or organisation?</p>	<p>Individual</p>
<p>If you would like your submission or your name to remain confidential please indicate below.</p>	<p>Anonymous - my submission can be published but my name should remain anonymous</p>
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<p>Last Name</p>	

Organisation Name	
Position	
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IPART's Submission Policy	I have read & accept IPART's Submission Policy