

LG Submission Form 2021-2022 - Applications

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IPART Special Variation Submission Form - Applications

Industry	Local Government
Review	(LG) Special Variations & Minimum Rates 2021-2022
Document Reference	
Council	Georges River Council, Special Variation Application

If you have any general feedback regarding your council's proposed SV, please leave your comments in the comment box below.

Overall strong objection to Council's application for a rate rise based on insufficient evidence of their ability to manage existing revenues, and examples of weak or poor community engagement in contrast to examples documented in their community engagement report.

Council should have to demonstrate 2 years of successful financial management and administrative discipline before receiving further financial support from residents.

A number of resident/ community groups have been formed to discuss issues with council and council has failed to take their input on board. The disconnect between these well represented community groups and Council on a number of key issues (Carss Park Pool, Todd Park, Car Park Sales, fence around Beverley Park Golf Course, rate increase under the guise of harmonisation) are not reflected in the documentation supplied by Council which therefore indicates the documentation suggests a better quality of engagement with residents on key issues than what is happening in reality.

Your comments on Criterion 1:

Community needs have not changed sufficiently to warrant an increase in rates. Councils prior to the amalgamation supplied front line services and managed to balance the books.

Your comments on Criterion 2:

Council claims to have made 2 million plus contacts across a variety of issues. This number is extraordinarily high given the number of people in the GRC area (57,000 ratepayers per council's community engagement report submitted as part of the variation request).

There is a difference between how many materials were printed off and how many actually reached rate paying residents. Council has not supplied evidence that this volume of materials were received by and read and understood by 2.3M contacts over multiple issues.

There is also a history of this council using tactics to shut the community out of decisions since over 100 residents attended a council meeting in 2019 to protest the erection of a fence around Beverley Park Golf Club. Since this time council has tried to hold council meetings in closed sessions and Cr Green has managed selected council meetings in such a way as to avoid public protest. Recent sales of car parks in the area is a good example.

Your comments on Criterion 3:

The variation fails to address a foundational issue - GRC is unable to manage a budget that was previously well managed by two separate councils. Rate payers SHOULD NOT have to provide more more money to a council that has proven it cannot manage existing revenues.

Council must evidence they can responsibly manage existing inflows before further funds are contributed and potentially spent inefficiently.

Your comments on Criterion 4:

Your comments on Criterion 5:

Council fails on in number of areas:

- 1. The number of expensive senior management positions specifically in Gail Connelly's team is excessive when compared to the number of residents and management structure other councils eg Sutherland, Sydney City.**
- 2. Council has consistently stated that front line services would need to be cut if the rate increase doesn't get approved. They have not considered decreasing excessive management overhead costs**
- 3. Council budget is in the top ten of worst managed council budgets which is evidence against this criteria**
- 4. Council has spent ratepayer money to fight issues that have already been decided eg Beverley Park Golf Course Fence.**
- 5. Council has failed to recover expenses owed from other sources eg property developers (per SMH article 21 Dec 2020)**
- 6. Council last year requested to take over selected foreshore areas from Bayside. Council cannot fund existing responsibilities and sees fit to expand its responsibilities without first successfully managing its existing responsibilities**

If you have attachments you would like to include with your feedback, please attach them below.

Your Details

Are you an individual or organisation?

Individual

If you would like your submission or your name to remain confidential please indicate below.

Anonymous - my submission can be published but my name should remain anonymous

First Name

Last Name

Organisation Name

Position

Email



IPART's Submission Policy

I have read & accept IPART's Submission Policy