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Date of submission: Tuesday, 7 March 2017

Submission: It is my belief that the special increase in rates requested by Ballina shire council should not be allowed. The Ballina shire is made up of a large number of pensioners and persons on government benefits. The set income many of are on just covers our day to day living costs, and I am even now behind in my last payment of rates. I believe that the council should operate within its financial means, and budget accordingly. If savings are to be made, every area of cost cutting, ie administration, and unnessessary projects should be put on stand by until the council can afford them. one perfect example is the closure of lake Ainsworth road, the legal cost and infrastructure costs are an area of expenditure that is not warrented. There are areas of land being developed at the moment that will increase dwellings by over 1000 homes over the next two years, and council its self is a commercial land developer. it appears that the bulk of any increase will be spent on the waterways and there health, but this will make no difference until council, and surrounding councils, enforce and check the run off from sugar cane fields. There are areas that I that the council has not investigated fully, like sharing major plant and equipment costs with BYRON SHIRE COUNCIL, who have also applied for a special rate increase. The council is charged with providing infrastructure and services to the residents of the shire. As a business they must operate with in there means and if that results in budget reviews, and the reduction in some services that is just how business works. The council owns large parcels of commercial premises in the town centre, and has been the developer of the industrial estate just out of town. with its assets at such a large holding the council should seek other ways of raising funds by either borrowing of selling off some of its holdings. It si my opinion that the standard rate increase that occurs is sufficient for the council to operate on.