

Letter of objection to Richmond Valley Council's Application for a Special Rate Increase February 2019

Firstly I would like to say thank you for allowing the ratepayers of Richmond Valley Council the opportunity to voice their thoughts and opinions on the application for a special rate variation. It validates this process as a fair and equitable one.

As a resident and ratepayer of the Richmond Valley Council (RVC) area I would like to express my very strong objection to the RVC's application for a special rate increase of 5.5% over the next four years.

RVC is a diverse council area with a large portion consisting of rural properties and villages and one small coastal town where a significant number of pensioners live.

Given the catastrophic impacts of the current drought on rural communities, both economically and emotionally, and given the high cost of living affecting families and pensioners, I wonder if RVC have **really considered** people's capacity to pay an increased amount on top of their current rate notice (given that we have also just completed a 5 year cycle of a special rate increase that was granted to RVC).

If RVC **truly** represent the people of their constituent they would have had **a genuine and extensive consultation process** with the broader community (not making decisions on a survey of 2% of RVC population as quoted on their website) to gauge people's real concerns and wishes in regard to rates and how council utilizes the money. After all it is the people's money they are spending and they are there to represent the people.


At a time when money is tight for all, it would make economic sense for the council to maintain rates at the lowest possible level and focus on the provision of basic infrastructure such as roads, water and waste.

I'm sure most people would like to be able to access more money so they can fulfill their needs and wants, but unfortunately that is not always possible. So good economic management sense tells us that we need to restrict spending and make cuts where possible so that we can maintain sound financial management of our current needs.

Perhaps council could look carefully at it's needs and wants and see where they can restrict spending and make cuts so they can manage ratepayers money and run council as a sound financial institution.

I look forward to hearing that you have considered **all** points of interest, all aspects and impacts of RVC application for a special rate variation of 5.5% each year for the next four years and that you make a decision that gives due consideration to the ratepayers who will bear the financial cost of this decision.

Yours sincerely


Concerned ratepayer of RVC