

Author name: [REDACTED]

Date of submission: Monday, 13 March 2017

Submission: From: [REDACTED]

Sent: Thursday, 9 March 2017 6:14 PM

To: Local Government Mailbox

Subject: Ballina Rates

Dear IPART

I have recently discovered, via local media, that the Ballina Shire Council has applied to you to implement two 'special' rate increases above the pegged rate, and that these are to compound and become a part of our annual rate base.

I understand that Council is required to have undertaken public consultation on the matter before making this application to you.

If such consultation did actually take place, it must have done so with minimal publicity and invitation for public involvement. As a resident of the Shire I've seen or heard no invitation from Council to have any say on the decision. Such debate as I've been aware of has been conducted solely in the Letters pages of our local newspaper.

I don't believe this is an adequate forum for 'public consultation'. The arguments supporting the rate increases which I've seen in those Letters pages have been, frankly, unconvincing. Vague references to being "fit for the future" or to address funding for particular projects which are already questionable in their accounting (e.g. the expanding budget for the local pool that itself remains a divisive matter).

I would ask that in considering Ballina Shire Council's submission you consider this resident's view that Council has acted in a manner wholly inconsistent with the values stated and promises made at the last local government election. Approving the application would send a message that the views of the ratepayer are in truth not important, other than as something to be paid lip service to on polling day.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]