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Submission: The community has been totally ignored over 70% of rate payers have opposed the rate increase. The 7.5% p/a over six years is well over any increases in the household income of the major portion of Port Stephen rate payers. One of the proposals listed by council on the spending of a huge amount of the money is the beatification of town centres, this is not warranted as well as a few other proposals put forward.

Taking into the account the financial pressures already on the majority of rate payers pensioners, self funded retirees, young families that are doing it tough the increase is going to make it hard to pay these increases. The SVR will only benefit the top end of town and will only put more financial burden on the majority.

The council have played the line that they will look at those cases that are in financial stress and could make arrangements this is not much comfort (you still have to pay eventually).

I have attended a few meeting and the council has played a planed con game and have endeavoured to make it appear why the rate payers NEED the increase despite an overwhelming opposition.

The latest figures supplied by our local member:

70% of rate payer that contacted council opposed the rise, including 75% of residence in a phone poll.

Councils are elected by the people for the people not there own agenda.

A few councillor even had the hide to apologise at one council meet for voting for the SVA to proceed, over resident No vote. This was document in the local paper.