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**To:** [Local Government Mailbox](#)  
**Subject:** Ratepayer submission in response to Bellinghen SRV  
**Date:** Wednesday, March 07, 2018 2:13:30 PM

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## **Ratepayer submission in response to Bellinghen Shire Council's SRV application 2018/19**

As a ratepayer living in Bellinghen Shire, I wish to voice my objection to Council's proposal to increase rates by 19.1% over the next 3 years.

### **Reasons for Objection:**

1. Affordability. As a self-funded retiree on a fixed income I cannot afford to pay such high increases on top of what are already high rates. This will add significantly to my cost of living. A comparison with rates paid by a relative living in Sydney shows that Bellinghen Council's rates are 17% higher, even though the land's value is much less and the services provided by Bellinghen Council are inferior. In Sydney there is sewerage, but I have a septic tank and have to pay an additional fee on top of my rates to have it inspected.

2. Council's communication to ratepayers of the intended use of this extra funding has been woefully inadequate.

3. There are many ways that Council could run much more efficiently than it does and make substantial cost savings.

There are almost as many indoor staff as outdoor staff. Indoor staff numbers could be pruned, as happens in other organisations.

The General Manager and 2 Deputy General Managers between them earn \$650,000 per year, Plus a car each. They could take a salary cut or use their own cars.

Council ridiculously spent \$75,000 to remove a camphor laurel tree from the main street.

Council allegedly spent \$150,000 of ratepayer money settling a confidential legal dispute, yet ratepayers are unable to find out the nature of the complaint or the details of the resolution/settlement, or the names of the people involved. This is a clear lack of transparency in the way our money is spent.

Please ask Council to improve efficiency in their own operation rather than passing their cost over-runs on to ratepayers.

Yours sincerely  
Bruce Champion

