

From: BG&D.Clarke [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, 27 June 2017 1:39 PM
To: IPART Mailbox
Subject: regarding submission by Mid Coast Council for 28.5% rate rise

With regard to the submission by the Mid Coast Council to Ipart for a rate increase of **28.5% !**

We live in the Tea Gardens/Hawks Nest area, which is a very popular retirement destination. However this also means that a large number of residents are pensioners. We are on the aged pension and when we moved here in 2002 the rates were already high by Sydney standards but still within our means.

However, over the past 10 years there has been a steady increase in the rates, many well above the CPI, until we now live in one of the highest rated councils in N.S.W.

In February 2017, the Mid Coast Council announced that it did not need a rate rise as its finances were in good shape, but now it is stated that a \$160 million hole has somehow appeared which necessitates this outrageous rate rise proposal.

There is also the matter of how Mid Coast Council managed to obtain an exemption to actually apply for this rate rise ???.

What has been published is that the Administrator contacted a politician that he previously knew to arrange an exemption, which does not sound altogether ethical.

There is also the matter of community consultation which in my opinion as been sadly lacking, also lacking was an adequate amount of information about how the exemption was obtained and why the very large increase is needed barely 4 months after the council said there was no need for any increase.

Again, from information published in our local press, and by talking to other ratepayers, it appears that at least 55% of people who were surveyed were against any increase, but the official report has somehow managed to turn this around into 80% in favour.

Therefore the points that we want to lay before Ipart, and for which we are asking serious consideration are as follows :

1. There are at the present no elected representatives to represent ratepayers on the council
2. There has been no discussion regarding the current Special Rate Variation proposal (SRV)
3. How and why was the Act to restrict rate increases for 4 years with regard to merged councils, mysteriously changed to exempt Mid Coast Council?
4. Survey results and the actual wording of the surveys are unclear! 55% of those surveyed indicated that they would be "inconvenienced" (???? - the word should be burdened) ! How has this been turned around into 80% in favour ?? ...there would appear to be a blatant manipulation of the figures to say the least.
5. Finally there is the documented fact that in February 2017 Mid Coast Council announced that an increase would not be necessary because savings had been found.

Surely, in a matter which has such a great impact on the lives of residents, then at least local representatives to council should be elected so that everyone can get the correct information and also have an opportunity to have their voices heard. I believe elections are scheduled for September 2017 which is not a long time to wait.

yours very sincerely

Barrie and Dinah Clarke

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27th June 2017