

[REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, 23 February 2019 5:55 PM

To: Local Government Mailbox <localgovernment@ipart.nsw.gov.au>

Subject: Port Stephens Council SRV

Hi

I tried to do it on line and got an error message and am now using the email address suggested.

Thanks

Barry and Janet Elliott

IPART Submission re Port Stephens SRV

Barry and Janet Elliott Salamander Bay 2317

1. Three of the Councillors voted against the proposed rate increase on the grounds that the majority (in excess of 70%) of ratepayers consulted and/or surveyed did **not support** the increase and could **not afford** the increase.
2. The local member for Port Stephens (Kate Washington) has publicly expressed she is disappointed "*the Council is continuing to rate hike when the majority of the community is clearly opposed to it*" arguing no-one she has spoken to supports it and Pensioners, single parents and families were telling her they can't afford to pay more.
3. The Mayor (Mr Palmer) **claims** the community are requesting more than the Council can provide with the current income but is discounting the fact that the community is not willing to accept the proposed rate increase and **expects the Council to live within its means like most ratepayers.**
4. The existing facilities enjoyed by ratepayers apart from road maintenance are second to none as those of us who have lived elsewhere are fully aware. Much of the Council's **wish list** are in the category of "nice if you can afford them", i.e., non essential.
5. As self funded retirees on a part pension, our income is unlikely to increase anywhere near the rate needed to pay for my future Council rates taking into account the Council's proposed compound cumulative increases. We struggle to pay our existing rates like many retirees, being supposedly asset rich but income poor. Our current rates amount to \$923.00 per quarter or \$3692 annually including the pensioner allowance. If the Council's SRV is approved our annual rates in 7 years time will be \$5928. **Thanks to compounding in 7 years time our rates would be 60.56% higher than today's rates.**
6. According to the latest ABS Census Port Stephens LGA has a much larger incidence of ratepayers aged 60 years and over (28%) versus the average across Australian LGAs (16%), confirming the issues relating to affordability raised by a majority of ratepayers, some Councillors and our Local Member of Parliament.
7. Our submission is to request that the **Port Stephens Council's SRV be rejected** in the interests of the majority of the ratepayers by respecting their wishes and in keeping with role expected by ratepayers of Local Government.

