

From: William Roberson
Sent: Thursday, 5 March 2015 5:15 PM
To: Local Government Mailbox
Subject: TRIM: Rate rises

The local government team, Hi.

In February 2014, IPART granted Coffs Harbour City council, a 7.9% rate increase. In October of the same year, the council issued a brochure entitled, "Cultural Facilities" what do you think?

A strong case was put forward for acceptance of a proposal to tear down a perfectly functioning library and build a fancier one, and among other things, construct a facility to accommodate opera and ballet facilities. A rate rise of 18.72% was required to fund this vital requirement [after all, how can the "mink and bling" set survive without it?].

Recently another survey titled "Funding Our Future" was circulated. Protracted detailed statistical [and almost incomprehensible] analysis of our bread and butter infrastructure was delivered. Some of it may have been genuinely indicative, who would know? but it was designed to engender a feeling of dire need to address funding problems in one of ONLY TWO ways: vote "A" and face apparent collapse of essential facilities like; roads, water, waste disposal etc. or vote "B" and agree to a 16.5% rate increase.

In this heavily loaded question, there's not much option, however coupled with the 7.9% already awarded, over 24.4% will be council's grab. The proposal was overwhelmingly rejected by the rate payers, but even after council's very expensive survey ostensibly to seek our approval, it has ignored the result and will apply for the rise anyway.

The bottom line is, council is stating it has allowed our infrastructure to deteriorate to dangerous levels and needs our help to rectify it's neglect. That in itself is bad enough as the 24.4% rate increase will have a huge impact in many quarters, but almost unbelievably it wants to plunge us into an additional \$40.6 million worth of debt, with estimated continuing costs of \$6.583 million per year, to enable the realization of our "VITAL" cultural facility. With compounding effects, rate rises of over 43.12% will be asked.

These statistics come directly from councils own brochures.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

This council has no comprehension whatsoever in regards sustainable budgeting, and regards rate payments as an ever accessible bottomless pit to be plundered. Many members of council have strongly campaigned to abolish rate pegging, [and I presume IPART], but without your powers we rate payers would be in dire straights.

Team members, I implore you to reject this outrageous council application as I'm convinced application for an administrator would be much more appropriate.

WE ARE IN YOUR HANDS

With respect
Bill Roberson