

**From:** Kim Stahl [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, 8 March 2016 12:06 PM  
**To:** IPART Mailbox  
**Subject:** Local Government SRV Submission

To whom it may concern

The Singleton Council SRV submission should be rejected for the following reasons.

1. The council did not make the case for the SRV in the brochure provided to rate payers. Council attempted to make the case in a series of dot point "challenges". None of the challenges were structural matters, generally they were short term or one off constraints which could be considered as minor. No detailed financial information was provided to give the magnitude of the costs. I made a submission as requested by council giving detailed analysis of the information they provided, and I asked a number of questions. I requested a response to my questions and none was provided. So much for community consultation!
2. The council is (IPART) rated as not being efficient. The council did not provide any plan to improve their efficiency. By definition **efficiency** is Operating Expenditure per Capita. With no plan to reduce expenditure and by increasing rates their expenditure will increase per capita, therefore the council will become more inefficient.
3. The most significant issue is the lack of Community Consultation. As discussed above the council did not respond to submissions and answer questions. The council had a consultant undertake a survey. These types of surveys are a waste of rate payers money. They are designed to provide the council with the answers that they want or, more importantly, not the answers that they do not want. A legitimate question could have been "Given that the council is inefficient should the council improve its efficiency by reducing costs or should the council increase your rates to pay for their inefficiency"? The previous council SRV (Road Infrastructure maintenance) included Community Information Sessions and submissions to Council meetings. I attended one of the Information Sessions. The overhead spreadsheet that was presented did not add up! To justify the expenditure a consultant report was distributed (I retain a copy) which did not justify the SRV, in fact it demonstrated that the increased expenditure was not required. Although the Information Sessions was poorly organised at least it gave concerned rate payers an opportunity to get some questions answered. It also demonstrated mismanagement by council. The point is that the council has not include Community Information Sessions, or the ability to make a submission at a council meeting, for this current SRV. This demonstrates a lack of transparency and honesty.

In summary the Singleton Council did not make the case for the SRV in their glossy brochure. The council did not respond to questions from rate payers in their requested submissions. The Consultant Surveys are designed to look after the clients best interests and do not reflect the actual views of the rate payer. The council deliberately avoided concerned rate payer scrutiny by not providing Community Information Sessions or the ability to present concerns at a council meeting. Effectively Community Consultation was non-existent therefore reflecting a lack of transparency and honesty by the council. The Singleton Council SRV should be rejected due to the failure to be open and honest with rate payers.

If you require a copy of my submission, or the Consultant Report, please let me know.

Yours Sincerely,

Mr Kim Stahl