The Armidale Dumaresq Council’s rate variation application is overly onerous and made without the council making any measures to make cost savings internally.  The Council has been misleading and deceptive to the community regarding all aspects of this application and has been advertising that it has the majority of the community’s support. It does not which was publically admitted by the Mayor.

When our local area committee was 'consulted' NO mention of the fact that the application was to be for a 7-year period was made.  This has been an absolutely underhanded attempt at a money grab, when ADC has made NO attempt to ensure internal efficiencies are made.

I have written to all councilors and attended several Council meetings, and it is obvious to anyone who takes an interest, that the Councilors themselves are not fully informed on decisions that they are voting for and are divided on the application being made.

A friend has told me that she was called to partake in the phone survey.  Due to her age though (she is well into her 70's) she was told that she did not meet their demographic profile.  I am sorry, but she is a ratepayer and her voice should not be silenced due to her age.  This is an appalling tactic taken by council.  It is an attempt to disempower minority community members.

As a rural ratepayer, we represent 10% of the ADC population, though we bring to council 25% of their income.  We do not get services in line with our payment.  While I do not begrudge paying my fare share of rates, over the 7 years that is proposed, this would equate to over $21,000 for me.  As a rural landholder, I am unable to absorb this size increase.  I have no control over market prices and seasonal conditions.  Things are tough enough as they are with out this additional burden.  This is something that Council would be aware of if their consultation had of been effective. Our costs are rising the same as Councils and we are experiencing a decrease in income. We are required to run our business in these conditions and suggest that the council should be doing the same. The frivolous waste of money the ADC constantly displays is appauling and I would urge you to decline any such application and suggest that the Council should be dismissed and an administrator appointed.

Regards

Mark Connock