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Submission: IPART's mission statement says "IPART provides independent regulatory decisions and advice to protect the ongoing interests of the consumers, taxpayers and citizens of NSW". The vast majority of current Clarence Valley Councillors (CVC) were elected on a platform of "no special rate increases". This was clearly stated in their campaign literature both online and at pre election meetings. In a so called Democratic society, the main vehicle the community has to project their democratic right is our election system. When councilors say they will do one thing, then once elected do the opposite it makes a mockery of this democratic process. When surveyed by the Council, the vast majority (over 70%) of Clarence Valley residents clearly said they did not want or support in any way a special rate increase. CVC rates are already among the highest in NSW, this in a region with high levels of socio-economic poverty, and low employment levels. We also have a high number of retirees both on Government pensions and self funded through their superannuation. These people simply cannot afford such high increases in the cost of living without increased hardship. In summary; The majority of CVC Councillors were elected on the platform of "no special rate increases", the community overwhelmingly opposes such an increase, and if implemented a Special Rate Increase of this magnitude will seriously harm the community IPART pledges to protect.