

Good morning [REDACTED]

I received IPART's email outlining the draft report response to CCC submission for a rate increase.

The community that follows this is extremely disappointed and feel as this has been published their concerns have already been dismissed.

Water rates will rise 19% in July and then 4% per year for the next three years which equates to an increase of 34% by 2025/26 when you include compounding.

Pricing regulators exist to protect customers from monopoly pricing, but IPART has approved CCC SRV with general rates for 3 years which just prompted council to push again. CCC had no respect for IPART's decision making process hence the push within 6 months with ongoing objections and the continued slaughter on ratepayers for their 10 year rate hike.

When CCC doesn't get everything it wants it simply reapplies the following year - in effect an appeal - whereas we are given no right of appeal against IPART's decisions.

IPART's processes have been stacked in favour of CCC which has spent millions lobbying for rate hikes, even commissioning expensive consultants to make its submissions. We make our own submissions in our own time.

CCC has been given opportunities for behind the scenes lobbying and relationship building. We are refused such access.

These include monthly meetings with IPART on both the water rate application and the Special Variation. It is clear from CCC's own public comments that these meetings have gone well beyond mere "technical assistance." IPART has refused to release the minutes of these meetings.

How can council be pre approved of a (draft)rate increase when the ratepayers haven't reached the deadline for input?

Council either needs the increase for immediate action or no immediate action. Part granting an increase just allows more money wastage on councils behalf. A one off increase over 12 months would provide an influx of funds to use for long term improvements followed by the general standard increase applicable. Drip feeding funds doesn't even make sense.

The council should be selling the water department and using the funds to repay the debt and get back onto the much needed maintenance in the area. The CEO during the enquiry stated that "IPART DOESN'T CARE" about councils problems it faces with water however IPART is pre-approving their application! In his meeting with [REDACTED] or the enquiry he speaks of the issues council face with the water dept!

If council truly wanted to improve the financial crisis they put us ratepayers in they could hold a referendum on our thoughts. [REDACTED] outlined the reasons perfectly himself with [REDACTED]! Council can sell water and be done with it!! Residents want the nature strips mowed. The potholes fixed! Their calls answered! Their emails returned! Sell the water and get on with maintaining our beautiful suburbs. We have had enough.

As far as IPART insisting council must be transparent with ratepayers that's with respect, frankly laughable! There has been no transparency where \$1,000,000 dollars was spent recently. I could go on and on about transparency but that's another subject all together.



I also won't go on about the former administrators rush to pay out millions in redundancies and sacking the CEO with a \$380,000 payout and now [REDACTED] finds himself in court with a defamation case against him! The ongoing rubbing of salt into the wounds of locals that love our homes and are proud of our suburbs and community spirit never ceases to deeply disappoint us all the while we fight so hard to stop being forced to bail CCC out! The rising cost of fuel, food and living after the devastation of covid and the ongoing push for us to bail council out of its extremely poor operational practices is just too much of a burden. Both emotionally and financially. Sell the water and be done with it!

Residents are reminded every time we leave our homes that we are stuck with the worst council in the history of Australian councils. The proof is in how hard it is for council to keep our suburbs tidy but all we hear is how much more hard earned money they need from us ratepayers. It's an insurmountable deeply felt burden on a daily basis!

Thank you for taking the time to read this email

Regards
[REDACTED]