

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Local Government Mailbox](#)
Subject: BSC - Proposed Rate Variation
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The current application by Ballina Shire Council for approval of a special rate variation is certainly not in the interests of the shire ratepayers. The Council purports to have the support of the majority of stakeholders for this increase but fails to address the impact on the many fixed income residents of the shire be they home owners or tenants who will bear the impact by way of rent rises. The many small business owners in a struggling local economy who lease premises will also bear this impost as owners pass on the rate rises to tenants. This of course in an environment of low or no wage increases, minimal pension rises and a continual increase in the number of local residents living below the poverty line.

This application is unconscionable in such an environment.

Council argues that the rise is necessary to maintain assets. Unfortunately they have an extremely poor record in this area as evidenced by the current unnecessary upgrades to the shire swimming pools. This so called upgrade was submitted to ratepayers by way of a referendum which resulted in an overwhelming vote NOT to undertake the project as it was to be funded by another increase in rates. Council chose to ignore the will of the ratepayers and proceed with the works. As expected there has been a significant increase in the original budget and many inordinate delays in completion.

It is time that this Council is brought to account and as with all businesses and households learn to live within its means and not continually call upon residents to fund their inefficiencies. Instead of regular applications for rate rises perhaps an external audit of council practices is more than necessary.

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