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Submission: The Council has abused the process of consultation in its approach to this increase. In its persuasive advice to rate payers it states: "The NSW Government established its Fit for the Future Program in 2014 / 15, where all councils in NSW needed to identify how they would comply with a range of financial criteria to demonstrate that they were financially sustainable. Ballina Shire Council, in responding to this program, included in our submission a proposal to increase our general rate income above the standard rate pegging limit for the three year period from 2017 / 18 - 2019 / 20...." The council had already locked ratepayers into a rate increase above the standard pegged increase prior to the consultation process of public meetings and invitation to make a submission to council. The same applies for the Council's 'healthy waterways' program under which it is seeking an additional rate increase of 1.5% for the rating period 2017 / 18. This too has already been included in the Council's Fit for the Future response. The consultation process has been abused, and these rate increases follow on from the very recent application (last year?) for an above the standard pegged increase to fund our swimming pool upgrades.