

LG Submission Form 2021-2022 - Applications

Submission date: **7 March 2021, 10:55PM**
Receipt number: **379**
Related form version: **2**

IPART Special Variation Submission Form - Applications

Industry	Local Government
Review	(LG) Special Variations & Minimum Rates 2021-2022
Document Reference	
Council	Central Coast Council, Special Variation Application
If you have any general feedback regarding your council's proposed SV, please leave your comments in the comment box below.	<p>The impact of the increases being sought are unreasonable and will have a significant financial impact on ratepayers causing hardship for some. The timing of these rate increases being sought shows no empathy for the current economic situation being experienced by many due to the COVID pandemic, with some ratepayers having lost jobs, or hours, and having had reduced income for a period. And at a time when we are experiencing very low inflation, and virtually little or no growth in wages, Council is putting in for this exorbitant 15% special variation to help get itself back in the black, after it's own financial mismanagement. And this 15% increase if approved, will increase the rates that we pay this next rating year, and this will compound further future rate increases, when the percentage increases in future years are calculated on this increased base. And on top of this increase ratepayers in the former Gosford council area, are apparently going to experience a further increase in rates, over and above the 15% special</p>

variation being sought, due to the harmonisation increases which are legislated to occur this year also. I have this week read in a local community newspaper, that due to both of these factors some ratepayers in the former Gosford Council area could experience up to a 42% increase in rates, if these proposed increases are approved to come in to affect in the next rating year. How can any of this be fair at any time, let alone in this current economic climate. Why should ratepayers solely bear the cost of Council's financial mismanagement. We need an inquiry to find out how this happened, and how it was allowed to happen. In this age of computerised Accounting systems, audits, Annual reports etc. why was this deficit allowed to grow and fester for so long, over 4 years, seemingly unnoticed, or at least unpublicised to ratepayers, before the NSW Government stepped in appointing an administrator / auditor. Why should ratepayers be solely held to account, and provide the pockets for council to reach in to for extra funds to try and recover from their deficit. And what measures and oversight are there in place to prevent this type of thing happening again in the future. What changes if any are being proposed to prevent this type of situation in future. Apart from Council employees, or Councilors being possibly complicit in arriving at this deficit, I am also extremely disappointed at the State Government, and the apparent lack of systems and oversight in place to detect or prevent this type of situation of an extremely large deficit occurring in the first place. The ratepayers deserve answers. And answers too about whether the amalgamation of Wyong and Gosford Councils, forced on them by the State Government, played any part in adversely affecting the financial situation of the new Central Coast Council, since it was inaugurated back in 2016. The reason for the proposed 15% special variation increase being sought is unfair, and also the quantity of increase being

sought in one year is unreasonable.

Your comments on Criterion 1:

Your comments on Criterion 2:

As a residential property owner in the former Gosford Council area, I have only this week become aware of the fact that our rates could rise significantly this year due to a harmonisation of rates due to the forced amalgamation of Wyong and Gosford Councils, in to Central Coast Council, back in 2016. I learnt about this only from a news article in the 26th of February edition of Coast Community News. I have received no information from council that I am aware of how much my rates may increase due to this harmonisation.

I have received information with regard the special variation of 15% increase being sought, in a letter dated 13th of January 2021, addressed 'Dear Ratepayer' and under the heading, "Securing your future". This heading in itself is an insult. It's not about securing my future, but about bailing out our Central Coast Council for it's mismanagement of it's finances over the past 4 years, culminating in a reported deficit over over half a billion dollars. It should have been titled "Money grab from Ratepayers to bail out Council."

Your comments on Criterion 3:

The impact of the increases being sought are unreasonable and will have a significant financial impact on ratepayers causing hardship for some. The timing of these rate increases being sought shows no empathy for the current economic situation being experienced by many due to the COVID pandemic, with some ratepayers having lost jobs, or hours, and having had reduced income for a period. And at a time when we are experiencing very low inflation, and virtually little or no growth in wages, Council is putting in for this exorbitant 15% special variation to help get itself back in the black, after it's own financial mismanagement. And this 15% increase if approved, will increase the rates that we pay this next rating year,

and this will compound further future rate increases, when the percentage increases in future years are calculated on this increased base. And on top of this increase ratepayers in the former Gosford council area, are apparently going to experience a further increase in rates, over and above the 15% special variation being sought due to the harmonisation increases which are legislated to occur this year also. I have this week read in a local community newspaper, that due to both of these factors some ratepayers in the former Gosford Council area could experience up to a 42% increase in rates, if these proposed increases are approved to come in to affect in the next rating year. How can any of this be fair in this current economic climate. Why should ratepayers solely bear the cost of Council's financial mismanagement. We need an inquiry to find out how this happened, and how it was allowed to happen. In this age of computerised Accounting systems, audits, Annual reports etc. why was this deficit allowed to grow and fester for so long, over 4 years, seemingly unnoticed, or at least unpublicised to ratepayers, before the NSW Government stepped in appointing an administrator / auditor. Why should ratepayers be solely held to account, and provide the pockets for council to reach in to for extra funds to try and recover from their deficit. And what measures and oversight are there in place to prevent this type of thing happening again in the future. Apart from Council employees, or Councilors being possibly complicit in arriving at this deficit, I am also extremely disappointed at the State Government, and the apparent lack of systems and oversight in place to detect or prevent this type of situation of an extremely large deficit occurring in the first place. The ratepayers deserve answers. And answers too about whether the amalgamation of Wyong and Gosford Councils, forced on them by the State Government, played any part in adversely affecting the financial

situation of the new Central Coast Council, since it was inaugurated back in 2016. The reason for the proposed 15% special variation increase being sought is unfair, and also the quantity of increase being sought in one year is unreasonable.

Your comments on Criterion 4:

Your comments on Criterion 5:

If you have attachments you would like to include with your feedback, please attach them below. [rates article 3.pdf](#)

Your Details

Are you an individual or organisation? **Individual**

If you would like your submission or your name to remain confidential please indicate below. **Publish - my submission and name can be published (not contact details or email address) on the IPART website**

First Name **Richard**

Last Name **Aichinger**

Organisation Name

Position

Email 

IPART's Submission Policy

I have read & accept IPART's Submission Policy