From: simon harman
To: Local Government Mailbox
Subject: clarence valley srv
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Simon harman
[redacted]

IPART

I oppose IPART granting Clarence Valley Council (CVC) a Special Rate Variation.

The CVC's SRV proposal is ill conceived and the CVC has not engaged with its ratepayers in good faith.

The CVC LGA population rates very low in census data regarding income and economc opportunity. The majority of ratepayers are economically stressed and cannot afford further financial impositions from council. Other council charges are also set to increase. Consideration needs to be given to the overall increases in rates charges.

CVC's SRV doesn't address the problem of being Fit For The Future. CVC's costs are out of control. A key problem is that CVC is significantly over staffed compared to other group 4 councils. CVC claims there will be a staff reduction of @25 positions but 16 of those positions didn't exist. This is just another example of CVC's cowboy approach. CVC is basically running a system of patronage financed by ever increasing rate rises. To make matters worse CVC is significantly raising costs by the increased use of outsourced consultant services in areas that are really core council business.

How will CVC use the extra SRV funds? According to its documents a full 50% will be spent on new roads. At @ $6 million / km that will be about 4 kms of new road!

I don't accept that this is the best way to use the funds generated by the SRV .

The CVC LGA already has about 1000kms of sealed road that it can't maintain.

CVC's current SRV plan doesn't appear to adequately address the fundamental issues facing council. I expect as a matter of course that once this SRV is done then there

will be further applications for SRV's by CVC after 2021.

The CVC's SRV public consultation was scandalous. The CVC issued a document

that purported to indicate what ratepayers could expect to pay over the next 8 years.

The numbers were incorrect and massively under estimated the proposed increases. These numbers* were also used by councilor [redacted] in news stories in the local newspaper, The Daily Examiner. *(document: CVC 10 year Rates Effect including SRV increase of 8% per year for 3 years: 2018/2019, 2019/2010 2020/2021)

Clarence Valley Council communications coordinator, [redacted] publicised a short video that was also misleading.

An SRV won't fix an incompetent council. An SRV won't fix a council that

approached the SRV public consultation in an ingenuous manner and largely thumbed

its nose at the process and ratepayers.