

Rate pegging should not be abolished but rather it should be structured so as to ensure that factors used to fund Councils includes funding of essential infrastructure and services such as roads, library, sporting fields etc. can be provided.

Council should not become solely reliant on IPART funding, but rather try to identify and utilize other sources of funding as well as identify real and potential savings. Council needs to embrace forward planning and prioritize realistic goals and community essential services instead of moving forward with services and developments which are not feasible or sustainable in the long term.

As a farmer I too would like to dictate not only when and who I supply my produce to as well as the price for my services and produce however this is unrealistic and I must live within the economic constraints placed upon my industry and my individual business. Farmers need to ensure that they make provision every year for unforeseen circumstances including flood, droughts, disease, oversupply and changes in consumer demand and tastes. Likewise Councils should also be ensuring that provisions are made and contingencies in place for changes that can arise to in government programs and focus.

Council should also follow the business model that industries are expected to operate under. There is not a bottomless pit of funds available and it is essential that Council priorities what services it wants to maintain and provide. It is not possible to expect that every development or activity that the communities would like is feasible or economically sustainable or justified. The community needs to be educated that their aspirations come at a price. There are costs associated with the provision of all services either directly or indirectly and that Council needs to be in a position to fund these aspirations not only in building new infrastructure but later down the track in maintaining the facilities and services.

Therefore while IPART may not be perfect I believe that it has an essential role to play in budgeting and sustainability, the Council needs to know that it is a two way street and that the developments that the community would like needs to be both sustainable and viable for the Council as well as the community.

Regards

Tony Ciccia