

Objection to Mid Coast Council Special Rate Rise 2017.

Three parts to the objection, first the method including community consultation Mid Coast Council conducted before the application to IPART. Second the inefficiencies from pre-amalgamated councils on why they are so far behind in capital works. Third, ratepayers can we afford it?

Part One, I understood no application would be made to IPART for a SRV from Amalgamated Councils until council elections are held in September 2017. The reason is simple, the democratic process is flawed with only one person making decisions, i.e. the administrator. To decide if an SRV application very limited community consultation was carried out, an extraordinary meeting was held at short notice on a week day and a decision was made by the administrator. Certainly not the democratic way.

Part two. There are many examples of inefficiencies and poor management from the three pre-amalgamated councils the very reason why capital works are so far behind. One example I watched with some close interest is the road outside my residence (Underwood), over the past four years. The road has never had line markings up till a few years ago. I came home one day to find double lines marked for the entire length. Looking at the line it did not appear to be in the centre of the carriageway. I contacted the council, the engineer was taken aback that the road had been line marked, it was a mistake a contractor got a bit carried away only planned to mark a connecting road. The lines were not in the centre as the contractor followed fire hydrant markings, there were no surveyed marking lines. I asked if they would be corrected, the answer was no the carriageway was still in spec it was too expensive to correct. A year later the road was prepared for re sheeting markers were placed for lines in the same incorrect line. I had to contact council for them to correct it before the new surface was laid. Edges were repaired and the road re-sheeted using low cost asphalt. Now just over a year later both carriageways have subsided but the edges have not. With any rain, there are now two tracks on either side of the road that fill with water. This creates erosion, the new surface is breaking up and there is a danger of vehicles aquaplaning.

Mid Coast Council has just spent a considerable amount of money marketing a new logo, designs and submissions carried out, there was some serious debate on colour schemes. Meanwhile we have three different library systems that have not been merged. I assume there are a whole cache of software that needs attention. BUT we have money for a new logo?

Part Three. MP for Myall stated Mid Coast residents can afford a rate increase above the limit, he is, as his party has shown out of touch. (Grey Hound Racing, Emergency Services Levy and Council Amalgamations). Wages growth is at an all-time low, CPI 2.1%, Power costs are increasing so is transport and do I need to mention housing? The rate increase application is 5% over 4 years which equates to around 25%, has anyone on a wage received a rise of that size? No.

The application should be refused it would not have been approved by rate payers before the amalgamation and no way should just one person as an administrator be allowed the decision.