

RE: Coffs Harbour Council Special Rate Variation proposal

I am a Coffs Harbour ratepayer and am objecting to the proposed 2015/2016 rate rise Council has asked of IPART.

I say NO to a 16.5 per cent cumulative increase over two years to be retained permanently in the rates base. This is in addition to 7.9% already approved for 2014/2015.

Last year, IPART refused to permit Council's application for three consecutive rate rises above the pegged limit due to Council's lack of communication with ratepayers of the likely impact. Only one was allowed.

This year, Council's recently completed mail and online survey of residents logged a 71% objection to Council's rebranded rate rise scheme, but Council ignored the survey results and has applied regardless.

In their latest survey to ratepayers, true facts were not revealed and several figures were misleading. The survey itself online could be filled in several times by the same user without IP blocking.

Council has a proven record of waste and mismanagement which includes fruitless legal costs in cases which it lost and incurred massive judgements against it.

We suffer a high unemployment rate and rising pensioner numbers. We have a low median income level and the rise will badly affect landowners as well as producing a major flow on effect to renters.

Council has for years been propping up unviable services not benefiting the community in a fair and equally distributed way.

Many of our streets do not have sealed paths or curbing. Yet they can find \$1.4 million to erect a roof over a parking lot.

It collects nearly a million dollars a year in environmental rates yet has not allocated significant funding to reduce waterways pollution.

Council spends an inordinate amount on 'special events' of a sporting, entertainment and cultural nature yet does not account for the ratepayers portion of these expenditures. The continuing subsidies of these events provide a cushion preventing the incentive of events to raise money through non-ratepayer means.

These are several reasons for my total objection to any Special Rate Variation and I wish to have my objection officially registered.

SIGNED: