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SENT BY EMAIL TO [lucy\\_garnier@ipart.nsw.gov.au](mailto:lucy_garnier@ipart.nsw.gov.au)

Dear Mr Cox

Review of Prices for Gosford and Wyong Shire Councils Ref 11/342; 11/644  
Review of calculation parameters for developer charges Ref 12/259

I refer to your two letters dated 19 February, 2013, relating to the above. With regard to reference 11/342; 11/644 you say "our decisions regarding the efficient costs of operating a water and sewerage business" and you state that Gosford City Council's "water and sewerage bills will increase".

Your ambit appears to be very restricted. GCC's water and sewerage bills are only part of Council's responsibility. It can be deduced from what little GCC makes public that it's financial policies leave much to be desired.

During the last eighteen months, from independent sources, the GCC has had savings of at least \$140 million which it has invested very unwisely and it has refused to openly discuss this matter with ratepayers. Much of this money has been lost with little success to date of recovery. There may of course be even more monies salted away of which ratepayers are not aware.

No Local Government Council needs to be saving ratepayers monies. Each Council receives annual ratepayers' fees plus levies as well as State and Federal funds. In addition each Council is allowed to increase the annual rate by the national rate of inflation. Should any Council need to make a substantial infrastructure expenditure (including water and sewerage) it may request the Minister for Local Government for permission to raise a special levy from it's ratepayers.

Gosford City Council has a poor record of building and maintaining it's public works. Roads appear to be made of corn flakes. Road drainage is non-existent on many urban roads causing many to become flooded causing a number of insurance companies (including the NRMA) to charge flood levies on their home insurance. This is despite the fact that residents have been paying drainage levies for thirty years or more.

The GCC has huge future responsibility for sea flooding both now and increasingly into the future and though warned of these problems thirty years ago, have done little or nothing about their responsibility.

Secondly the GCC is increasingly allowing our roads and parking areas to be destroyed by the largest/heaviest motor lorries delivering to Coles/Woolworths/Aldi and soon McDonalds, as well as garbage collectors, in overweight trucks.

Even though this Council's single biggest employer and income earner is tourism, much of the infrastructure to support tourism is either missing, dilapidated or misused. GCC has recently, very heavily supported a high rise complex of "investment housing" on public land including a huge area of Brisbane Waters, against the majority views of the people who live in this part of Gosford City Council.

In relation to the GCC proposed increase in drainage and water rates of 23.1% (\$244) over four years the owners of 38 Breeze Street have been paying stormwater and drainage rates for as many years as the GCC have been charging drainage rates without any drainage being supplied. Indeed, the owners of homes at the eastern end of Breeze Street refer to the street as "The River Breeze" during and after rain, as the street is flooded from nature strip to nature strip (there is no kerb and guttering) across the width of the road easement.

IPART should first ascertain how long and how much money has been collected as drainage fees to the many hundreds of homes in Umina who have no drainage or kerb and guttering and where this money is or to what purposes has it been applied?

So finally if the GCC is efficiently running our water and sewerage business it will be to the great surprise of most ratepayers.

Before you even consider thinking about raising water and sewerage bills, you should make a close examination of the \$140 million plus of "savings" referred to above and whether the Council actually employs qualified professionals rather than administrators to manage our infrastructure.

I have no comment on your ref: 12/259.

Yours sincerely

Hon J E Akister