

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Local Government Mailbox](#)
Subject: Comment on IPART application for special variation of rates by Randwick City Council 2018-19
Date: Monday, March 12, 2018 5:14:08 AM

I am writing with regard to an application for a special rate variation by Randwick City Council for the next and following years. I am a resident in and a ratepayer for a property in the council area at [REDACTED].

I consider that the way the council approached the community was contrived to achieve a result that they wanted and does not represent what the community wants. Firstly as the matter concerns rates that financially impact only ratepayers, it is not fair to be asking non ratepayers their opinion on the matter of whether rates should be increased. The community generally can fairly be consulted only on where the money should be spent.

The survey document was originally mailed out to ratepayers but one had to read it very carefully to discern that it was about raising rates. In a casual reading it appeared to be about where the money should be spent. The initial result had a limited response but the majority did not vote for the full highest cost option. The survey was constructed with 3 options in such a way that the financial question would be answered in a first past the post way rather than a preferential system as is employed for all other electoral systems in Australia. The middle and no cost options together achieved more votes than the high cost option.

To cement the result the council employed an independent consultant to conduct surveys by phone and in shopping centres. The organisation employed was a market research consultant. Inspection of their website will show that they cannot be considered independent. There is no way to remove the bias suggested by the fact that they were paid by the council (to achieve the result that was wanted).

I suggest that the assessment criteria number 3, third bullet point "include the council's consideration of the community's capacity and willingness to pay rates" has not been achieved.

[REDACTED]