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Your submission for this review:

Having served 2 terms on Port Stephens Council I am now witnessing a Labor-controlled Council forcing up cost-of-living pressures ignoring IPARTs 4.4% recommendation for a growth area and requesting a 5.1% on top of the 4.4% i.e to 9.5% compounding over 3 years. I have strongly held the view that councils cannot be trusted to evaluate anything and when tendering for services contractors take full advantage of Local, State and Federal governments and overcharge for these services. I know for a fact that councils formulate their land and property values via recent sales of properties, forcing up our land values double the VG. Real estate agents sometimes find their way to becoming elected councillors along with developers and real estate service providers, elected to councils in turn forcing up valuations of properties they dont own especially during auctions. It now seems that there may be some legislation pending to eliminate some real estate auctions. This I feel would be a worthwhile result. IPART should have control over land valuations every 3 years and not 6 years and also not rely on councils inputs.