

## Submission (taken verbally and via emails) from Camila Peters-Quayle:

The issues below are raised generally, and are also specifically about Ballina Shire Council and Lismore Shire Council.

### Cost of living and rates

- IPART should consider using same criteria and replicating the framework set out by the recent Victorian review
  - <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2023-07-02/financial-stress-council-rate-debts-cost-of-living-pressures/102549288>
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    - Calls for government action, rather than 'toothless tinkering'
  - <https://www.realestate.com.au/news/buy-for-365000-less-the-cheapest-and-priciest-pockets-in-every-suburb-revealed/?suburb=Ballina&postcode=2478&state=NSW&campaignType=external&campaignChannel=edm&campaignSource=braze&campaignName=content&campaignSegment=sell&campaignPlacement=a1&campaignContent=mn1>
- Council rates are too high and twice what is needed
- There is a lack of transparency around information on affordable housing assistance

### Accountability, governance and complaints

- It is not possible for ratepayers to hold council staff and councillors accountable if they do not meet the requirements of their own policies
- Governance structures around local government are insufficient and there is a sense of entitlement
- There should be an independent body that handles complaints and holds local governments to account, particularly in terms of
  - professional behaviour
  - pecuniary interests.
- It's not [REDACTED] in the system, it is the system of [REDACTED].
- Oversight is failing and there are systemic cultural issues and complacency. Better performance management is needed.
- There is a lack of governance, compliance, accountability and trust. There is a lack of personal or professional integrity.
- ICAC, OLG, the Ombudsman don't effectively hold councils to account.
- There is poor spending and poor procurement – there needs to be a system to avoid public money being wasted.
- IPART needs to look at how councils spend the money.
- The right people should be hired to do the right job regardless of who they are related to or friends with.
- Complaints are not reported or resolved properly.
  - I made a property valuation objection as the land value with Council's valuation and house value with insurance that rates are based on are higher and don't match to the market and sales reality as the land values in the area have been destroyed by the council/government pods and putting [REDACTED] in them ahead of flood victims and the reality that we are in a recession. My objection hasn't been responded to, I made a complaint and council has blocked subsequent emails.

- The land valuation revenue report used ignored flood destroyed homes and council making it a “ slum” area. Both council and the Valuer General haven’t responded and the Minister has asked me to speak at Senate.
  - I have previously tried to talk with [REDACTED] – got hung up on 4 times – [REDACTED] hasn’t responded.
- Ballina never respond to my emails yet their Service Level Agreement (SLA) KPI says they should do so within a week.
- Council is charging crazy high interest rates after crashing my land not fixing it yet, helping to cause costs and losses to me of over 1 million dollars.
- Council [REDACTED] me for money but hasn’t provided a correct bill and refuse to include disability concessions and [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] Debt collectors were sent with no warning for a water bill that was never sent.
- Ballina has done accounting [REDACTED], unfit, improper, not correct billing.
- Lismore is [REDACTED] (it doesn’t have [REDACTED] invoices) and discriminate against vulnerable people (including people who have experienced domestic violence and flood catastrophe and people living with disability) and [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] of invoices or debt collection and instead [REDACTED] people who ask for a fair go.
- Council is [REDACTED] and not stopping guns/knives violence and drugs in the community.
- Ballina’s strategy is [REDACTED] –please in your review, help the people get a fair go and reasonable behaviour. The current culture is to [REDACTED] the ratepayer.
- Internal investigation is non-existent and internal processes are gamed top-down by [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] because NO one internally or externally makes them do their basic job.
- I am fearful and can’t deal with the [REDACTED] and need protection for telling the external leaders the truth and being asked to talk in senate about it.
- Please look at this in the Terms of Reference as the charter of councils is to service the public interest with integrity, instead they are incredibly [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] at great cost to society
- They [REDACTED] and what’s going on is [REDACTED] and even the [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] the area of buybacks, house raising and retro fitting.
- Women keep dying from domestic violence here and the [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED] in Ballina Shire – it’s toxic, as is the council and [REDACTED] who know.
- There is male entitlement -it’s1950s entitlement and privilege [REDACTED] - it needs an overhaul as the framework is enabling and championing undermining laws and common good. We need the [REDACTED] to stop and just proper fit ethical practices and values that are lived and people who have honour not the dysfunctional culture at Ballina.
- [REDACTED]
- Council doesn’t follow policy process or practice yet look clean on the outside.

- [REDACTED] hasn't put [REDACTED] conflict of interest disclosure on the web as obligated.
- [REDACTED] refuses to do [REDACTED] job and [REDACTED] (LGNSW Code of Conduct).
- There is [REDACTED] because they can and the current oversight weaponises and protects the wrong doing. There is failure of internal accountability and management to respond, remedy and rectify formal complaints about staff gross unconscionable misconduct and intentionally taking advantage of power.
- There's rates price [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]
- Council refuses to include disability pension rebates for water and council and refusal to waive rates for hardship catastrophic victims they never paid out, bought out or retrofitted as promised by the Mayor and Chair of the NRRC, causing violence, poverty, ghetto of pods and putting trauma victims in a trauma environment while crashing land values near pods and causing unacceptable unsafe unaccountable consequences such as drive-by shootings, domestic violence deaths and increasing ice, drug and domestic violence in the community, pods and for flood victims near the pods.
- The services by council aren't [REDACTED] and they caused my car to be [REDACTED], allow environmental issues and are currently [REDACTED] koalas for the richer boys club against state policy.
- Council fails their duty of care to act with public interest and integrity to feather their own nest and fill their pockets [REDACTED] and with unsafe unreasonable unfair practices.
- They use [REDACTED] tricks and games, are mean and tricky and act like sledgehammers without ethical integrity.
- Ballina doesn't walk their talk and have taken extreme advantage of their power, [REDACTED] the flood victims and not delivering on the promise of the NRRC and not delivering on their advertising and hardship strategy and instead acting diametrically, oppressively, opposite to good fit and proper governance.
- The strategic plan on hardship or policy isn't lived, there is [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED].
- They act in bad faith more like an [REDACTED] area.
- There's no oversight and we desperately need heroes to help do basic umpiring and actually ensure regulatory laws and compliance because the Ombudsman doesn't rectify nor does the Politician or the local government bureaucrats.
- We need top level oversight to remove the cancer and hold council to account as making money [REDACTED] from poor people isn't what proper good humans do and is against codes of governance.
- We need a return to honour and public decency not these who cash-cow use without consequences or conscious.
- We need a proper framework and accountability framework – applying SOX, probity modelling and/or an auditing body should be considered.
- Victoria has some good practices that could be applied to NSW.