

24 August 2013

Councillor Wayne Kratzmann
Mayor
South Burnett Regional Council
PO Box 336
KINGAROY Q 4610

Dear Mayor,

We, the undersigned, being rate payers and residents of the township of Blackbutt and surrounding rural areas, wish to convey to you and your Council, our extreme disappointment at the recent unreasonable rate increases.

Council's decision to increase rates and charges by as much 32 per cent and on average 28 per cent when compared to rates and charges in 2011/12 is reprehensible and irresponsible. The most recent decision to charge a \$50 road levy makes a mockery of Council's charter and its responsibilities.

Council has, over recent years, demonstrated a complete lack of understanding of its communities ability to meet sustained and unreasonable rate increases. We must therefore demand that:

1. Council immediately and without delay, revoke its decision to charge a \$50 road levy.
2. Council immediately and without delay, repeal all rate increases to ensure that such increases are no greater than the national Consumer Price Index, in any given year.
3. Council immediately and without delay, agree to meet with rate payers and residents of the Blackbutt township and surround rural areas to:
 - (i) Provide an explanation as to Council's decision to unfairly and unreasonably increase rates and charges between 28 - 32 per cent in 2013/14 when compared to 2011/12 levels.
 - (ii) Provide an explanation as to the reasons for the implementation of a road levy and how Council justifies such a levy.
 - (iii) Provide an explanation as to why residents of the township of Blackbutt and surrounding rural areas have been subjected to far greater rate increases than other townships and regions within the South Burnett Regional Council area.
 - (iv) Provide a report on savings made, efficiencies realised, staff reductions, improved services, additional infrastructure and benefits to rate payers since amalgamation.
 - (v) Provide a comprehensive report on the Council's financial management and its strategies to meet its ongoing obligations.
 - (vi) Provide a report on the levels of State and Federal Government assistance as a result of the 2010/11 and 2012/13 floods.

We await confirmation of Council's willingness to meet with its constituents to discuss these important issues in an open forum. In that regard, we respectfully, and for your convenience, wish to nominate the following persons as contacts for the organisation of the proposed meeting:

Kevin Wilson
41 630 248

Peter Scott
0409 077 468

Barry Nugent
41 700 067

