

Dump landfill proposal, say three councillors

THREE councillors have voiced their opposition to the rate rise for the proposed new landfill site and the burgeoning cost of the project.

Crs Brian Chetwynd, Bev Roobol and Margaret Walford claim the \$65 levy (an increase of \$22.50 on the \$42.50 imposed last year) is an unfair impost on rural ratepayers.

The three councillors are also concerned that blowouts could push the cost of the landfill from \$6-7 million to \$12 million.

"And that could escalate even further," said Cr Chetwynd.

"This is an unfair and severe impost on Armidale Dumaresq ratepayers, who can expect to pay much more if this landfill is allowed to proceed in its present form."

Mayor Peter Ducat said the increased levy was necessary to service the debt council will incur in borrowing to investigate alternative

waste technology and proceed with the planning of the landfill.

"We need to investigate and bring on-stream alternate waste treatment technologies," he said.

Cr Ducat said a number of factors had contributed to any blowout in the cost of the landfill site - the extra requirements put on by State and Federal governments, extra planning and the extra precautions that need to be taken so that we as a council can be satisfied that what we are doing is environmentally sound'.

Cr Roobol voiced her concern over the effects of the rate rise in rural communities, while Cr Walford said she believes council needs to look at alternatives within recycling and composting.

The three councillors are calling for a full review of the landfill project and the rate levies, involving the community and environmental groups.

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