

Friday 2 September 2022

Dear Armidale Regional Ratepayers Association

Re: Proposed Special Rate Variation – Special Briefing

Council is committed to delivering our vision for growing a prosperous and sustainable region over the next decade and beyond. However over the past 25 years we have drifted into a perfect storm of unsustainably low (land) rates in both the old Armidale and Guyra council areas compounded by a stagnating population. The ever tightening financial position has led to ongoing under-investment in infrastructure.

Council has resolved to seek community input on a proposal that Council apply for a permanent special rate variation of around 50% over 3 years, which would take effect from 2023-24.

As a valued stakeholder, we would like to offer Armidale Regional Ratepayers Association a special briefing on these issues. We have set aside some time on the 13th and 14th September during the day to attend a meeting should you choose to convene one. The times available include:

Tuesday 13 September

- 2pm-3:30pm

Wednesday 14 September

- 9am-10:30am
- 11-12:30pm
- 1pm-2:30pm
- 3pm-4:30pm

Please RSVP to Sarah Artist at [REDACTED]@centium.com.au or on [REDACTED] as soon as possible if you would like to take up this offer.

Everyone in the community is also invited to read about these issues and have their say in a number of ways:

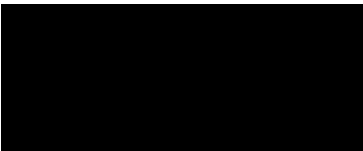
- **Understand** - download and read the information pack on the *Your Say* website at <http://yoursay.armidale.nsw.gov.au/> or visit either the Armidale or Guyra Library to view the information display or come into the Armidale Council building.
- **Respond** - take the survey on the *Your Say* website to express your views
- **Attend** - come to a public meeting:
 - 13 September - Armidale Town Hall, 6pm to 8.30 pm
 - 14 September - Guyra Bowling Club, 6pm to 8.30pm
 - 15 September - Sauer Memorial Hall Wollomombi - 6pm to 8.30pm

- **Register** – on the *Your Say* website for an online meeting on 21 September at either 10am or 6pm
- **Comment** - Make your comments on the website discussion forum
- **Write** - send your submission to Council by **Friday 30th September**

At the conclusion of the current period of community engagement Council will consider whether to proceed with an application for a Special Rate Variation. This will take place at the Council meeting scheduled for November. Council will then need to notify IPART of its intent to lodge a Special Rate Variation application in February 2023.

We invite your participation to inform our decision, and to ensure that we can deliver on our vision to grow our region into the future.

Mayor Sam Coupland



Friday 2 September 2022

Dear Guyra and Armidale Branch NSW Farmers

Re: Proposed Special Rate Variation – Special Briefing

Council is committed to delivering our vision for growing a prosperous and sustainable region over the next decade and beyond. However over the past 25 years we have drifted into a perfect storm of unsustainably low (land) rates in both the old Armidale and Guyra council areas compounded by a stagnating population. The ever tightening financial position has led to ongoing under-investment in infrastructure.

Council has resolved to seek community input on a proposal that Council apply for a permanent special rate variation of around 50% over 3 years, which would take effect from 2023-24.

As valued stakeholders, we would like to offer the Guyra and Armidale Branch NSW Farmers a special briefing on these issues. We have set aside some time on the 13th and 14th September during the day to attend a meeting should you choose to convene one. The times available include:

Tuesday 13 September

- 2pm-3:30pm

Wednesday 14 September

- 9am-10:30am
- 11-12:30pm
- 1pm-2:30pm
- 3pm-4:30pm

Please RSVP to Sarah Artist at [REDACTED] or on [REDACTED] as soon as possible if you would like to take up this offer.

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- **Understand** - download and read the information pack on the *Your Say* website at <http://yoursay.armidale.nsw.gov.au/> or visit either the Armidale or Guyra Library to view the information display or come into the Armidale Council building.
- **Respond** - take the survey on the *Your Say* website to express your views
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 - 15 September - Sauer Memorial Hall Wollomombi - 6pm to 8.30pm

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Mayor Sam Coupland



Friday 2 September 2022

Dear Guyra Progress Association

Re: Proposed Special Rate Variation – Special Briefing

Council is committed to delivering our vision for growing a prosperous and sustainable region over the next decade and beyond. However over the past 25 years we have drifted into a perfect storm of unsustainably low (land) rates in both the old Armidale and Guyra council areas compounded by a stagnating population. The ever tightening financial position has led to ongoing under-investment in infrastructure.

Council has resolved to seek community input on a proposal that Council apply for a permanent special rate variation of around 50% over 3 years, which would take effect from 2023-24.

As a valued stakeholder, we would like to offer Guyra Progress Association a special briefing on these issues. We have set aside some time on the 13th and 14th September during the day to attend a meeting should you choose to convene one. The times available include:

Tuesday 13 September

- 2pm-3:30pm

Wednesday 14 September

- 9am-10:30am
- 11-12:30pm
- 1pm-2:30pm
- 3pm-4:30pm

Please RSVP to Sarah Artist at [REDACTED]@centium.com.au or on [REDACTED] as soon as possible if you would like to take up this offer.

Everyone in the community is also invited to read about these issues and have their say in a number of ways:

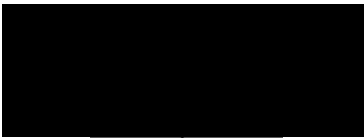
- **Understand** - download and read the information pack on the *Your Say* website at <http://yoursay.armidale.nsw.gov.au/> or visit either the Armidale or Guyra Library to view the information display or come into the Armidale Council building.
- **Respond** - take the survey on the *Your Say* website to express your views
- **Attend** - come to a public meeting:
 - 13 September - Armidale Town Hall, 6pm to 8.30 pm
 - 14 September - Guyra Bowling Club, 6pm to 8.30pm
 - 15 September - Sauer Memorial Hall Wollomombi - 6pm to 8.30pm

- **Register** – on the *Your Say* website for an online meeting on 21 September at either 10am or 6pm
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- **Write** - send your submission to Council by **Friday 30th September**

At the conclusion of the current period of community engagement Council will consider whether to proceed with an application for a Special Rate Variation. This will take place at the Council meeting scheduled for November. Council will then need to notify IPART of its intent to lodge a Special Rate Variation application in February 2023.

We invite your participation to inform our decision, and to ensure that we can deliver on our vision to grow our region into the future.

Mayor Sam Coupland



Friday 5 August, 2022

Dear community member,

Armidale Regional Council would like to invite you to participate in a series of panel conversations about a Special Rate Variation (SRV) proposed for the council area. We would love for you to join us to learn about the issues giving rise to this proposal and to share your views:

- Thursday 25 August – 11-1.30pm at Armidale Town Hall
- Tuesday 30 August – 11-1.30pm at the Guyra Council Building
- Tuesday 6 September – 11-1.30pm at Armidale Town Hall

Over the past 25 years the region has drifted into a perfect storm of unsustainably low property rates in both the old Armidale and Guyra council areas, leading to an inability to maintain our local infrastructure, compounded by a stagnating population. The ever tightening financial position and increasing responsibilities carried by councils across NSW has caused an accumulation of under investment leading to a gradual deterioration of important local assets and infrastructure. We need a viable plan to turn the situation around for the years ahead.

Council is proposing a Special Rate Variation (SRV) to bridge the funding gap; this is required to increase our investment in renewal of community infrastructure and assets as well as to improve our operational service delivery. Council has resolved to seek community input on a proposal to seek a permanent SRV of 50% that will be phased in over three years.

In forming the business panel we are aiming to include a cross section of local business owners. The work of the panels will occur in three meetings of two hours each over a three week timetable to enable reflection and processing of information, and we will be providing lunch.

Meetings will be led by an external facilitator and you will hear presentations about the issues confronting ARC from Council staff. The emphasis of panel meetings will be to hear your feedback and engage in discussion with you to ensure we consider all perspectives. Topics to be covered in council presentations will include:

- Understanding the legislative requirements for the rates restructure and the options for consideration
- The financial issues Council needs to consider in short and long term planning
- Options for the application of a Special Rate Variation and the anticipated community outcomes associated with each option
- Infrastructure and capital works programs and service levels
- Expenditure priorities and community capacity to pay

We would appreciate your time and your input and hope to see you at the meetings! We are asking people to commit to all three meetings, so that we can allow time for people to hear all about the issues and participate in discussions. Please let us know if you can attend the meetings by sending your RSVP to our independent consultant Sarah Artist on [REDACTED] [@centium.com.au as soon as possible](mailto:[REDACTED]@centium.com.au), or call if you have any questions or issues on [REDACTED]

Mayor Sam Coupland
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Friday 5 August, 2022

Dear community member,

Armidale Regional Council would like to invite you to participate in a series of panel conversations about a Special Rate Variation (SRV) proposed for the council area. We would love for you to join us to learn about the issues giving rise to this proposal and to share your views:

- Thursday 25 August – 6-8.30pm at Armidale Town Hall
- Tuesday 30 August – 6-8.30pm at the Guyra Council Building
- Tuesday 6 September – 6-8.30pm at Armidale Town Hall

Over the past 25 years the region has drifted into a perfect storm of unsustainably low rates in both the old Armidale and Guyra council areas, compounded by a stagnating population. The ever tightening financial position and increasing responsibilities carried by councils across NSW has caused an accumulation of under investment leading to a gradual deterioration of important local assets and infrastructure. We need a viable plan to turn the situation around in the years ahead.

Council is proposing a Special Rate Variation (SRV) to bridge the funding gap needed to increase our investment in renewal of community infrastructure and assets as well as to improve our operational services. Council has resolved to seek community input on a proposal that Council seek a permanent SRV of 50% over three years.

In forming the community panel we are aiming to include a cross section of residents and non-residential ratepayers by age, gender, cultural background and other demographic characteristics. The work of the panels will occur in three meetings of two hours each over a three week timetable to enable reflection and processing of information, and we will also be providing a light dinner.

Meetings will be led by an external facilitator, and you will hear presentations about the issues from Council staff. The emphasis of panel meetings will be to hear your feedback and engage in discussion with you to ensure we consider all perspectives. Topics to be covered in council presentations will include:

- Understanding the legislative requirements for the rates restructure and the options for consideration
- The financial issues Council needs to consider in short and long term planning
- Options for the application of a Special Rate Variation and the anticipated community outcomes associated with each option
- Infrastructure and capital works programs and service levels
- Expenditure priorities and community capacity to pay

We would appreciate your time and your input and hope to see you at the meetings! Please let us know if you can attend by sending your RSVP to our independent consultant Sarah Artist on [REDACTED] [as soon as possible](#), or call if you have any questions or issues on [REDACTED]

Mayor Sam Coupland
[REDACTED]

Monday 29 August 2022

Dear resident,

Council is committed to delivering our vision for growing a prosperous and sustainable region over the next decade and beyond.

However, over the past 25 years we have drifted into a perfect storm of unsustainably low (land) rates in both the old Armidale and Guyra council areas compounded by a stagnating population. The ever tightening financial position has led to ongoing under-investment in infrastructure.

Council has resolved to seek community input on a proposal that Council apply for a permanent special rate variation of around 50% over three years, which would take effect from 2023-24.

As a resident or ratepayer you are invited to read about these issues and have your say in a number of ways:

- **Understand** - download and read the information pack on the *Your Say* website at <http://yoursay.armidale.nsw.gov.au> or visit either the Armidale or Guyra Library to view the information display or come into the Armidale council building.
- **Respond** - take the survey on the *Your Say* website to express your views or access a hardcopy at the libraries or at the Armidale council building.
- **Attend** - come to a public meeting:
 - 13 September - Armidale Town Hall, 6pm to 8.30 pm
 - 14 September - Guyra Bowling Club, 6pm to 8.30pm
 - 15 September - Sauer Memorial Hall Wollomombi - 6pm to 8.30pm
- **Register** – on the *Your Say* website for an online meeting on 21 September at either 10am or 6pm
- **Comment** - Make your comments on the website discussion forum
- **Write** - send your submission to Council by **Friday 30th September**. Via email to council@armidale.nsw.gov.au or mail to Armidale Regional Council PO Box 75A Armidale NSW 2350

At the conclusion of the current period of community engagement Council will consider whether to proceed with an application for a Special Rate Variation. This will take place at the Council meeting scheduled for November. Council will then need to notify IPART of its intent to lodge a Special Rate Variation application in February 2023.

We invite your participation to inform our decision and to ensure that we can deliver on our vision to grow our region into the future.

Mayor Sam Coupland

