

A survey of adult residents in the Muswellbrook Shire to measure awareness of and support for/opposition to the continuation of an existing 14.73% Special Rate Variation (including 2.3% rate peg)



Results of a random telephone survey of 509 adult residents – and parallel online survey - conducted by Jetty Research for Muswellbrook Shire Council

FINAL REPORT

December 10th 2018



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Front cover photo: Muswellbrook in Jacaranda season. (Credit: Council Facebook page)



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Executive summary

In August 2018 Muswellbrook Shire Council (MSC) commissioned Jetty Research to conduct a random and representative telephone survey of its adult residents, to understand community sentiment towards a proposed continuation of an existing 14.73% special rate variation (including 2.3% rate peg). The random telephone survey was accompanied by an opt-in online survey, allowing all those interested in the subject of Council rates an opportunity to have their say.

The random CATI (telephone) survey, of adult residents living in the 2328 and 2333 postcodes¹, was conducted from October 18th to 29th 2018, using a questionnaire devised by Jetty Research in conjunction with MSC (see Appendix 1). Residents were not initially informed of the survey's subject matter, to avoid response/ non-response bias. The parallel online survey ran from October 19th to November 5th inclusive.

Total sample size for the telephone survey was 509, with a random sampling error of +/- 4.3% at the 95% confidence level. Total sample size for the online survey was 395. (As this was a self-selecting rather than random sample, random sampling error cannot be applied to the results.)

For more information on survey methodology and sampling error, see pages 6-8.

Among the survey's major conclusions:

1. Awareness of the existing special rate variation (SRV) was high, with 69% of CATI respondents claiming knowledge.
2. Likewise, 62% of CATI respondents said they had heard (unprompted) about Council's latest proposal to continue the SRV, and 68% recalled (once prompted) receiving a letter from Council explaining the rationale for the continuation.
3. **Among CATI respondents, support for and opposition to the proposed continuation of the SRV was almost evenly split, with 45% supportive and 47% opposed (the balance being unsure).** Among those supportive, the main reasons were a belief that Muswellbrook needed better facilities (mentioned unprompted by 23% of all telephone respondents), and/or that the planned facilities would be good for the community and its future (12%). Among those opposed, the main reasons were a perception that they didn't trust Council or that it was wasteful (14% of all telephone respondents), that rates were already too high (10%) and/or that they couldn't afford the increase (8%).
4. **Online respondents were significantly more opposed to the continuation of the SRV in all respects. Only 16% of those completing the online survey supported the SRV being continued, while 72% opposed it (and the balance unsure).** For these residents there was a much stronger belief that Council couldn't be trusted or was wasteful (27% of all online respondents), that rates were already too high (19%), and/or that they couldn't afford the increase (16%)

¹ But excluding MSC councillors and permanent Council employees

Introduction

Background

In August 2018 Muswellbrook Shire Council (MSC) commissioned Jetty Research to conduct a random and representative telephone survey of 500 adult residents within the Muswellbrook Shire, together with a parallel online survey accessible by all residents.

The surveys, conducted immediately after an explanatory unaddressed newsletter was delivered to all residences and an addressed letter was sent to all ratepayers in the Muswellbrook Shire, were designed to measure awareness of, and support towards the continuation of a permanent special rate variation (SRV) granted by IPART in 2017-18 for one-year. Specific survey objectives comprised:

1. Measuring awareness/knowledge of proposed continuation of SRV
2. Measuring awareness/reading of letter to ratepayers
3. Measuring awareness/reading of Newsletter to residents
4. Measuring support for proposed continuation of SRV, and reasons for support/opposition
5. Understand how results vary by factors such as prior awareness, urban/rural, age, gender, postcode etc.

Methodology

Random telephone survey

The telephone survey was conducted using a random fixed line and mobile telephone poll of Muswellbrook adult residents. Respondents were initially selected at random from a verified and random telephone database of 2,847 residential fixed line and mobile telephone numbers within the LGA. ²

Quotas were applied by region, with a minimum of 15% of the sample sought within the 2328 postcode (incorporating the town of Denman) and a maximum of 85% in the 2333 postcode (in which Muswellbrook is situated). This was designed to reflect differences in population size while still maintaining an adequate sample size for cross analysis. No other formal quotas were applied, although attempts were made to ensure an adequate mix of respondents across age groups and genders.

No mention of the survey subject matter was made in the survey pre-amble, to avoid response/non-response bias³. Instead, residents were merely asked if they would assist Council by completing a research survey on "an important local issue".

² Numbers were provided by SamplePages, a respected supplier of random valid numbers to the market and social research industry

³ That is, participation biased towards those with a pre-existing interest in the survey's subject matter

Respondents were screened to ensure they were aged 18 or over, residents of the Muswellbrook Shire, and were not councillors or permanent employees at MSC. A survey form was constructed collaboratively between MSC and Jetty Research (see Appendix 1), based on satisfying the above objectives.

Telephone polling was conducted between October 18th and 29th from Jetty Research's Coffs Harbour CATI⁴ call centre. A team of 12 researchers called residents on weekday evenings (excluding Friday) from 3.30 to 8pm. Where phones went unanswered, were engaged or diverted to answering machines, researchers phoned on up to five occasions at different times of the afternoon or evening.

In all, 509 residents completed a telephone survey. Interview duration varied from 4 to 16 minutes, with an average of 6.6 minutes. Response rate was good, with 53% of those reached and potentially eligible agreeing to take part.

Please note that due to the nature of the survey, not all respondents answered every question. The number of respondents answering each question is marked as "n = XXX" in the graph accompanying that question.

Cleaned data was entered into the statistical database SPSS for analysis. Where differences in this report are classed as significant, this implies they are statistically significant based on independent sample t-scores, Chi-square or other analysis of variation (ANOVA) calculations. In statistical terms, significant differences are unlikely to have been caused by chance alone. Unless indicated otherwise, significant differences are typically highlighted in blue (above mean) and pink (below mean).

Results have been post-weighted by age and gender to match the adult population profile of the Muswellbrook Shire in the 2016 ABS census. (See Appendix 2 for weighting calculation.)

Online survey

A parallel online survey was created, replicating the content of the telephone survey, and allowing all those wishing to have a say the opportunity to do so.

Launched on Friday October 19th, the online survey was prominently promoted on Council's website. It was also promoted via Council's Facebook page and in the local media (via a media release dated 22/10/2018).

By the completion deadline of Monday, November 5th, 395 valid responses had been received to the online survey.

Online findings have been reported side-by-side with telephone survey results⁵ in Part 3 of this report. (Hence all results in Parts 1 and 2 refer only to the telephone survey.)

⁴ Computer-assisted telephone interviewing

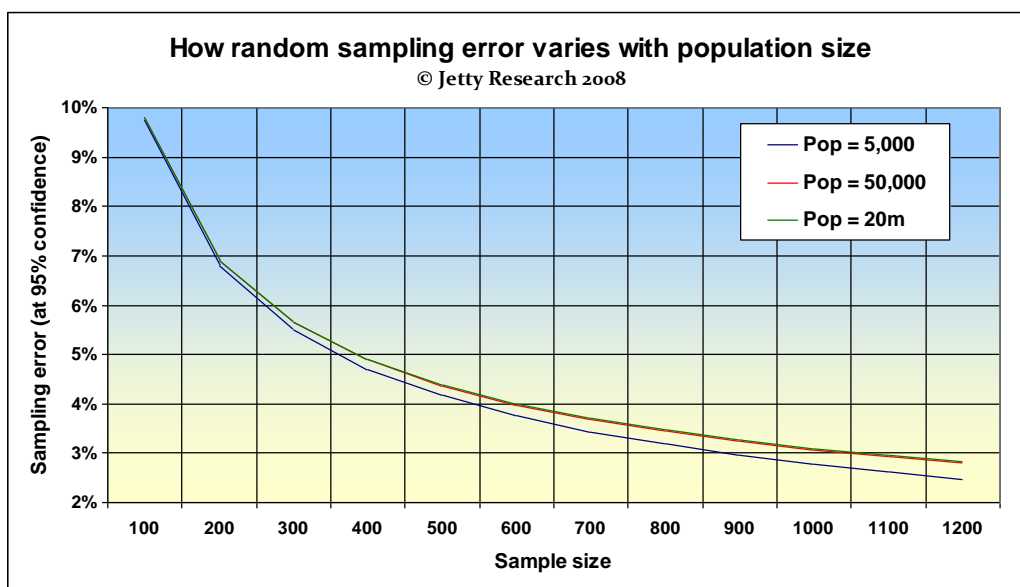
⁵ Telephone and online results cannot be merged: the former is random and statistically representative, allowing results to be extrapolated to the wider population to within a pre-defined margin of error. Online respondents, meanwhile, are self-selecting (i.e. opt-in): hence results of this poll may or may not be reflective of the adult population.

Sampling error

According to the 2016 ABS Census (Usual Resident profile) the total adult (18+) population of the Muswellbrook Shire was 11,851. Hence the sampling error of an n=509 sample is +/- 4.2%. (This means in effect that if we conducted a similar poll 20 times, results should reflect the views and behaviour of the overall survey population to within a +/- 4.2% margin in 19 of those 20 surveys.)

As Graph i, below, shows, margin for error falls as sample size rises. Hence cross-tabulations or sub-groups within the overall sample will typically create much higher margins for error than the overall sample. For example, using the above population size, a sample size of 100 exhibits a margin for error of +/- 9.8% (again at the 95% confidence level).

Graph i: How sampling error varies with sample and population size



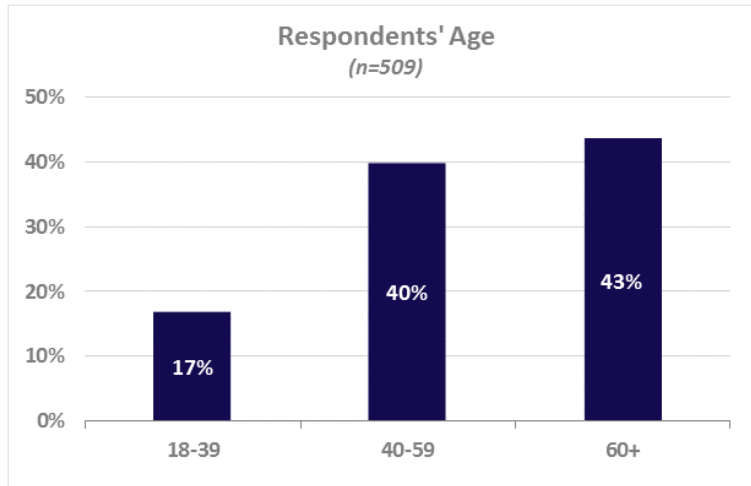
In addition to the random sampling error, above, there may also be some forms of non-random sampling error which may have affected the results. These include respondents without fixed line phones, the proportion of non-respondents (refusals, no answers etc.), social desirability bias⁶ and/or imperfections in the questionnaire. However, steps have been taken at each stage of the research process to minimise non-random error wherever possible.

Due to the self-selecting (i.e. "opt-in") nature of the online survey, and the fact that it was more likely to be completed by those with strong views and/or a high level of interest in the subject matter, random sampling error cannot be applied to the results. This in turn means that the online findings cannot be extrapolated to the wider Muswellbrook Shire adult population.

⁶ By which respondents provide answers that present themselves in a more favourable light

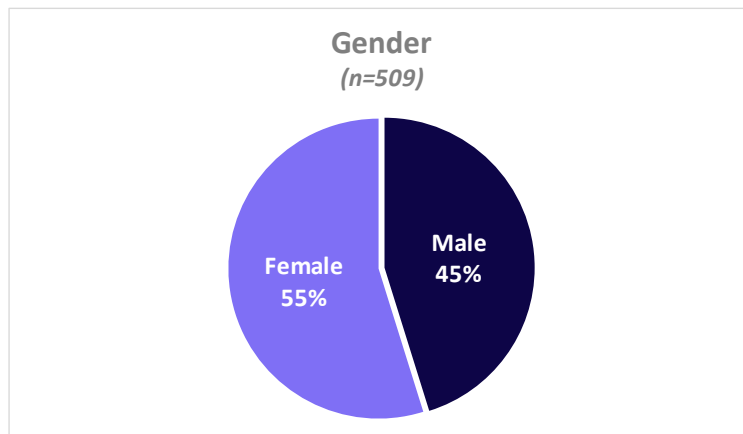
Respondent characteristics

Graph ii: Respondent Age



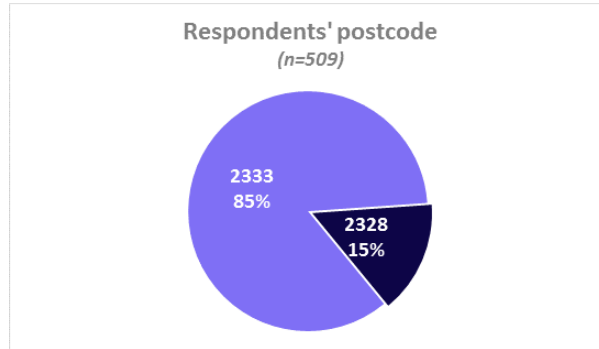
As is common in random telephone surveys, the sample was biased to older residents. However this has been corrected by post-weighting the data to match the age and gender profile of the Muswellbrook Shire based on 2016 Census data.

Graph iii: Respondent Gender



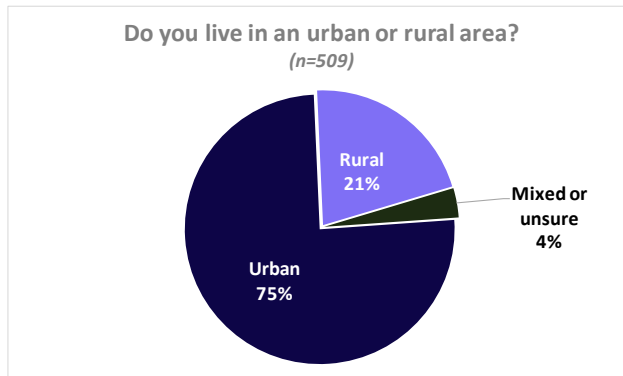
There was a relatively even mix of gender across the sample.

Graph iv: Respondent Postcode



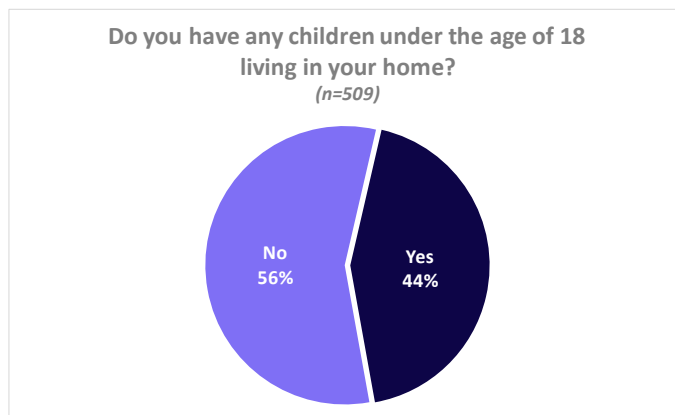
Some 85% of the sample resided in the 2333 postcode (including Muswellbrook) with the balance living in the 2328 postcode

Graph v: Urban vs. rural



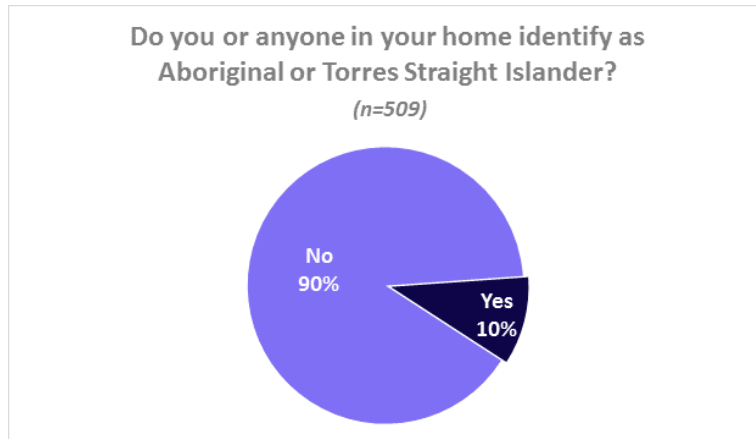
Three-quarters of the sample lived in urban areas.

Graph vi: Proportion with children living at home



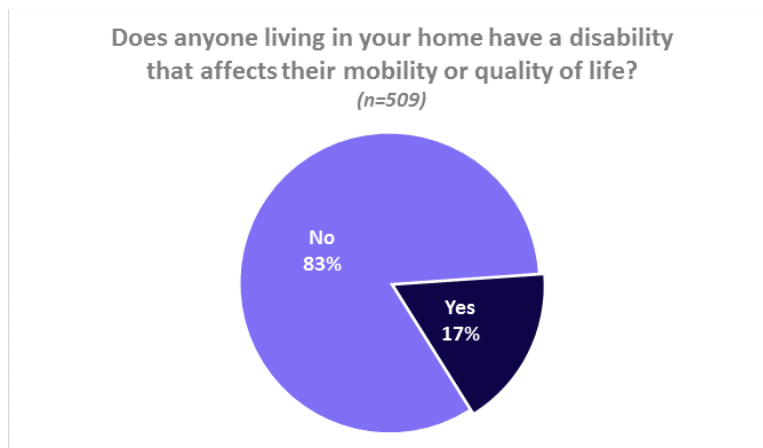
Just under half of those surveyed had children living at home.

Graph vii: Proportion identifying as ATSI



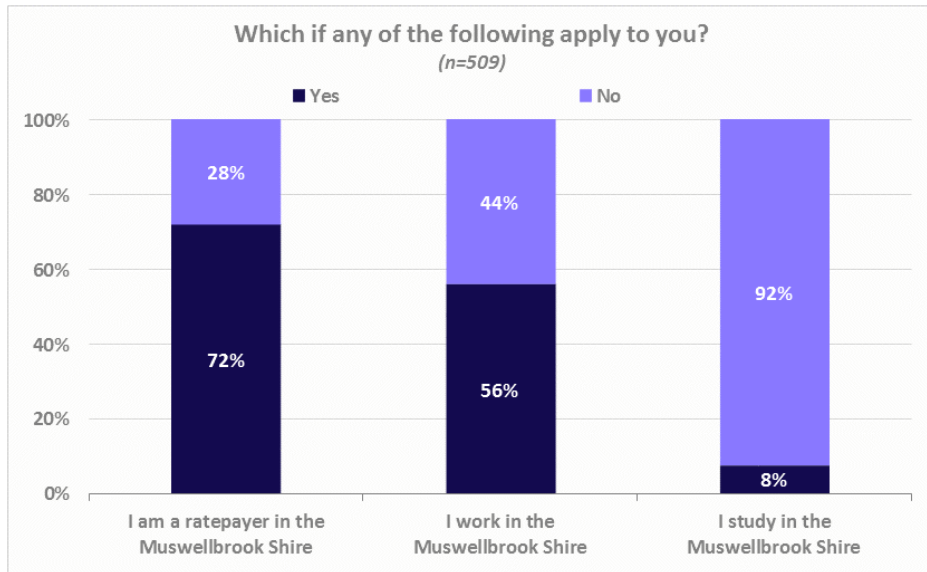
One in ten of the sample identified as ATSI (or had another family member who so identified.)

Graph viii: Proportion with a disability affecting mobility or quality of life



One in six respondents said they had a disability.

Graph ix: Proportion as ratepayers, working and/or studying in Muswellbrook shire

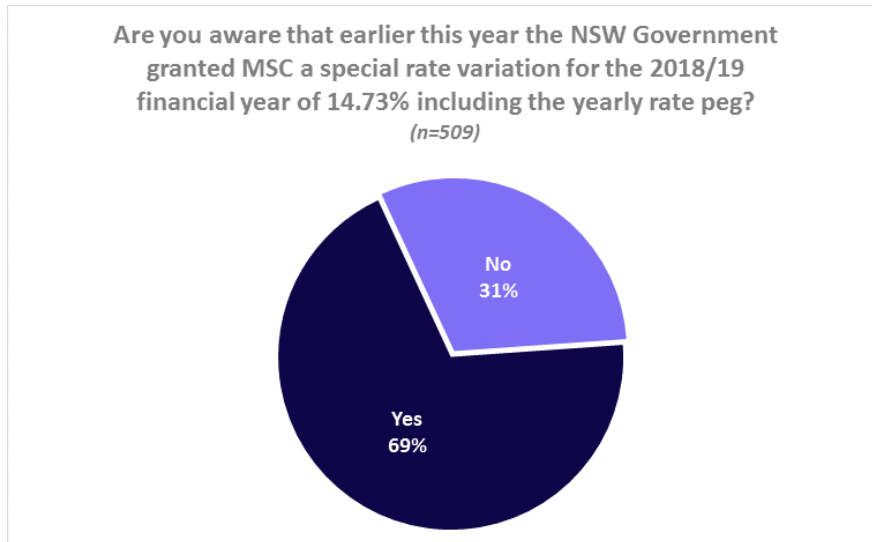


Just over seven in ten respondents were ratepayers, while slightly over half worked in the shire.

Part 1: Awareness of SRV

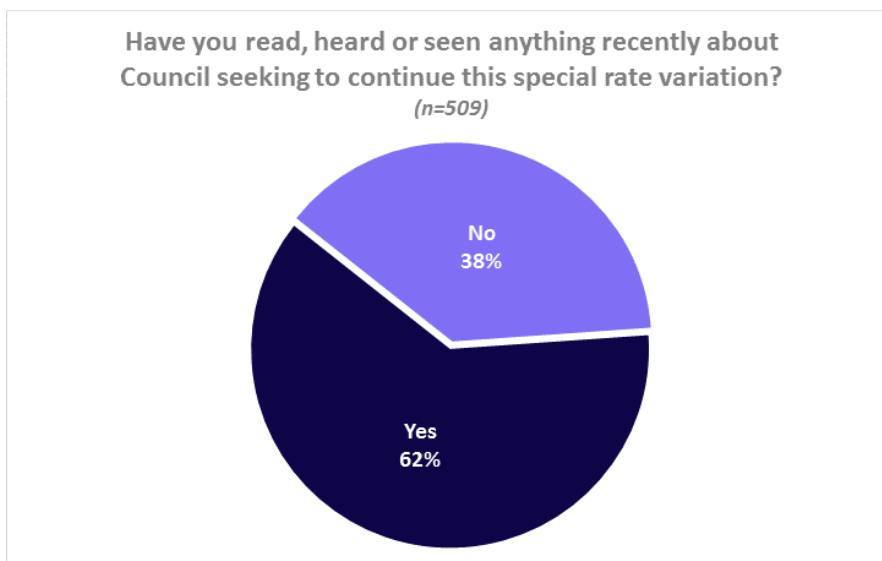
The survey commenced with respondents being asked if they were aware of the previous (one-year, 14.73%) SRV granted to MSC:

Graph 1.1: Awareness of current ('18/19) SRV



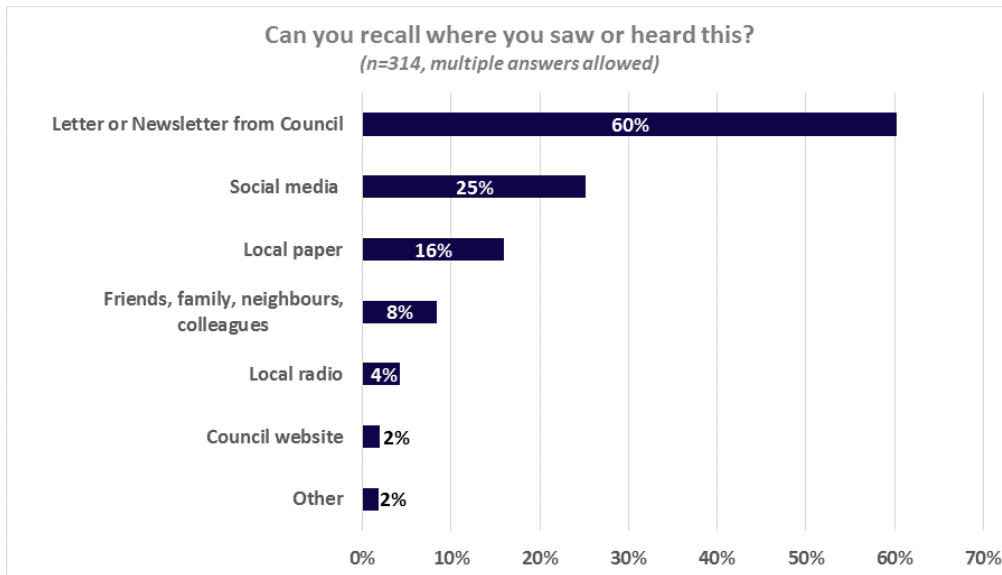
Of all respondents, 69% claimed awareness of the prior SRV. This included 83% of those aged 60-plus, and 90% of those who had read Council's most recent newsletter on the subject. (There were no significant differences by gender, postcode or whether the respondent lived in an urban or rural area.)

Graph 1.2: Awareness of MSC seeking to continue SRV permanently



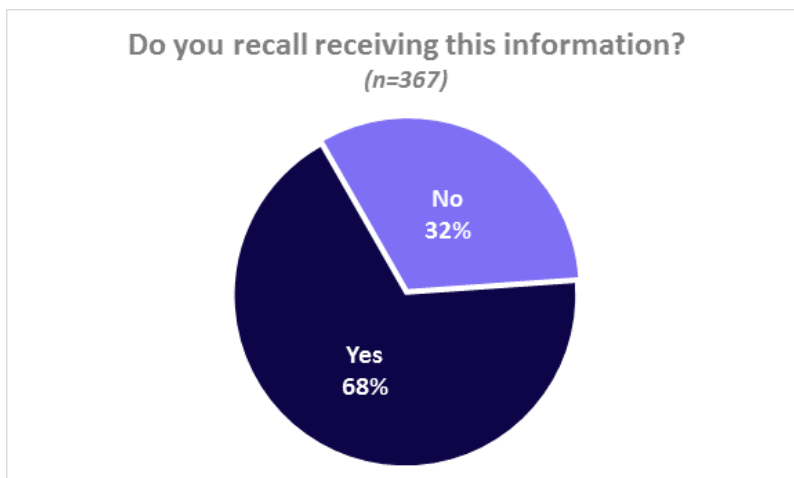
Meanwhile 62% of respondents had heard at least something recently about Council's proposal to seek to continue this SRV. That included 78% of those aged 60-plus. (Again, there were no significant differences by other demographic groups.)

Graph 1.2a: Source/s of awareness



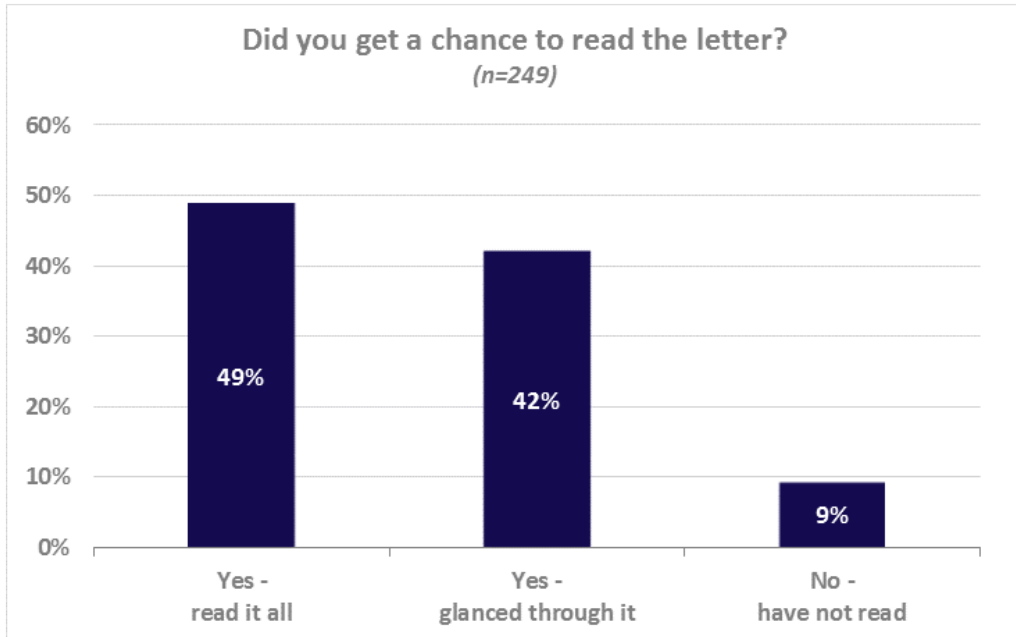
Of those with prior awareness, the majority said they had heard about the proposed continuation of the SRV either from a Council letter/newsletter (60%) or via social media (25%). As one would expect, knowledge of the letter/newsletter was highest among older residents (77%, against 33% of those aged 18-39), whereas social media was the most likely source among younger respondents (52%, against 3% for those 60-plus).

Graph 1.3: Recall of receiving MSC letter explaining rationale for SRV



Of those with some prior awareness, two-thirds (68%) recalled receiving a recent letter from MSC on the subject. Again, recall was higher among older respondents (at 80%).

Graph 1.3a: (If yes) Readership of letter



Meanwhile half of those who had received the newsletter from Council claimed to have read it in full.

Part 2: Support for/opposition to proposed SRV

Respondents were then told that:

"Earlier this year the IPART approved Council implementing a special rate variation of 14.73%, including the yearly rate peg, for one year to help it deliver the first stage of the following programs and facilities:

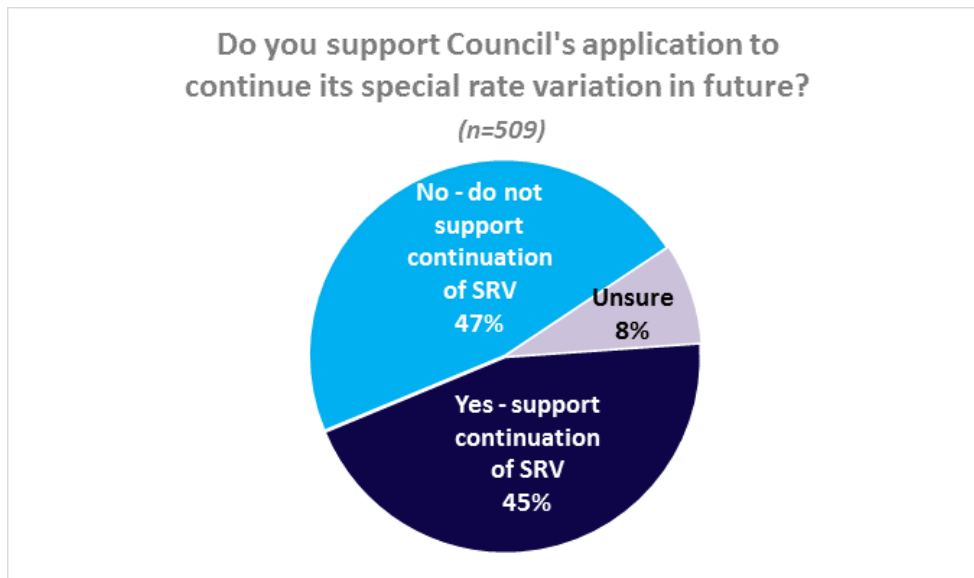
An upgrade to stormwater drainage and additional funding for the roads and parks asset maintenance program. Development of an Olympic Park Precinct Master Plan and a Regional Entertainment and Conference Centre and ongoing operational maintenance. An expanded Job Creation program and additional funding to allow for biodiversity offsets.

Council is now applying to IPART to keep this special rate variation on a permanent basis, so that it can construct, maintain and manage these facilities and services. If IPART approves Council's application to continue the current SRV, there will be no further impact on rates with the exception of the yearly rate peg adjustment.'

And asked

"With all that in mind, do you support Council's application to continue its special rate variation in future?"

Graph 2.1: Support for/opposition to proposed continuation of SRV

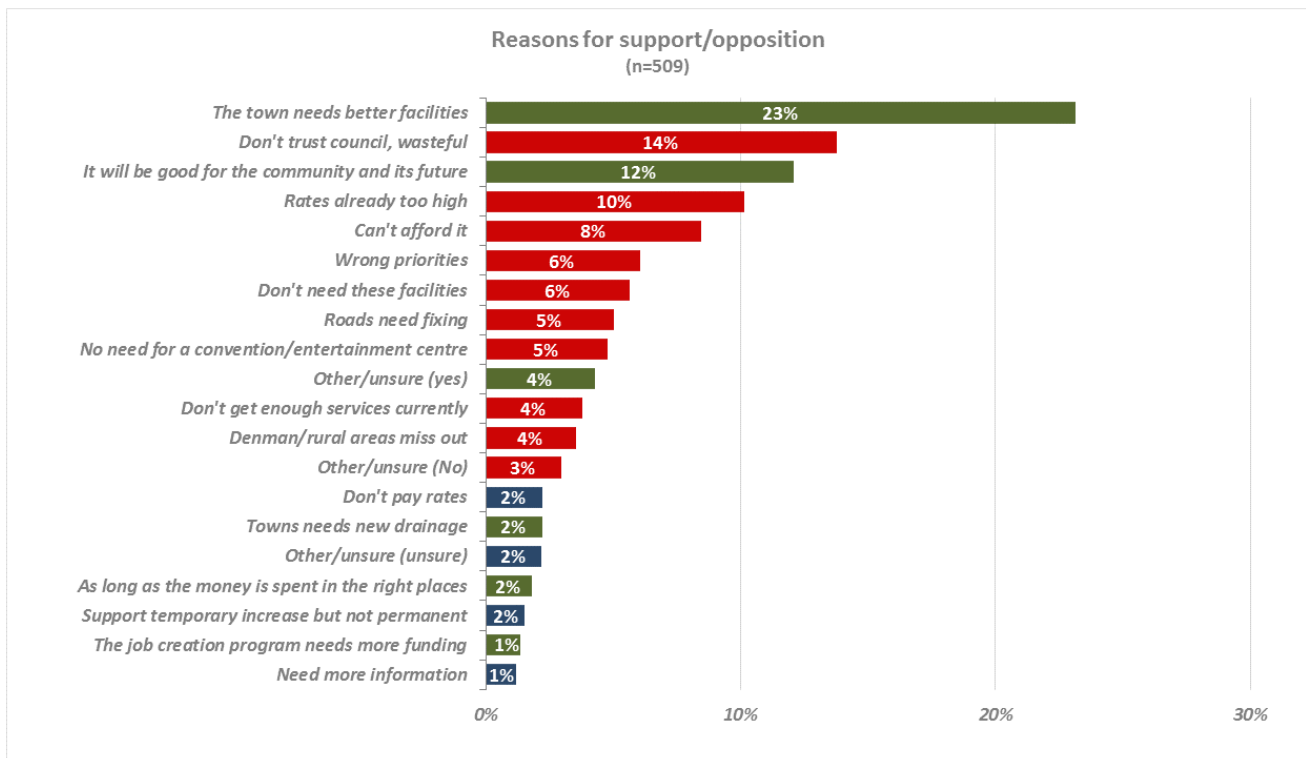


Support/opposition to the continuation of the SRV was evenly split, with 45% supportive and 47% opposed. A further 8% were unsure.

Females were more supportive than males (at 50% and 40% respectively), while the most supportive age cohorts were those aged 18-39 and 60+ (at 48% each, against 38% of those aged 40-59). There were no significant differences between postcodes, urban/rural or whether the respondent had children living at home. However renters were more positive than rate payers, at 60% and 39% support respectively.

At this point all respondents were asked why they supported/opposed/were unsure about the SRV. Their open responses have been coded, with the main themes shown below: (positive in green, negative in red, neutral in blue):

Graph 2.2: Reasons for support/opposition (unprompted)

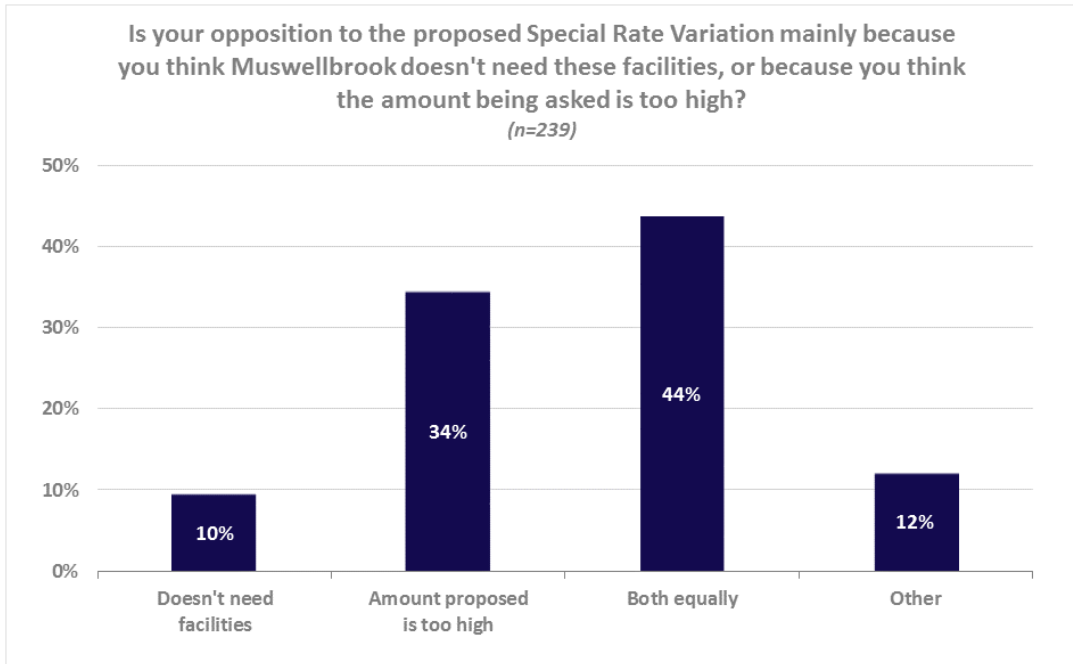


The most common sentiment, expressed by almost a quarter of those surveyed, was that Muswellbrook needed better facilities (23%). The other most common sentiment (12%) was that the additional facilities would be good for the town/region's future growth.

Of those negative, the most common beliefs were a perception that Council was wasteful (14%), that rates were high enough already (10%) or that the respondent couldn't afford the increase (8%).

Those opposed to the continuation of the SRV were then asked whether their opposition was based more on a belief that the proposed facilities weren't required, or that the mooted rate rise was too high:

Graph 2.3: (If opposed) Specific reasons for opposition (prompted)

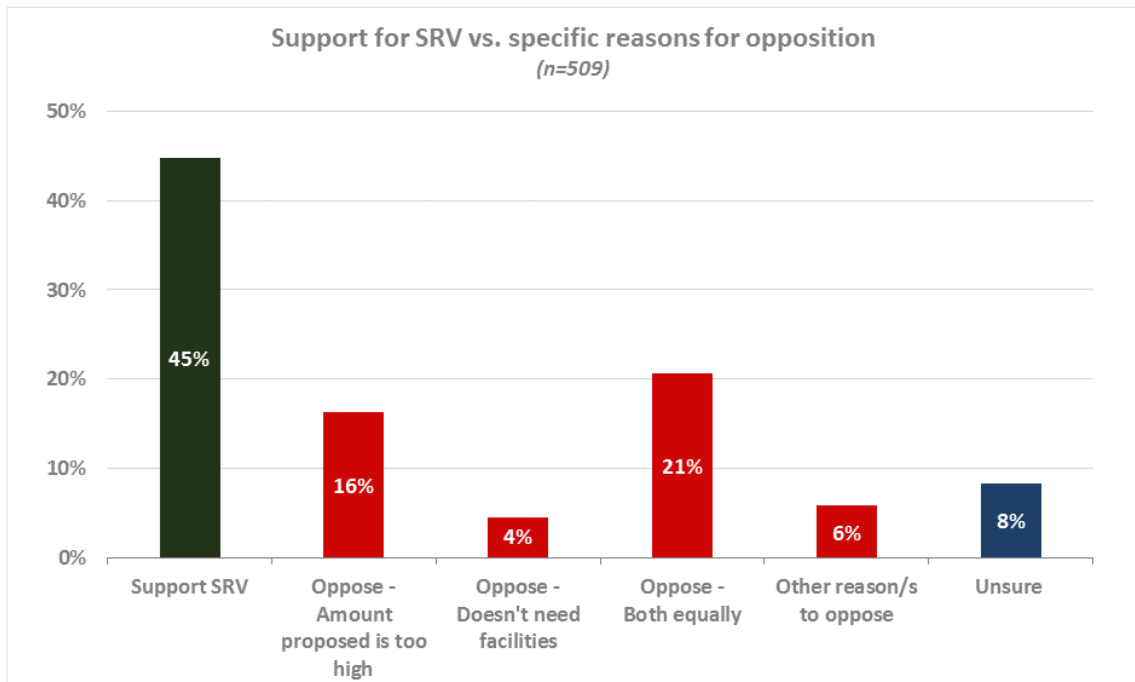


While 44% of those opposed felt it was both factors equally, a further 34% felt the amount proposed was too high – while only 10% of opponents were driven solely by a belief that the facilities were not needed.

Among all respondents, however (Graph 2.3, next page), support was most common (at 45%) followed by those opposing the SRV both on cost and perceptions that the proposed facilities weren't needed (21%).

(Continued next page...)

Graph 2.3a: Specific reasons for opposition (all respondents)



Part 3: Comparison of CATI vs. online results

An online, opt-in survey was run in parallel to the random and representative telephone survey. The online version was open from October 19th to November 5th inclusive, and promoted via Council's website and Facebook page, and in the local media (via a Media Release dated 22/10/2018). By survey completion deadline, 395 unique and valid responses had been received.

The tables below compare telephone and online responses.

Table 3.1: Status and Awareness

Question	Responses	Phone survey (n=509)	Online survey (n=395)
<i>I work in the Muswellbrook Shire</i>	Yes	56%	82%
	No	44%	18%
<i>I study in the Muswellbrook Shire</i>	Yes	8%	12%
	No	92%	88%
<i>I am a ratepayer in the Muswellbrook</i>	Yes	72%	88%
	No	28%	12%
<i>Awareness of previous SRV</i>	Yes	69%	75%
	No	31%	25%
<i>Have you read, heard or seen anything about Council's proposal?</i>	Yes	62%	77%
	No	38%	23%
<i>Can you recall where you saw or heard this?</i>	<i>Local newspaper</i>	16%	16%
	<i>Local radio</i>	4%	15%
	<i>Local TV news</i>	0%	1%
	<i>Council website</i>	2%	11%
	<i>Social media</i>	25%	52%
	<i>Letter from Council</i>	60%	63%
	<i>Friends, family, neighbours, colleagues</i>	8%	26%
	<i>Other</i>	2%	1%

This indicates that online respondents were significantly more likely than those in the telephone survey to work in the Muswellbrook shire (82% and 56% respectively) and be ratepayers in the shire (88% vs. 72%).

Those completing the online survey were significantly more likely to have had prior awareness of Council's proposal to apply for a continuation of the special rate variation (77%, against 62% of those completing the phone survey).

Online respondents were also significantly more likely to have heard about the proposed rate variation from social media (52%, against 25% of telephone respondents) and/or family/friends/neighbours etc. (26% and 8% respectively).

Table 3.2: Support/opposition

Question	Responses	Phone survey (n=509)	Online survey (n=395)
Receive letter from Council?	Yes	68%	72%
	No	32%	28%
Read the letter?	Yes - read in detail	49%	65%
	Yes - glanced through it	42%	32%
	No - have not yet read it	9%	3%
Support continuation of 14.73% SRV?	Yes	45%	16%
	No	47%	72%
	Unsure	8%	12%
Opposition based on purpose or amount too high?	Muswellbrook doesn't need these facilities	10%	13%
	Amount proposed is too high	34%	34%
	Both equally	44%	42%
	Other	12%	11%

Online respondents were significantly more likely to have read Council's letter regarding the proposed SRV (65%, vs. 49% of residents completing the telephone survey).

Online respondents were significantly more likely to oppose the proposed variation: only 16% supported the SRV, against 72% opposed. This compares with 45% support/47% opposition for telephone respondents. However among opponents in both surveys, reasons for this opposition were relatively consistent:

Table 3.3: Reasons for support/opposition (unprompted)

Question	Responses	Phone survey (n=509)	Online survey (n=395)
Why do you support or oppose the SRV?	<i>The town needs better facilities</i>	23%	7%
	<i>It will be good for the community and its future</i>	12%	3%
	<i>The job creation program needs more funding</i>	1%	0%
	<i>Towns needs new drainage</i>	2%	3%
	<i>Other/unsure (yes)</i>	4%	4%
	<i>Don't trust Council/wasteful</i>	14%	27%
	<i>Can't afford it</i>	8%	16%
	<i>Rates already too high</i>	10%	19%
	<i>Roads need fixing</i>	5%	2%
	<i>Don't need these facilities</i>	6%	8%
	<i>Wrong priorities</i>	6%	6%
	<i>Don't get enough services currently</i>	4%	3%
	<i>Denman/rural areas miss out</i>	4%	3%
	<i>No need for a convention/entertainment centre</i>	5%	7%
	<i>Other/unsure (No)</i>	3%	4%
	<i>Support temporary increase, not permanent</i>	2%	1%
	<i>Don't pay rates</i>	2%	0%
<i>Other/unsure (unsure)</i>	2%	0%	

Online respondents were significantly less likely than those polled by phone to argue (unprompted) that Muswellbrook needed better facilities (at 7% and 23% respectively) or that it would be good for the community and its future (3% and 12%).

Similarly, online respondents were far more likely to believe that they didn't trust Council or that it was wasteful (27%, against 14% of telephone respondents), that they couldn't afford the increase (16% vs. 8%) and that rates were already too high (19% vs. 10%).

Appendix 1: Telephone Survey

Version 1

MSC_SRV_2018

Last modified:15/10/2018 10:09:07 AM

- Q1. Hi my name is (name), and I'm calling from Jetty Research on behalf of Muswellbrook Shire Council. Council has asked us to call residents at random to conduct a short survey about an important local issue. The survey only takes around 5 minutes, all answers are confidential, and we're not trying to sell anything. Would you be willing to assist Council by completing a short survey this afternoon/evening?

Offer a CALL BACK.If asked 'Does this survey relate to special rate variation' say YES. Residents can confirm validity or if they have any questions about the survey or procedures to call Council switchboard, 6549 3700.

Yes	1
No	555

Answer If Attribute "No" from Q1 is SELECTED

Q1

- Q2. Thank you for your time. Have a great afternoon/evening.

End

- Q3. Thank so much, before we proceed can you confirm that you live in the Muswellbrook Shire?

Muswellbrook local government area

Yes	1
No	555

Answer If Attribute "No" from Q3 is SELECTED

Q3

Q4. I'm sorry, only residents in the Muswellbrook Shire qualify to participate. Thank you for your time.

End

Q5. And are you a Councillor or permanent Council employee in the Muswellbrook shire?

Casual and contractors okay

Yes	1
No	555

Q5

Answer If Attribute "Yes" from Q5 is SELECTED

Q6. I'm sorry, Councillors and permanent Council staff don't qualify for this survey. Thank you for your time.

End

Q7. And may I have your postcode?

2328	1
2333	2

Q7

Q8. And would your age range be between?

PROMPTED

18-39	1
40-59	2
60+	3

Q8

Q9. Gender?

DONT ASK

Male	1
Female	2

Q9

Q10. May I have your first name for the survey?

Only so we can refer to you by name

Q10

Q11. Thanks [Q10]. To start things off can you tell me which if any of the following apply to you?

PROMPTED

	Yes	No
I work in the Muswellbrook Shire	1	555
I study in the Muswellbrook Shire	1	555
I am a ratepayer in the Muswellbrook Shire	1	555

Q11_1

Q11_2

Q11_3

Q12. [Q10], are you aware that earlier this year the NSW Government granted Muswellbrook Shire Council a special rate variation for the 2018/19 financial year of 14.73% including the yearly rate peg?

Yes	1
No	555

Q12

Q13. And [Q10], have you read, heard or seen anything recently about Council seeking to continue this special rate variation permanently in order to deliver a number of programs and initiatives for the Muswellbrook Shire?

Yes	1
No	555

Q13

Q14. Can you recall where you saw or heard this?

Answer If Attribute "Yes" from Q13 is SELECTED

UNPROMPTED - tick any mentioned

Local paper	1
Local radio	2
Local TV news	3
Council website	4
Letter or Newsletter from Council	5
Social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter etc).	6
Friends, family, neighbours, colleagues etc.	7
OTHER	

Q14_1
Q14_2
Q14_3
Q14_4
Q14_5
Q14_6
Q14_7
Q14_0

Q15. Muswellbrook Shire Council recently sent all ratepayers a letter explaining that Council will be submitting an application to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal, or IPART, seeking to continue the special rate variation granted this year. Do you recall receiving this information?

Answer If Attribute "I am a ratepayer in the Muswellbrook Shire" from Q11 is Yes

Yes	1
No	555

Q15

Q16. Did you get a chance to read the letter?

Answer If Attribute "Yes" from Q15 is SELECTED

PROMPTED

Yes - read it all	1
Yes - glanced through it	2
No - have not read	3

Q16

Q17. Now [Q10], earlier this year the IPART approved Council implementing a special rate variation of 14.73%, including the yearly rate peg, for one year to help it deliver the first stage of the following programs and facilities:

An upgrade to stormwater drainage and additional funding for the roads and parks asset maintenance program. Development of an Olympic Park Precinct Master Plan and a Regional Entertainment and Conference Centre and ongoing operational maintenance. An expanded Job Creation program and additional funding to allow for biodiversity offsets.

Council is now applying to IPART to keep this special rate variation on a permanent basis, so that it can construct, maintain and manage these facilities and services. If IPART approves Council's application to continue the current SRV, there will be no further impact on rates with the exception of the yearly rate peg adjustment. .

With all that in mind, do you support Council's application to continue its special rate variation in future?

Confirm answer, except unsure

Yes - support continuation of SRV	1
No - do not support continuation of SRV	2
Unsure	666

Q17

Q18. Can you briefly explain why think this?

RECORD response

Q18

Q19. And is your opposition to the proposed Special Rate Variation mainly because you think Muswellbrook doesn't need these facilities, or because you think the amount being asked is too high?

Answer If Attribute "No - do not support continuation of SRV" from Q17 is SELECTED

UNPROMPTED

Doesn't need facilities	1
Amount proposed is too high	2
Both equally	3
Unsure/prefer not to say	4
OTHER	

Q19

Q20. Thanks so much [Q10], we're almost done. Can you just tell me if you live in an urban or rural area?

Urban	1
Rural	2
Mixed or unsure	3

Q20

Q21. And do you have any children under the age of 18 living in your home?

Yes	1
No	555

Q21

Q22. Do you or anyone in your home identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander?

Yes	1
No	555

Q22

Q23. And does anyone living in your home have a disability that affects their mobility or quality of life?

Yes	1
No	555

Q23

Q24. Just before we finish, Muswellbrook Shire Council is currently seeking to establish a randomly selected online survey panel of local residents. This panel is being established to provide a quick and easy way for locals such as yourself to provide feedback to Council on issues of community importance from time to time. Is this something that may interest you?

Yes	1	
No	555	Go to Q27

Q24

Q25. Thanks, that's great [Q10]. I just need your name and email address, Council will be in touch shortly with further details.

Read back email address

First name	1	Q25_1_1
Surname	2	Q25_1_2
Email	3	Q25_1_3

Q25_1_1
Q25_1_2
Q25_1_3

Q26. Thank so much, that's the end of the survey. Muswellbrook Shire Council greatly appreciates your views. Did you have any question about the survey? Have a great afternoon/evening.

End

Appendix 2: Telephone Survey Weighting Calculation

It is common in random telephone surveys to weight results by age and gender. This avoids the need to sample by quota (which is far more expensive than purely random sampling), and ensures the data from under- and over-represented groups is adjusted to meet the demographic profile of the survey population.

Population weighting can only occur where the true survey population is known. In this case the population, defined as “adults 18-plus living in the Muswellbrook Shire”, can be accurately measured through the 2016 ABS Census⁷. We can hence weight the survey data by the known population.

To do this we divide the survey sample by gender (male/female) and across three age groups (in this case 18-39, 40-59, and 60-plus.) This divides respondents into one of six age and gender categories, as shown below:

Randomly selected survey		
Age	Male	Female
18-39	7.1%	9.6%
40-59	19.4%	20.2%
60+	18.7%	25.0%

Meanwhile the 2016 ABS Census demonstrated the following adult (18+) age and gender breakdown:

Muswellbrook adult population by age and gender (ABS 2016 Census data)		
Age	Male	Female
18-39	20.3%	19.1%
40-59	18.7%	17.3%
60+	12.1%	12.5%

Dividing the “true” population by the sample population for each age and gender category provides the following weighting factors:

Weighting factor by age and gender		
Age	Male	Female
18-39	2.873	1.986
40-59	0.962	0.855
60+	0.648	0.499

These weightings are then assigned to each data record based on each respondent’s age/gender profile, and the raw data for each question is adjusted accordingly.

⁷ ABS Census for Muswellbrook LGA, Usual Resident profile.