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# Road to financial sustainability -- bridging the gaps

Kyogle Council has taken the first few steps down the path to financial sustainability.

It has adopted a revised [Financial Management Policy](#), a revised [Community Engagement Strategy](#) and a new [Long Term Financial Plan \(2015-2034\)](#)

It is also undertaking a review of its Community Strategic Plan - a process that will be informed by the recently adopted Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) and is being assisted by the establishment of five [Council Focus Groups](#). The aim of the Focus Groups is to guide long term planning in the key target areas of: Ageing in Place, Disability Services and Respite Care, Agriculture; Governance and Community Services, Village Life; and Visitor Attractions.

It is clear that Council is facing some hard budget choices as it seeks to become financially sustainable. Council's income is limited - due largely to more than 30 years of rate pegging by the NSW Government - and is not keeping pace with increases in the costs of delivering services to the community.

In addition to these costs, there are also the extra responsibilities that have been shifted to Council that were previously overseen by the State Government.

The second factor in Council's unsustainable position is the cost of looking after the community's infrastructure assets - the roads, bridges, buildings, sports fields and playgrounds

Council is the custodian of \$460 million worth of public assets. Over the years, funding to maintain and renew this infrastructure has been reduced relative to the costs associated with the upkeep of the assets. This has resulted in a backlog of infrastructure renewals and has led to a deterioration of assets, increased costs of maintenance and reduced levels of service.

Based on the Asset Management Plan and Strategy adopted by Council in 2012 (see below), the current backlog is in the order of \$40 million. These figures have been verified by independent reports from TCorp (see below) undertaken as part of the work of the NSW Independent Local Government Review Panel and also by private consultants, Review Today (see below) engaged by Council.

There is no single solution. Council's annual funding gap of \$4 million will need to come from a range of options including.

- Productivity improvements (changing the way services are delivered)
- Reductions in current levels of service
- New revenue opportunities
- Additional borrowings
- Rate increases above pegged limits
- Asset disposals

The LTFP adopted in December 2014 is seen as key to Council's push to achieve financial sustainability and "bridge the gaps" between income and services. It proposes a series of above-the-pegged-limit rate rises over five years to help fund significant increases in expenditure on Council's road and bridge network. It also provides for cuts to services.

Council must now seek approval from the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal for the special rate rises in the LTFP.

Kyogle Council's application to IPART asks for a total rate rise (including the above pegged limit increase and stormwater management charges) of 12.42% in 2015-2016, two rate rises of 5.43% (including the above pegged limit increase and stormwater management charges) from 2016-2018, and two rates rises of 5.44 % (including the above pegged limit increase and stormwater management charges) from 2018 to 2020.

IPART is not expected to make a decision on the application until April 2015.

Meanwhile, Council is working to identify new income sources and savings generated through productivity improvements.

Council also wants you, the ratepayers and residents, to be a part of the discussion and to contribute to the process.

Already, hundreds of people have had the chance at public information sessions, through submissions and via a community survey to tell the Council their views on the LTFP and to identify the "gaps" they want the Council to target as it moves to become financially sustainable.

The Council will continue to provide ratepayers and residents with opportunities to have a say and to become involved in the process over the coming year.

Arthur Piggott

General Manager



**KNOCKROW ROLLOVER: Truck flattens car**

# No jail for B-double deaths

FROM PAGE 1

very close family," Mr Janke said.

"The shock of the day of June 25 is something that we are still struggling with and will never get over."

Mr and Mrs Liu's statement, translated from Chinese, spoke of their beautiful only child who was looking forward to marrying Mitchell and starting a family.

Since the crash the distraught couple have been diagnosed with depression and hypertension, and worry who will care for them in their old age because of China's one-child policy.

"I believe the greatest misfortune in life is for someone to lose their only child, especially at a middle age," the statement read.

"Your leaving has taken our hearts away."

"Life without you is like a world without sunshine."

An expert crash report from Dr Robert Casey of the University of NSW, police facts and Prest's NSW and Queensland criminal histories were tendered for Ma-

**"It is our horror that the driver has been allowed to continue driving trucks"**

- Dennis Janke

gistrate Jeff Linden to consider.

Prest's barrister Peter O'Connor told the court his client had been substantially psychologically affected by the crash and lost his relationship over his "error in judgment".

Mr Linden sentenced Prest to a nine month suspended jail sentence and disqualified him from driving for 18 months.

"At the end of all the experts' reports and evidence there are just four words 'too fast, too close'," Mr Linden concluded on Prest's driving.

**HAVE YOUR SAY**  
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**HORROR SMASH: Rescue crews work to lift the B-double of the car after the crash at Knockrow.**

PHOTO: WESTPAC RESCUE HELICOPTER

## SOME CLOSURE

WHILE any laugh penalty wouldn't have brought back Mitchell and Sha, Dennis Janke said the sentencing of the truck driver responsible for the unfortunate tragedy has brought some closure. Despite this sense of closure, the hearts of the Janke and Liu families will bleed for ever over this loss of their loved ones.

"We need to accept the fact that this is a tragedy that's imposed by the courts," Mr Janke said.

"We would have liked a more serious sentence and going by the laws and precedents that is what we were told to expect."

"And that isn't going to

bring the kids back."

Mr Janke said an examination of the truck found three of the four brakes were not connected to the prime mover and the truck had been pulled over multiple times by the RFS and defected.

The evidence wasn't sufficient to prove a dangerous driving charge, he just made the wrong decision and as the magistrate said he was just driving too fast and too close and didn't know how to handle the situation.

"Police found the truck wasn't speeding, and the driver had no drugs or alcohol in his system."



**FACING FACTS: Kyogle mayor Danielle Muirholland says "we obviously need to act now and negotiate the best position we can if we're forced into a merger".**

PHOTO: THE NORTHERN STAR

## Kyogle prepared for forced merger possibility

HAMISH BROOME

hamish.broome@northernstar.com.au

KYOGLE mayor Danielle Muirholland says her council needs to prepare for the possibility of a forced amalgamation.

On Wednesday night the council resolved to hold bilateral meetings with senior staff and councillors from both Lismore City and Richmond Valley to model a potential merger.

The mayor said she didn't support amalgamation but Kyogle couldn't afford to keep its head in the sand.

"Forced amalgamations are being talked about; they're on the table," she said.

"We obviously need to act now and negotiate the best position we can if we're forced into a merger."

The bilateral meetings will take place within the next two months.

"We are going to gather as much information as possible, and we are going to negotiate the best possible outcome we can with Lismore and Richmond Valley Council," Cr Muirholland promised.

Issues expected to be discussed at the meetings include rates, services, financial sustainability, potential economies of scale, lobbying capacity and other less quantifiable issues, such as loss of local representation and local identity.

Cr Muirholland said once the council had a clear idea of what a merger would involve it could deliver a better idea to its 3500 residents via community consultation.

"Our responsibility is to present an unbiased argument to the community. We need to say to them these are the pros and these are the cons."

"If we decide to merge or we decide to stand alone,

## Council amalgamations won't fix problems

A REGIONAL planning expert heading up a new planning degree at Southern Cross University says amalgamation won't solve any of the underlying issues facing councils on the Northern Rivers.

Amalgamation has become a real possibility for many NSW councils, with Premier Mike Baird refusing to rule out forced mergers and Kyogle Council identified as a candidate in last year's Independent Local Government Review.

But Dr Elizabeth O'Brien, course co-ordinator of SCU's new Bachelor of Regional and Urban Planning, said amalgamation was a "quick fix" that didn't

address the root of councils' problems.

"The research shows many reasons why amalgamation won't work."

"The rural shires are spatially huge; if you amalgamate them you're still only going to have the same amount of dollars averaged out."

"You're still going to have the same lack of public transport, the same lack of accessibility to services, the funding will remain the same, and you're still going to have the same rates coming in, and lack of infrastructure."

"You're then going to have an issue about where your council is based - if 'Council A' has the biggest dollars,

you may get a skewing of things being better for that area than other."

While there were some benefits from amalgamation, Dr O'Brien argued the main beneficiary was the state government, not the community.

"The only thing that works dollar-wise is administration costs."

"But why save on administration costs if the outcomes for your community are going to be no better, or worse?"

Once councils went through the process of amalgamation, it was tempting to "rationalise services", and the first axe to fall was usually on community infrastructure - libraries, swimming pools, and community centres.

Because of the aging population, there was a greater requirement for these kinds of assets, especially in regional areas. "It's more of an issue in regional areas than metropolitan areas because there's less economies of scale with less population density," Dr O'Brien said.

"If you're in a smaller city area you would have five local pools within 10km. Some have lots of public transport, you don't have to worry about getting around."

## SCU | planning issues

Dr O'Brien said the Bachelor of Regional and Urban Planning (Honours) offered on campus at Lismore from 2015 offered both a technical qualification and the chance to address regional planning issues such as catering to an ageing population, managing climate change on the coast, urban growth and preserving local identity.

She said the course would turn out planners with a good sense of social justice, with both a liberal arts as well as a technical education.

Said the value of a planning degree was it equipped students to work in all sorts of areas, both locally and overseas - and there was plenty of demand for planners.

"It opens up opportunities at the three levels of government, private consultancies, development companies, community organisations," she said.

"We need new planners coming into the profession."

As part of the \$10 for the

Future package, \$103 million has also been made available to assist councils who decide to merge.

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## Tributes

### Funeral Notices

#### ATTEWELL, HAZEL JEAN "JEAN"

12th December 2014. Passed away peacefully at St Michael's Apartments, Casino. Beloved Wife of Frank (dec). Much loved Mother and Mother-in-law of Wendy & Ian (dec) Barbato, Steve & Isla and David & Ruth. Cherished Gran to her grandchildren and Great-grandchildren. Jean will be sadly missed by the Members of her extended Family and Friends.

Aged 85 years

Relatives and Friends are invited to attend Jean's Funeral Service to be held at the Lismore Memorial Gardens Crematorium, Skyline Road, Gonellabah on Friday 19th December 2014, commencing at 11.00 am.



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It's been eleven years since that day  
The one we loved was called away.  
God took you home it was his will  
But in our hearts you live on still  
Always Remembered  
Your Loving Wife and Family

### Bereavement Thanks

#### FREDA JOAN SHEPARD

2 NOVEMBER 1916 - 14 NOVEMBER 2014  
The family of the late Freda Shepard would like to thank relatives and friends for their support after the loss of Freda.  
Special thanks to Dr Rajan, St Michael's Apartments for their dedication, Casino Guardian Funerals and Sandra Humphrys for their guidance.  
Mary and John Hancock, Geoff and Julie Shepard and families

#### HENRY, May Bell

29/11/1918 - 27/11/2014

I sincerely thank all those who assisted and shared in my Mother, May Bell's Funeral celebration, and for all the cards, flowers and prayers received.

Special thanks to The Kyogle Court Staff for their care. Please accept this as my personal thanks.

Donna McInnes

## Notices

### Church Services

CATHOLIC Church Casino Mass Times: Sat Vigil 6pm, Sunday 8am, Office hours: Mon-Thur 8.30am-4pm, Fri 8.30am-2pm (casino@lismore.catholic.org.au).

### Public Notices

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## Notices

### Public Notices

#### Christmas Closures

The Northern Star and Richmond River Express Examiner wish to advise that the Casino office will be closed over the holiday break from 3pm Friday 19th December 2014 until 9am Monday 5th January 2015.

For any classified advertising during this time, visit finda.com.au or phone the Customer Contact Centre on 1300 136 181.

We wish you a safe and happy Christmas and New Year.



#### KYOGLE COUNCIL ADOPTION OF LONG TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2015-2034/AMENDED DRAFT DELIVERY AND OPERATIONAL PLAN

Kyogle Council has recently been through a comprehensive review of its Long Term Financial Plan. This document has been on public exhibition, and discussed at various forums. Council has considered all submissions and information provided by its residents and has recently adopted this document.

Council has resolved to apply for a special rate variation which is in addition to the "rate pegging" amount set each year by the NSW Government. These, as well as the other changes outlined in the Long Term Financial Plan, are now reflected in the amended Draft Delivery and Operational Plan. The amended Draft Delivery and Operational Plan and supporting documents can be viewed on Council's website [www.kyogle.nsw.gov.au](http://www.kyogle.nsw.gov.au) or at the Administration Office. Hard copies can be mailed and to request this, you need to phone 6632 1611.

The amended Draft Delivery Plan is now on public exhibition and written submissions are invited and will be received up until 4pm on January 27, 2015. Submissions can also be made using the Kyogle council website.

#### COMMENCEMENT OF KYOGLE LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL PLAN 2012 AMENDMENT NUMBER 3

Kyogle Council has made an amendment to the Kyogle Local Environmental Plan 2012 to permit the development of dual occupancies (detached) in Zones RU1, RU2, RU4 and R5 and secondary dwellings in Zones RU1, RU2, RU4, R1, R3, and R5 with the consent of Council. The amendment also increases the maximum permissible size of secondary dwellings. The LEP amendment commenced on 5 December 2014.

The LEP amendment is available for inspection at Kyogle Council Administration Building, 1 Stratheden Street, Kyogle, Monday-Friday 8.30am-4pm and is also available to download on the NSW Legislation website at [www.legislation.nsw.gov.au](http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au)

For further information please phone Council's Planning Department on 6632 0293.

Arthur Piggott

Kyogle Council

General Manager

KYOGLE NSW 2474

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## Richmond Valley set to debate plans to go it alone

RICHMOND Valley Council will tonight debate whether to prepare a submission to move forward as a stand-alone council.

Amalgamation with Kyogle Council has been identified as an option under the State Government's Fit for the Future reforms, but Kyogle has told Richmond Valley it does not want to proceed with talks until after a councillor workshop in January.

At the Richmond Valley Council meeting tonight, staff will recommend the council move forward.

"It (Kyogle Council) has also adopted a long-term financial plan, which seeks to go it alone," the staff report explains.

"Because of the tight timeframes required in lodging council's submission for Fit for the Future, it is recommended that Richmond Valley Council proceed with the view Kyogle Council is not interested in amalgamation."

As part of a submission to the Office of Local Government, Richmond Valley Council will be required to address its scale and capacity, look at key challenges and opportunities, and rate its performance against Fit for the Future benchmarks.

WOULD-BE BUYER: Council 'botched' process, leaked confidential information

# Stoush over airport sale

FROM PAGE 1

council had fallen silent and he had only found out via a news report that they had abandoned the process.

"We thought we already had a seat at the table for discussions," he said.

He said the company had wanted financial information about the airport before it was prepared to do due diligence to deliver an actual proposal.

"I figured that that was the next stage of discussion (but) the opportunity to have that next stage never happened."

But in what appears to be an epic misunderstanding, Lismore mayor Jenny Dowell said Mr Keast had made accusations which weren't true. She denied ever mentioning the mysterious "\$20 million" figure.

"I have never ever quoted that figure," Cr Dowell said. "There's inaccuracies all through his claims."

Cr Dowell also rejected Mr



Lismore City Council has decided not to proceed with a process to sell Lismore Airport.

PHOTO: MARC STAPPELBERG

Keast's allegation that Lismore City Council staff somehow

"botched" the Eol process.

"I refute that completely; our staff are extremely experienced in both expressions of interest and tenders," she said.

"The rules governing what we do are set down very stringently and they are followed to the letter."

"If anyone seriously wants

to be considered for the next stage of an Eol process then they have to put a serious amount of work in ... and that was not forthcoming."

Mr Keast said he was no stranger to local government processes, saying he had dealt with Bundaberg Regional Council and had a "very good working relation-

ship" with the Ballina-Byron Gateway Airport.

The company saw the Lismore airport as a potential "strategic acquisition".

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**JENNY DOWELL:** If anyone seriously wants to be considered for the next stage of an Eol process then they have to put a serious amount of work in ... and that was not forthcoming.

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Tuesday, December 16, 2014

Northern Star





Dec 2014 / Jan 2015



## Kyogle Council Community Newsletter



### Seasons Greetings

As we look back on 2014, *we are grateful for your* continued support, involvement and input.

We look forward with *enthusiasm* and *optimism* to the *challenges* and *opportunities* that 2015 will no doubt bring and aim to ensure the best interests of the *people of the area* are served at all times. Councillors and staff of Kyogle Council would like to *wish you, your family and friends*, hope, happiness and peace during this Festive Season and throughout the *coming year*.

### Council to apply for above pegged limit rate rises

Kyogle Council will apply to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for a series of special rate rises over the next five years.

The rolling series of above-the-pegged-limit rate increases is part of Council's Long Term Financial Plan which was adopted at the 8 December Ordinary meeting and aims to put Council on a path to financial sustainability.

*continued over page*

## Councillors to workshop *Fit for the Future* Program

Kyogle Councillors will meet early in the New Year to explore the issues, implications, advantages and disadvantages in relation to *Fit for the Future* and the relevant templates.

The councillor workshop will be held on 12 January, 2015, and will be led by an independent facilitator.

To date Kyogle Council has not adopted a position on the question of a potential merger as recommended in the State Government's *Fit for the Future* blueprint for local government in NSW.

Kyogle Mayor Danielle Mulholland said the Council wanted to be as fully informed as possible before making such a crucial decision.

"We want to have as much information as possible on the pros and cons of the *Fit for the Future* program and the implications, both good and bad, for



Mayor Danielle Mulholland

ratepayers and residents before we adopt a position one way or the other," Cr Mulholland said.

"I would expect that Councillors will have a much better understanding of all the issues after the January workshop and we will be able to further explore these at separate, informal discussions. Council is looking to have with Lismore City and Richmond Valley councils in the New Year."

Cr Mulholland said that the Council would inform and continue to engage with the community throughout the process.

## Council to apply for above pegged limit rate rises

*continued from previous page*

The Long Term Financial Plan also proposes significant increases in expenditure on Council's road and bridge network and some cuts to services.

Council received a mixed response to the draft Long Term Financial Plan when it was placed on public exhibition for community feedback.

Some people believed the proposed rate rises were unaffordable and the cuts excessive. Others indicated that while they would prefer not to pay a significant rate rise, it was preferable to a merger

with a neighbouring Council.

Kyogle Council's application to IPART will seek approval for a total rate rise (including the above pegged limit increase and stormwater management charges) of 12.42% in 2015-2016, 5.43% (including the above pegged limit increase and stormwater management charges) from 2016-2018 and 5.44% (including the above pegged limit increase and stormwater management charges) from 2018-2020.

While Council had to inform IPART that it intended applying for an above the pegged limit rate rise by 12 December, it won't lodge the formal application until February 2015.

IPART is not expected to make a decision on the application until April 2015.

## From the Mayor

Well by the time you read this, December will have been a full month and I can genuinely say that, along with most of you, I'm really looking forward to the Christmas/New Year break coming up. This month has seen discussions about the State Government's Fit for the Future initiative continuing although, as more details emerge, it's obvious that these are still very early days and it's a long way from having any well defined outcomes. I've recently met with our State and Federal representatives about a range of issues including roads, bridges, waste management, health and policing to name but a few.

I was privileged to attend the graduation ceremony at the Bonalbo Central School on 28 November and there are photos on my Facebook page for interested parties. I've attended a number of end-of-year events including an RFS cadet graduation ceremony at Woodenbong, the International Day of People with Disabilities celebrations, opening of an Art Exhibition at Mallanganee, meetings at Bonalbo and discussions with indigenous representatives about some of their issues – so life has been as busy as always. And I'll be attending a number of functions in the lead up to Christmas as well as a range of meetings and discussions until Council closes on 19 December 2014, so you'll probably see me out and about frequently.

Council will recommence operations on 5 January, 2015, but if there are any emergencies or natural disasters, Council will always be there to assist.

With summer upon us, it's really important for everyone to stay cool and calm. I know and understand that dealing with each other, like dealing with government at different levels, can sometimes be a frustrating experience.

We all want simple solutions to complex problems and if we could do it, we would but that's sometimes not possible. Please remember, we're trying to help not hinder you, and that sometimes the answer to your question will not be what you hoped for.

I like to meet as many of you as I can, but there's only one of me and there's lots of you so if you see me in the street, feel free to say hello. Alternatively, you can always phone, email or contact me on Facebook if there's something you'd like me to know about.

Finally, on behalf of all Councillors, let me take this opportunity to wish everyone a safe and happy Christmas and a prosperous New Year.

Be kind to each other, have a wonderful break with family and friends and from everyone at Council, we wish you all the best and look forward to your continuing enthusiastic support in 2015.

*Until next time, all the best,  
Cr Danielle Mulholland  
Mayor Kyogle Council*

## NBN Rollout

Kyogle has been added to the National Broadband Network (NBN) rollout schedule. Kyogle and surrounds is set to receive fixed wireless facilities. NBN Co spokesperson Darren Rudd, said the ongoing rollout was

delivering fast, reliable broadband to more and more Australians.

"More families and businesses in NSW are a step closer to being able to enjoy the benefits of fast and reliable broadband, which can deliver improved access to e-health resources,

online education, teleworking opportunities and entertainment on demand," he said.

"For families in rural and regional communities in particular, NBN provides access to internet speeds and capacity that many in the big cities take for granted."



## Council to apply to IPART for special rate variation

Kyogle Council will apply to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for a series of special rate rises over the next five years.

The rolling series of above-the-pegged-limit rate increases is part of Council's Long Term Financial Plan which was adopted at the 8 December Ordinary meeting and aims to put Council on a path to financial sustainability.

The Long Term Financial Plan also proposes significant increases in expenditure on Council's road and bridge network and some cuts to services.

Council received a mixed response to the draft Long Term Financial Plan when it was placed on public exhibition for community feedback.

Some people believed the proposed rate rises were unaffordable and the cuts excessive. Others indicated that while they would prefer not to pay a significant rate rise, it was preferable to a merger with a neighbouring Council.

Kyogle Council's application to IPART will seek approval for a total rate rise (including the above pegged limit increase and stormwater management charges) of 12.42% in 2015-2016, two rate rises of 5.43% (including the above pegged limit increase and stormwater management charges) from 2016-2018 and two rate rises of 5.44% (including the above pegged limit increase and stormwater management charges) from 2018-2020.

While Council had to inform IPART that it intended applying for an above the pegged limit rate rise by 12 December, it won't lodge the formal application until February 2015.

IPART is not expected to make a decision on the application until April 2015.

For further information on Council's push to become financially sustainable, click [here](#).

To learn more about the process Council went through in adopting the Long Term Financial Plan, click [here](#)

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Kyogle Council

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Kyogle Council is responsible for an area of 3,589 square kilometres and adjoins the Scenic Rim, Tweed, Lismore, Richmond, Clarence, and Tenterfield Councils

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- Kyogle Council** @KyogleCouncil · Dec 12  
Kyogle Council to apply to IPART for a series of above the pegged limit rate increases over the next five years.Go to [kyogle.nsw.gov.au](http://kyogle.nsw.gov.au)
- Kyogle Council** @KyogleCouncil · Oct 22  
Level 1 water restrictions for Kyogle and Bonalbo came into effect last night. For details see Council's website [kyogle.nsw.gov.au](http://kyogle.nsw.gov.au)
- Kyogle Council** @KyogleCouncil · Oct 22  
Learn more about Council's draft long term financial plan at a listening post manned by Council staff at the Woodenbong Market on Saturday.
- Kyogle Council** @KyogleCouncil · Sep 9  
Danielle Mulholland has been re-elected to serve a second term as Mayor of Kyogle Council. Cr John Burley was elected Deputy Mayor
- Kyogle Council** @KyogleCouncil · Jul 31  
Kyogle Council calls for applications for Financial Assistance Grants. Applications close 12 September. For info [kyogle.nsw.gov.au](http://kyogle.nsw.gov.au)

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## Kyogle Council

December 12 at 10:45am · 🌐

Kyogle Council will apply to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for a series of special rate rises over the next five years. The rolling series of above-the-pegged-limit rate increases is part of Council's Long Term Financial Plan which was adopted at the 8 December Ordinary meeting and aims to put Council on a path to financial sustainability.

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While Council had to inform IPART that it intended applying for an above the pegged limit rate rise by 12 December, it won't lodge the formal application until February 2015.

IPART is not expected to make a decision on the application until April 2015.





to the residential aged care residents and families, ensuring that each person is the centre of all decisions, care and activities. Nerida will provide clinical leadership to the staff at the three MPS sites and revamp many of their processes and paperwork, ensuring that they meet current standards and evidence based practices.

If you have a relative in an MPS Aged Care Unit you will hopefully meet Nerida in the near future and be involved with her in improving the care they provide to the aged residents.

Nerida moved to the Northern Rivers ten years ago and was previously in the private sector in aged care and taught Bachelor Health (Nursing) at the University of Newcastle.

We welcome you Nerida and look forward to hearing more of your work here at our MPS sites.



#### General Information:

Remember to call the Health Advice Line if you have a health issue. It's a 24 hour 7 days a week free service on 1800 022 222. An RN (Registered Nurse) will speak to you and assess whether or not you need to go to the Emergency Dept at your local MPS. Read more information about this service on [www.healthdirect.org.au](http://www.healthdirect.org.au)

Ambulance/Police Phone No. 000 (Triple Zero)

Mental Health Helpline 1800 011 511

Noelle Lynden-Way

Community Representative  
Quality & Safety Committee



## Lismore Greens to hold information stall at Kyogle Farmers' Markets



## IPART Application

Kyogle Council will apply to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for a series of special rate rises over the next five years.

The rolling series of above-the-pegged-limit rate increases is part of Council's Long Term Financial Plan which was adopted at the 8 December Ordinary meeting and aims to put Council on a path to financial sustainability.

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While Council had to inform IPART that it intended applying for an above the pegged limit rate rise by 12 December, it won't lodge the formal application until February 2015.

IPART is not expected to make a decision on the application until April 2015.

## Kyogle PA & H Society (Show Society) AGM

Will be holding its Annual General Meeting at the Showground on Monday Feb 2nd 2015 at 7PM.

To be eligible to vote, members must be financial and dues of \$10.00 per person can be paid on the night. Nomination forms for President, 2 Vice-Presidents and Treasurer will be accepted up until Friday prior to the meeting and can be obtained by phoning Wendy on 0438 554 385.

## The Risk Hall New Years Eve dance

Will be held at the Risk Hall. Music by the Diamond Duo. Plenty of novelties and supper will be supplied, from 8pm.

Be there for a great night out.

**NRTT papers can be found at:**



## Granny's Good Oil

### Old Fashioned Handy Hints

If you buy a gift voucher as a gift from a local business for special occasions such as Christmas you are helping to keep your town on a prosperous path. Those local businesses are the ones that constantly support local groups that you or your family are members of all year long.

\* A slice of bread placed in a bag with hard brown sugar for a few days will make the sugar soft and usable again.

\* When boiling eggs add some salt to the water to stop the shells from cracking during the boiling process.

\* When cooking cabbage or onions, boil a small amount of vinegar in a pan to remove the odours.

\* If you sprinkle lemons with water and refrigerate them in a plastic bag, they will last a month or more.

\* They say that for making good pastry, you should make sure your hands are cool. Wash them in cold water before starting and chill the pastry before attempting to roll it out. Work quickly and handle the pastry as little as possible. Tough pastry can mean too much liquid and not enough fat or the ingredients were not cold enough, or simply plain over cooking. Crumbling pastry can be too much fat and not enough liquid or that the fat was not rubbed in to the flour thoroughly.

\* To clean tea towels, add a dessertspoon of vinegar to the water when washing. It will bring them out much cleaner.

\* To prevent glass jars from breaking when packing away, place a thick rubber band around the body of the jar. This will stop them from bumping into each other.

\* When corks are too hard to go in to a bottle, throw them in hot water for a couple of minutes, they will soften easily.

\* Fleas can be driven away from an area by sprinkling a few drops of lavender oil around where the infestation is.

\* Two ways to remove grass stains:-

1. Spread butter on them and leave in the hot sun.

2. Wet with lemon juice, sprinkle with salt and leave in the sun. You might also try using soap and cold water.

\* Granny made her linen perfectly white by putting a large handful of powdered Borax in to every 10 gallons of wash water.

\* To remove tar from cloth, saturate the spot and rub it well with turpentine. Every spot will vanish.



RREXP  
17-12-14

# ride into town

## exhilarating Range route



motorbike riders keen for a rest break after a challenging route.

PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED

of the Border Ranges.

"The Lions TT event brought in \$180,000 to the town," he said.

"That weekend there was a group from Cobar who used it as a school reunion.

"We had all these people in town so that there was an overflow tent city and not

one bad incident the whole time."

Mr Wallis sees the attraction of Kyogle and surrounding villages partly as their accessibility and affordability, being close to Brisbane, the Darling Downs and the Gold Coast.

"Kyogle is becoming

recognised as the gem of the Northern Rivers Region of NSW," he said.

Kyogle Mayor Danielle Mulholland said a number of projects were in their infancy for the greater good of the local government area. "It is all part of our broader economic strategy."

## Council applies to lift rates

KYOGLE ratepayers may be paying more for their services in the near future as Kyogle Council will apply to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) for a series of special rate rises over the next five years.

The rolling series of above-the-pegged-limit rate increases is part of the council's Long Term Financial Plan, which was adopted at the December 8 Ordinary meeting, and aims to put the council on a path to financial sustainability.

The Long Term Financial Plan also proposes significant increases in expenditure on the council's road and bridge network and some cuts to services.

Kyogle Council's application to IPART will seek approval for a total rate rise (including the above pegged limit increase and stormwater management charges) of 12.42% in 2015-2016, rate rises of 5.43% (including the above pegged limit increase and stormwater management charges) from 2016-2018 and rate rises of 5.44% (including the above pegged limit increase and stormwater management charges) from 2018-2020.

Applications had to be in by December 12 but the council won't lodge the formal application until February 2015.

IPART is not expected to make a decision until April 2015.

## Historical society's jubilee

MEMBERS of Casino and District Historical Society Inc recently celebrated their Golden Jubilee with a special lunch at St Mark's Hall.

Special guests were Richmond Manyweathers, son of founding members Richmond and Beryl Manyweathers, and Leo Lane, who was elected vice-president at the inaugural meeting and has remained a member for 50 years.

After a talk by Leo about

the beginning of the Society, president Bob Moran presented Leo with Life Membership.

The society was formed on November 20, 1964 with the main objective being to secure a building being vacated by the high school which was transferring to the new location in Queensland Rd, to establish a museum. They obviously had big plans even then.

Over its 50 years the society has collected over 10,000 objects, including a

comprehensive collection from local properties and early industries, which together with early photographs, depict the lifestyle of the district's pioneers.

The first committee included Mr Quinn as president, Mr Lane vice-president, Mr Ryan secretary, Mrs Manyweathers treasurer, and a committee of five - Messrs Woods, Crawford, Martin, Robotham and Mrs Hickson.





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Includes wheelbarrow & garden tool with ass'd heads. 3350254 **\$39**

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## CLEAN UP: Patrons treat Bangalow park like rubbish

## Sports fields look a dump

HELEN HAWKES

helen.hawkes@northernstar.com.au

RUBBISH dumped at Bangalow Sports Fields is proving an expensive problem for the local council and ratepayers.

The popular park is used by sports groups, dog owners and, most recently, skateboarders, who have access to the new skate bowl.

But drink cans, dog poo and even sports socks are increasingly strewn around the grounds.

Byron Shire Council's infrastructure services director Phil Holloway said there were 12 bins at the Bangalow park, which were emptied twice a week.

Rubbish on the ground is also collected before the sport fields are mowed. At this time of year, the grounds are mowed weekly.

"Users of all sport fields in the shire, sporting and recreational, need to be reminded to pick up their litter and put it in a nearby bin," Mr Holloway said.

PHIL HOLLOWAY:

We are constantly surprised at the rubbish left lying on the edge of fields and the bins are close by and only half full.

"We are constantly surprised at the rubbish left lying on the edge of fields and the bins are close by and only half full."

The Bangalow Sports Fields are also an on-leash dog area.

"With the walking track around the perimeter of the fields, it's a great place to exercise a dog and dog owners are reminded to take a dog poo bag," Mr Holloway said.

"There is nothing worse than stepping in the 'unexpected'. The majority of dog owners carry a bag when they go out and being prepared is part of being a responsible pet owner."

Dog owners are also reminded that an owner of a roaming dog can be fined

\$220, and \$275 for not picking up dog poo.

Mr Holloway added that tradesmen were currently working to build a shelter next to the skate bowl.

"The community worked hard to fundraise and install the shade structure at the Bangalow Sports Fields and should be congratulated," he said.

"As the recent weather has been showing us, the temperatures can heat up and providing shade shelter is good, safe sun practice for our children."

"The skate park is proving to be a popular place for our young people and it's ideally centrally located."

"Keeping children active, outdoors and away from the computer screens is always a positive outcome."

Skateboarders are reminded there are bins next to the bowl for their use.

**HAVE YOUR SAY**  
northernstar.com.au

## Kyogle Council seeks rate rises

KYOGLE Council has announced it will apply to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal for a series of special rate rises over the next five years.

The council says the rate rises were part of the long-term financial plan adopted at the December ordinary meeting. It aims to put the council "on a path to financial sustainability".

The financial plan also proposes "significant increases" in expenditure on roads and bridges, as well as cuts to some services.

The community reaction to the financial plan has been mixed, with some people believing the rate rises will be unaffordable and the cuts "excessive".

However, other ratepayers said rate hikes

were preferable to the council merging with nearby councils.

The council's application to the tribunal will seek approval for a rate rise of 12.42% in 2015-2016, 5.43% from 2016-2018 and 5.44% from 2018-2020.

Council's application will be lodged in February and the tribunal is expected to make its decision in April.

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# Fit for the Future

## Have a say in Kyogle's Long Term Financial Plan

### Supplementary Information Sheet



Kyogle Council is proposing a 22% rate rise above the pegged limit over the next five years as part of its draft Long Term Financial Plan (Option 2). This increase is proposed to be implemented over a five year period, with the total annual increases in Ordinary Rates proposed at 10.34% in 2015/16 then 5.5% for the next four years. These figures include the 2.3% rate pegging amount, such that the total cumulative effect of these increases would be 22% above rate pegging after the five years. The draft plan, which also proposes significant increases in expenditure on Council's road and bridge network and some cuts to services, aims to put Council on the path to financial sustainability. To help the community fully understand how the proposed 22% rate rise will affect their rates in dollar terms, the Council has put together a rates comparison chart (see below). The chart shows how much rates and charges will rise under normal circumstances over the next six years (under a 2.3% rate pegging limit), and how much they will rise with the proposed above rate pegging increases factored in, and the annual difference in dollar terms. The figures are shown rounded to the nearest whole dollar. The Council is keen to hear what the community thinks and is encouraging all ratepayers and residents to provide feedback on the draft plan.

<b>Farmland Rates Category</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Total Rates and Charges Under Rate Pegging Limits</b>	<b>Total Rates and Charges Under LTFP Option 2</b>	<b>Annual Difference</b>
Includes Ordinary Rates, OSSMS Charges and Landfill Management Charges	2014/2015	<b>\$1,401</b>		
	2015/2016	\$1,434	\$1,540	\$107
	2017/2018	\$1,467	\$1,623	\$156
	2018/2019	\$1,502	\$1,710	\$209
	2019/2020	\$1,537	\$1,802	\$266
	2020/2021	\$1,573	\$1,899	\$327
	2021/2022	\$1,609	\$1,944	\$334
<b>Residential Rates</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Total Rates and Charges Under Rate Pegging Limits</b>	<b>Total Rates and Charges Under LTFP Option 2</b>	<b>Annual Difference</b>
Includes Ordinary Rates, Water, Sewerage, Stormwater, and Waste Charges	2014/2015	<b>\$2,112</b>		
	2015/2016	\$2,169	\$2,267	\$98
	2017/2018	\$2,235	\$2,352	\$118
	2018/2019	\$2,312	\$2,450	\$138
	2019/2020	\$2,400	\$2,560	\$160
	2020/2021	\$2,491	\$2,675	\$183
	2021/2022	\$2,587	\$2,775	\$188



<b>Rural Residential</b>	Year	Total Rates and Charges Under Rate Pegging Limits	Total Rates and Charges Under LTFP Option 2	Annual Difference
Includes Ordinary Rates, OSSMS Charges and Landfill Management Charges	2014/2015	<b>\$959</b>		
	2015/2016	<b>\$982</b>	\$1,053	\$71
	2017/2018	\$1,005	\$1,109	\$104
	2018/2019	\$1,029	\$1,168	\$139
	2019/2020	\$1,053	\$1,230	\$177
	2020/2021	\$1,078	\$1,296	\$218
	2021/2022	\$1,103	\$1,326	\$223
<b>Residential - Kyogle</b>	Year	Total Rates and Charges Under Rate Pegging Limits	Total Rates and Charges Under LTFP Option 2	Annual Difference
Includes Ordinary Rates, Water, Sewerage, Stormwater, and Waste Charges	2014/2015	<b>\$2,598</b>		
	2015/2016	\$2,666	\$2,804	\$137
	2017/2018	\$2,744	\$2,918	\$175
	2018/2019	\$2,833	\$3,048	\$215
	2019/2020	\$2,933	\$3,190	\$257
	2020/2021	\$3,036	\$3,340	\$303
	2021/2022	\$3,144	\$3,455	\$311
<b>Business</b>	Year	Total Rates and Charges Under Rate Pegging Limits	Total Rates and Charges Under LTFP Option 2	Annual Difference
Includes Ordinary Rates, Water, Sewerage, Stormwater, and Waste Charges	2014/2015	<b>\$2,129</b>		
	2015/2016	\$2,186	\$2,286	\$100
	2017/2018	\$2,252	\$2,372	\$120
	2018/2019	\$2,330	\$2,471	\$141
	2019/2020	\$2,418	\$2,582	\$163
	2020/2021	\$2,510	\$2,698	\$188
	2021/2022	\$2,606	\$2,799	\$192
<b>Business - Kyogle</b>	Year	Total Rates and Charges Under Rate Pegging Limits	Total Rates and Charges Under LTFP Option 2	Annual Difference
Includes Ordinary Rates, Water, Sewerage, Stormwater, and Waste Charges	2014/2015	<b>\$3,056</b>		
	2015/2016	\$3,134	\$3,309	\$174
	2017/2018	\$3,222	\$3,451	\$228
	2018/2019	\$3,323	\$3,609	\$287
	2019/2020	\$3,433	\$3,783	\$349
	2020/2021	\$3,549	\$3,965	\$416
	2021/2022	\$3,669	\$4,095	\$426

For further information on the Draft Long Term Financial Plan visit Councils website at [www.kyogle.nsw.gov.au](http://www.kyogle.nsw.gov.au)

**RACE AGAINST TIME** Steve Posselt takes his conviction about the cause of Earth's disasters to global platform

# Climate change crusade

by HAMISH BROOME

Steve Posselt is a man on a mission.

PADDLING 8000km north from the mouth of the Mississippi River in New Orleans to Hudson Bay in Canada's Arctic Circle is more than just a massive physical challenge for local Steve Posselt.

The 62-year-old environmentalist is not taken about the threat of climate change and will use his massive kayaking expedition next year as a platform to raise awareness of the issue.

He is the first to admit the trip could be a

bit of a struggle.

"The Mississippi travels at 5km an hour, and I only paddle six," he laughed.

"It's all planned until I get until a few hundred km from the Arctic, where there are no roads," Mr Posselt added.

That there is the wildlife to consider.

"I want to get out of Canada by the end of September because that's when the polar bears will be where I'll be. I don't fancy facing a polar bear with a can of capsicum spray."

Travelling up

the Mississippi and across the Great Lakes is a huge journey, but amazingly Mr Posselt will do much more than that: he starts his trip kayaking from Canberra to Sydney, and after the North American point he'll paddle from Bristol in England to Paris, via the English Channel.

In total he will paddle 3000km over 10 months, ending the trip at the Paris international climate conference in November 2015.

"When I get to Paris, I want a million signatures," saying the Australian government doesn't represent all Australians.

**I want to get out of Canada by the end of September because that's when the polar bears will be where I'll be. I don't fancy facing a polar bear with a can of capsicum spray.**

Steve Posselt, pictured heading down the Mary River at Traveston Crossing. PHOTO: GREG WATKINS

traham, and constant sleep or "comission" early," he declared.

More specifically, Mr Posselt's trip is about looking what he calls "climate change events" that are outside any known precedent.

He cites the "Caneberran" tornado during the Canberra bushfires of 2003, Hurricane Katrina, Superstorm Sandy, and Ty-

phoon Haiyan as examples.

He put these scary weather events down to a simple factor - they all come out of the atmosphere, which is 150m more than it had 50 years ago.

They are more extreme than have ever occurred on Earth in the time that mankind has lived here," he said.

If you have a warmer at-

mosphere, it will hold more water, so it draws more water out of the ocean which causes more extreme rainfall events, and pulls more water out of the ground which causes bigger droughts.

This will be Mr Posselt's fifth major kayaking trip, which started when he paddled and walked his wheeled kayak 3256km from Brisbane to Adelaide via the Murray-Darling system, including dragging the "specially modified" wheeled kayak for a total of 1086km because the Darling was in drought.

He last trip in 2009 he paddled across Victoria, from the border up the Goulburn River, walking over the dam, and then down the Yarra River to Melbourne.

## Kyogle merger with Lismore needs closer look, says Piggott

by LUKE MORTIMER

luke.mortimer@northernstar.com.au

ANY decision by Kyogle Council to merge with Lismore City Council will not come until at least early next year.

Kyogle general manager Arthur Piggott said council initially agreed to let Lismore know by December.

But Kyogle's public consultation and internal discus-

sions are ongoing and Mr Piggott said rushing the process would be unwise.

"The council has resolved that the focus is on our Long Term Financial Plan and whether we need to go to IPART (Independent Pricing a Rating Tribunal) for a rate pegging increase," he said.

Kyogle Council is hoping to discuss the pros and cons in detail with the Office of Local Government.

"Council won't be in the position to make a decision on mergers for quite a while," he said.

In the meantime, the council is struggling with a backlog of \$48 million in works, while it aims to meet financial sustainability targets under the State Government's Fit for the Future reforms.

One option for the council is to raise rates to 22% above rate pegging by 2020, accom-

panied by State and Federal funding, or to 46% to allow a self-sufficient funding model.

Amalgamation is the third option and one that may be forced on Kyogle and other councils in the near future, according to recent comments by Premier Mike Baird.

Kyogle mayor Danielle Mulholland was critical of the State Government's latest stance.

"I'd really like the State Go-

vernment to pick a policy and stick with it," she said.

"It's basically saying to pick up our stuff and get ready to move."

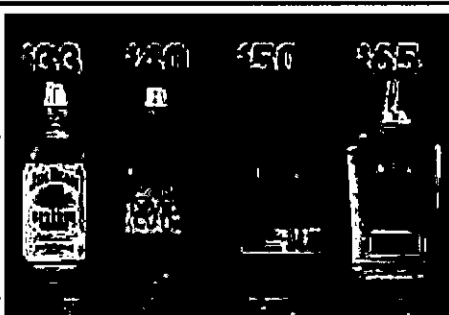
Cr Mulholland said previous polls showed about 70% of Kyogle Shire's ratepayers oppose amalgamation.

If the 22% increase is applied, extra infrastructure funding for roads, bridges and sewerage systems will be made available.

But cutbacks will include replacing Woodenbong landfill with a transfer station, the closure of at least seven old bridges and returning some roads to gravel.

**LEARN MORE:** Visit [www.kyogle.nsw.gov.au](http://www.kyogle.nsw.gov.au) to view the council's Draft Long Term Financial Plan and Community Strategic Plan. Submissions close November 24.

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Northern Star

Friday, November 7, 2014



## Opinion

Northern Star editor David Kirkpatrick



Either the law needs to be amended or the police get upgraded drug-testing equipment.

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## OPINION

## Time to get drug-driving laws straight

DAVID KIRKPATRICK  
news@northernstar.com.au

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At least that is the impression you get from reading one of The Northern Star's online polls.

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The counter argument to that is that alcohol is not

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illegal and the mere detection of traces of drugs in the system should prompt some form of penalty.

But there should be some room for compromise, considering local courts have accepted some motorists charged with driving with an active presence of cannabis had taken the drug more than 24 hours earlier.

Where it gets even murkier is if approval is given for the hemp food industry.

There are concerns hemp food could interfere with roadside drug-testing methods if made legal to eat in Australia.

This is despite it containing only small amounts of the cannabis psychoactive compound THC.

Either the law needs to be amended or the police get upgraded drug-testing equipment.

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It has job creation through tourism, being for healthy lifestyle and totally green, not to mention it would be a world-class attraction.

The rail trail would be a boost to the whole region, not just a handful of train buffs.

If you are one of the majority who cares about where their taxpayer funds are going, speak up now! David, Ballina.

## Thank you, fires

AS THE weather becomes warmer and with summer



FULL STEAM AHEAD: One letter writer today has urged the silent majority to get onboard the rail trail proposal.

just around the corner, our heroic Australian firefighters will become busier than normal. What better way to say thank you to our fires than celebrating the end of summer by letting them know we appreciate their efforts in saving our lives and properties, not just throughout summer, but all year round.

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The concept of National

Red Balloon Day began in January 2014 with our first major thank you day celebrated on February 28.

In just five short weeks, a dedicated team of volunteers came together to make it all happen and managed to raise over \$20,000 which all went directly back to fire services right across Australia.

For our 2015 campaign, we aim to make the event much bigger and better.

Together with the sale of 'Thank You Fires' Red Balloons and other merchandise which is available through our website [www.nationalredballoonday.org](http://www.nationalredballoonday.org), we hope to thank our firefighting heroes and assist in raising

funds for state fire services or services which support our firefighters in times of hardship.

All profits from this fundraising event will go directly back to the state where the item is purchased.

You can also donate directly through our website.

Fire services from each state and territory of Australia have been contacted in order to establish a fundraising partnership, either with their service or a nominated charity of their choice.

The volunteer committee of National Red Balloon Day are also seeking corporate sponsorship to help with the administration of our charity organisation.

A donation to help with these expenses would see advertising on our website and promotion through our Facebook page.

Jody Hardiman, California Gully.

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A LETTER writer (NS website, 6/11) condemns the killing of animals for entertainment - horse racing - but condones the killing of animals for food - live export.

The truth is, humans eat animals because they enjoy the taste of them - not because they need to eat them.

A vegan diet is, in fact, far healthier than a meat-based diet.

Killing animals for taste but pleasure is just as deserving of condemnation as killing animals for entertainment. Jenny Moxham, Monbulk.

## WEB

## RE: 'Ball is in Kyogle's court'

Imagine the damage LCC could do now with the extra revenue from rates and then implement some more nutty green schemes from the diversion of the road repair funds and leave twice as many roads and bridges in disrepair if it merges with Kyogle. At least there will be a bigger pool of candidates to select from and hopefully breathe some new life into this area.

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SHOP owner Michael Rossington complaining about loss of income during anti CSG demo ... one day for a healthy future?

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Eyewatch, Byron Bay Michael Rossington is correct about the disruption caused to retailers in the CBD when they have these marches during business hours. Could they not be held after businesses close on a Saturday? Business is hard enough to generate during these difficult economical times without groups marching through the town in prime business hours and with many of those involved providing little financial support to many of the businesses in the CBD. Susan, Lismore

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## Opinion

## Make rates fair

KYOGLE ratepayers, a fourth option to the Fit for the Future Financial plan could be a levy where all ratepayers contribute an extra \$200 per year in order to achieve a satisfactory level of services.

There would need to be debate with ratepayers as to what this satisfactory level would be.

For example, do we need to keep sealing roads while at the same time unsealing others? Do we need to upgrade Kyogle Memorial Hall?

I pay council for the privilege of managing my own wastewater. I am not sure why I am paying for three village systems to be installed.

The current way of rating farms - on a per hectare basis - means every rate rise to the drought and price-stressed farmer is double what most ratepayers pay. These larger farms are often on gravel roads which cost the council very minimal amounts to maintain (eg no need to mow road edges, and grading every two years). These farms are already out of pocket for time and money expended on

environmental problems.

Surely an equal levy per ratepayer would be a more equitable solution.

Patricia Holt and  
Jeff Friend  
Kyogle

## Protect drill hall

MORE than 100 people attended the meeting in relation to the Drill Hall at Casino. As well as a broad cross-section of the community and the RSL, there were several invited special guests. Kevin Hogan MP, Mayor Ernie Bennett, and general manager of the Richmond Valley Council, John Walker attended the meeting.

There were five presentations given, representing the perspective of the council, the Federal Government, a long-term resident and a recent arrival to the community of Casino, as well as the history and significance of the Hall to the RSL.

The unanimous support for the hall from the RSL sub-branches of Casino, Lismore and Kyogle was a telling point to those relatively new to the area.

The public had the opportunity to ask questions and make comments before a

resolution was discussed, fine-tuned and then put to the meeting. It was passed unanimously. The resolution was:

*That the sale of the Drill Hall and all of the land on which it is situated, known as 73 - 81 Lennox St, Casino, be deferred for a period of 12 months to allow the community to provide a plan for the site and a financial assessment to determine all aspects to keep the Drill Hall in the hands of the Northern Rivers Communities, for the express purpose of developing the Northern Rivers Military Museum.*

Mr Hogan has taken the resolution and a full list of those attending the meeting, and will present that to the Minister this week. People wishing to support the Drill Hall can collect a proforma for signature from the RSM Casino, or from Tony Hennessy on 0419581130.

Tony Hennessy  
Casino

## Defence of history

AT A time when all Australians are being encouraged to focus on the massive contribution made at all levels by our country

during the Great War to secure peace, it is almost unbelievable that the Defence Department intends to sell off the Casino Drill Hall to developers.

The Casino Drill Hall is a significant part of our district's history. It has been with us for over a century as a recruitment centre, training facility and base for manoeuvres.

On its original Barker St site, it was a rallying point for the local war effort. Over 500 personnel enlisted from our district. During World War II, Casino, as a rail junction, had an important role as a staging and camping area for hundreds of troops on their way to the Front. The Drill Hall was a very busy place. Not only is the sudden fire sale announcement poor timing but it shows little regard for community feelings.

The Defence Department failed in its responsibility to consult with our community. Casino people need time to consider the matter and a chance to meet face to face with Defence. At the very least we're asking the Department for a fair go on this. The proposed sale should be put on hold to give us the time we need.

Isn't it ironic. Across Australia, communities are

putting up monuments, but here there's a federal department wanting to get rid of one.

Charlie Cox  
Casino

## Cotton squares

WE ARE organising drop-off points around the Northern Rivers for the public to donate cotton squares. Bat carers use 100% cotton squares to wrap the baby bats. Perfect size is a standard bandanna 50 x 50cm, already hemmed. We need hundreds, because they are constantly being laundered and recycled! Call Muriel 0432 094 917 to find out your local drop-off point, as it is different in different areas. Thank you.

WIRES Northern Rivers  
Muriel Kinson  
Publicity Officer

## Be positive

BE positive at all times. It is the only way to go in a world that they say isn't meant to be easy.

I worked with the Links program at one stage of my life and I received a certificate of achievement award for completing the program and would like to thank the people of that program and people in the community for their help.

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# Brothers walk for stroke funds

IT was a long hot road for brothers Tom and Matt Lewis, who walked to Grafton from Casino last week to raise awareness of stroke.

The brothers, supported by their sister Ali Lindsay of Casino, made the journey in memory of their father Brendan, who passed away from the combined ravages of stroke and Type 1 Diabetes last May.

Matt, who now lives at Miami on the Gold Coast,

also suffers with Type 1 Diabetes and carried this burden, as well as a strong dose of flu, down the road to Grafton.

But the pair - Tom comes from Grafton - were undaunted by the road ahead of them.

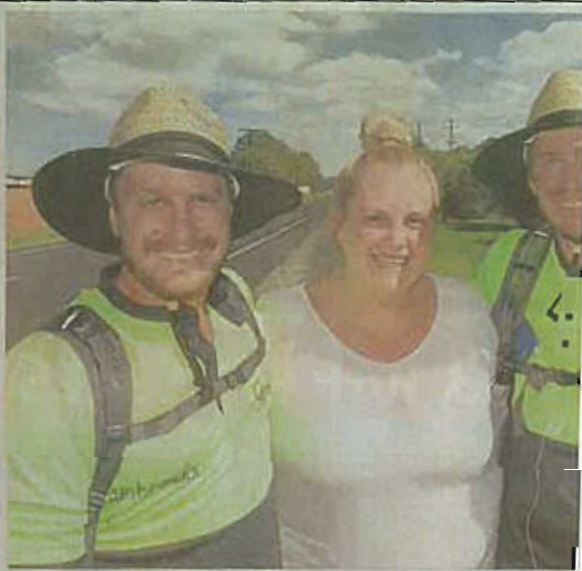
"Dad always did things against the odds," said Ali. "His sheer determination was amazing. After his first stroke in 2010 he managed to stay alive for another three and a half years. He

never complained."

For anyone keen on donating to the cause, there are fundraising canisters at Shear Illusions Hair Design and Vogue Frock shop in the Casino Plaza as well as at Blue Ribbon Meats in Lismore.

**LONG HOT ROAD:** Fundraising for stroke research are brothers Tom and Matt Lewis, with their sister Ali Lindsay, from Casino.

PHOTO: JAMIE BROWN



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**MAYORAL ULTIMATUM:** Dowell allows a month for decision, but Mulholland wants extension into next year

# Kyogle ponders a merger

CHRIS CALCINO  
APN Newsdesk

KYOGLE Shire Council has been given a one-month ultimatum to decide whether it wants to amalgamate with Lismore City Council.

Lismore Mayor Jenny Dowell has called for Kyogle to make a decision by next month so Lismore can get its own fit for the future proposals in order.

Every council in NSW must assess its financial position and submit either an "improvement proposal" or "merger proposal" to the

State Government, to be reviewed next October.

"We can't leave that until next year. There's too much work involved," Cr Dowell said. "The ball is very much in Kyogle's court."

However, Kyogle Mayor Danielle Mulholland said any hope of a merger decision coming within a month was misplaced.

"We're focusing on our report to IPART (the Independent Pricing and Rating Tribunal) before we get into mergers," she said.

"We will be looking at mergers next year, leading up

to our submission."

Cr Dowell said there were many variables to consider, including whether the whole Kyogle Shire or just part of it would be included in a possible merger.

"We will consider any proposal, but there are too many possibilities for Lismore City Council to make a decision yet," she said.

"We can see there's a fairly high possibility if councils don't voluntarily look towards amalgamating, that they will be forced into amalgamation."

Councils across the state

face being whipped into submission if they refuse to bow to the New South Wales Government's \$1-billion incentive to amalgamate.

Treasurer Andrew Constance told attendees of a recent business breakfast in Sydney the Government may have to "pull out the stick" on forced amalgamations.

Premier Mike Baird would not rule out forced mergers when questioned in Parliament on Tuesday.

HAVE YOUR SAY

## AMALGAMATION | Mayors not keen

BALLINA Mayor David Wright said his council was against any amalgamation and that whispers of a possible merger with Byron Shire Council were nothing but rumours.

"We're nothing like Byron ... My favourite saying is: 'Ballina is twice as good for half the price'."

"That's not having a go at Byron - they don't want to be part of us either."

"There's just nothing whatsoever to gain."

It was a similar tale from Tweed Shire Council Mayor Gary Bagnall.

"We have 91,000 residents compared with Byron's 30,000 and Lismore's 40,000," he said.

"The projection for the next 15 years is for our population to go up to 125,000."

-APN NEWSDESK

## Bikers band together for veterans' Memorial Ride

APN Newsdesk

DUST off your leathers and service your bikes with the second Annual Veterans Motorcycle Club Memorial Ride set to hit the road this weekend.

Organiser Trevor "Fleecy" Fleecy said riders of all ages and abilities, including learners and P-plate

riders were invited to join in the five-hour ride for charity.

"A great proportion of the money raised will go to wounded warriors, the younger men who have been to Iraq and Afghanistan and lost limbs and that sort of thing," he said.

Fleecy said the majority of the club members are Vietnam veterans, with

others having served in Timor and Iraq.

"Last year we had 50 riders and I'm expecting more this year," he said.

"This year's ride is more significant because it's the 100th anniversary of the start of World War One."

Fleecy said it will be side stands up at 9.45am when

the riders leave Lismore with this year's ride to take in some of the most scenic destinations along the Northern Rivers coast.

"We are going to ride to Evans Head to the war memorial and have a service and from there we are going to head down to Iluka for a couple of hours and

have lunch at Sedgemoor Hotel," he said.

"Then we are going to take a scenic route back to Lismore."

Raffles will be held on the day to raise money and Fleecy said good quality T-shirts will be on sale.

READY TO RIDE: Veterans Motorcycle Lismore Chapter members Swampy Marshall, Wally Parth and Dave Ryan will join in the Memorial Ride. PHOTO: MARC STAPELBERG

## AT A GLANCE

Where: The Veterans Motorcycle Club Memorial Ride  
When: Sunday, November 9, 8.30am to 3pm  
Where: Leaves Lismore Railway station carpark at 9.45am  
Cost: \$15 per rider





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## Opinion

Northern Star editor David Kirkpatrick



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## OPINION

## TOPIC OF CANCER | With Digby Hildreth

## Time to say no to violent behaviour

DAVID KIRKPATRICK  
news@northernstar.com.au

IT IS hard to forget scenes from the video of the ugly brawl that spilled out of the Beach Hotel in Byron Bay and on to Jonson Street a couple of weeks ago.

The video, posted on Facebook and shared on our website, went viral.

It showed bouncers subduing a man and kneeling on his head and yelling abuse at a woman who was showing concern for the bloke's welfare.

As it turned out, the guy the bouncers were attempting to subdue had earlier been up on stage exposing himself to hotel patrons and head butted a member of security staff as he was being escorted out.

Unfortunately, in Byron Bay that kind of scene is played out on almost a nightly basis.

## The Northern Star and its sister APN publications today launch an anti-violence campaign

Yet we have seen the unfortunate consequences of this type of incident over and over again, sometimes with tragic consequences.

With that in mind, and with schoolies about to arrive in droves and the summer silly season ahead of us, it is timely that The Northern Star and its sister APN publications today launch an anti-violence campaign.

The Hands Off: Say No To Violence campaign aims to explain to the community the root causes of this sort of violence and arm them with the capacity to make a tangible difference.

We want people to sign up online and take the following pledge: Not to participate in, or condone or be silent about any form of violence. To report any incidents of such violence to the relevant establishment and authorities. To display a sticker/poster/online screensaver showing your commitment in a visual way.

Please support our campaign in any way you can.

# Chance to meet ourselves

IT WAS a great pleasure this week to talk with two men who are refusing to take their cancer diagnoses lying down.

Instead, David Young and Ken Connell are putting time and energy into setting up a support group for men and women with the disease. It sounds altruistic but they admit to having some selfish motives as well.

"We will be facilitating, but we will be there as people with cancer: it's a place for us to find support too," said David, a local photographer.

The group, starting in Byron Bay next week, will be "closed" - for those with the disease only - its primary purpose to provide

"a safe place for people with cancer to share their true feelings and to connect with others with the disease".

Its emphasis will be on providing emotional support rather than as a casual info swapping and chatty type group, said David, who was diagnosed with a type of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma about two years ago.

He is following a Western medicine path and is currently "doing very well" on a low-dose chemotherapy regime.

Ken was diagnosed with prostate cancer earlier this year and says he is now "learning to navigate the next chapter unfolding in my life".

He is trying to decide whether to have surgery or not, but in the meantime is taking a positive view of his situation.

"A crisis such as cancer gives us the opportunity to meet ourselves," he said.

"Life has brought me this potential to evolve; it's bringing me to new edges of growth."

His journey, he says, is teaching him that "one of the gifts of life is in bringing all of our lives to each other in a caring supportive way".

Both men have deep backgrounds in personal development, psychotherapy and group work.

David has spent 18 months with Petrea King's Quest for Life Foundation

and says he sees the new group as being based upon that model.

The two men - twinkled-eyed, light on their feet - may be taking different approaches to the disease but they share similar therapeutic - and spiritual - goals.

Inspiration, intuition and love will provide the basis for the group - and ideally will be enhanced by it, says Ken.

David puts it this way: "Growth, love; that's what it's all about."

If you are interested in learning more, call Ken on 0411 233 755 or David on 0428 187 025 or email kengabe@linknet.com.au

or david@davidyoung.com.au

## WEB

RE: Ball is in Kyogle's court for Lismore amalgamation; Kyogle and Mullholland, Her Majesty Dowell OBE of Lismore has spoken. How dare you disregard her demands. Please decide within the month whether you want part, all or none of your shire annexed by Dowell and Lismore. Chop chop!

League, Lismore Be afraid, very afraid @AL - Devious Dowell storm-troopers at this very moment are being kitted-out for their forthcoming commando-raid on Kyogle! BigBunny, Lismore

RE: Acute heart failure cause of death of Admire Rakiti in Cup:

Time for a reality check, people! Yesterday there were around 75 different race meetings all over the country, with thousands of horses competing. One horse died of a very rare and almost undetectable heart defect, another broke its leg (well, after the race) after it got spooked by a child waving a flag in its face. You want to ban all horse racing because 0.2% of the horses that ran on cup day died?

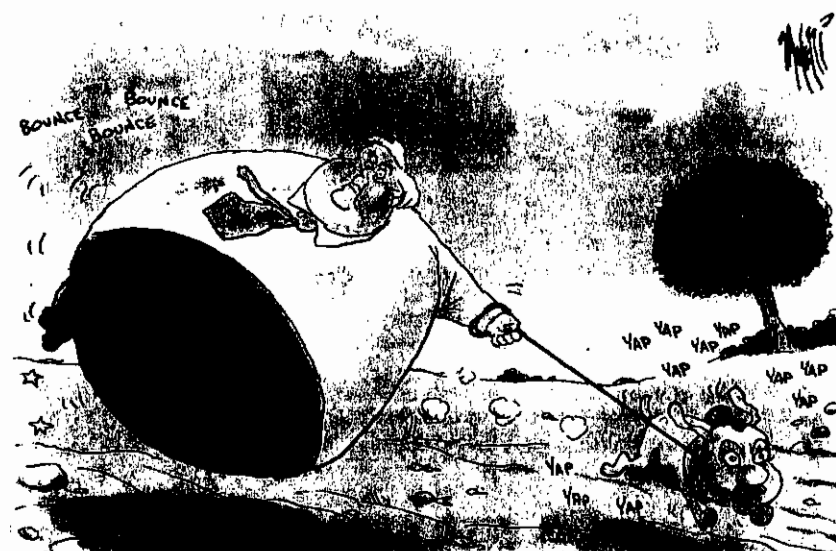
Alwaysright, Maroochydhore If all the animal activists on this thread are so sure of their arguments (and I do not say I agree or disagree) why call for racing to be banned? Surely the power of logical, unemotional argument would be enough to sway people to the extent few would continue to support the industry. Convince enough people to your way of thinking and few would go to watch, bet on or participate in any form of racing. As it is, they want to ban the entire sport because of what I can see to be only two reasons: 1) the 100+ deaths in the sport over a year and, 2) that horses "do not choose" to run. All other comments are emotional outpourings. Neither "reason" is strong enough for banning the practice on its own. So please, activists, get your act together, put in place a logical, irrefutable, persuasive argument you can then take to the people of the world to encourage them to stop supporting the industry. laybak88, Casino

## facebook

facebook.com/thenorthernstar

Should the Kyogle Ball Ev

WIDE to narrow (spines)



## LETTERS | have your say

## Life's essentials

THE NSW Minerals Council has renewed its push for the rapid approval of mining and gas projects in NSW, despite overwhelming community concern about the impact of these activities on clean water, farmland and the health of local communities.

The recently released NSW Chief Scientist Report identified that coal seam gas presented major risks to the environment and human health, and needed careful regulation.

Coal and coal seam gas mining are threatening the essentials of life - our clean water, prime agricultural land and the health of our communities.

It's now time for the NSW

Government to stop giving coal and coal seam gas projects special treatment, stand up to industry efforts to fast-track it, and place safeguards in place for the risk posed to water, air and human health.

It is increasingly clear that most of the benefits from these projects go to overseas investors while communities in regional and rural NSW are left to clean up the mess left behind.

It's not logical to hastily approve coal and gas projects when mounting evidence is that the value of these projects is falling.

The reality is that a strong economy relies on a healthy environment and healthy communities to support it. The mining boom is

receding but short-sighted, rapid approvals for coal and gas projects would mean we'll be left dealing with the damage to our environment and communities for decades to come.

George Woods, Lock The Gate.

## Keep your word

THERE are few certainties in life other than death and taxes.

Death might be coming early for the Australian renewable energy industry if the Federal Government goes ahead and breaks an election promise it made to keep the current Renewable Energy Target.

Investors have spent over \$10 billion on big renewable

energy projects such as wind and solar farms under this policy, and now they face being ripped off if the Government changes the rules halfway through the scheme and pushes through a cut to the target of almost two-thirds.

This would mean a massive cut in the number of wind and solar farms in the future and the loss of thousands of jobs in rural and regional Australia.

Any cut to this policy will drive up power prices.

Companies don't expect calm seas and plain sailing, but they do expect a Government to keep its word.

Kane Thornton, Acting Chief Executive, Clean Energy Council.

# Fit for the Future

Have a say in Kyogle's long term financial plan

Kyogle  
Australia

Which way would you like Council to go?

What are the possible ways forward?

What factors led to this situation?

What's the good news?

What work has taken place so far?

How much will rates go up?

Isn't there a third option of amalgamation?

Stable Future

I'm Feeling Lucky

[Advanced search](#)  
[More information inside](#)

Find out how Kyogle Council is rising to its financial challenges over the next 20 years.

[kyogle.nsw.gov.au](http://kyogle.nsw.gov.au)





## Kyogle Council is facing some tough decisions as it aims to achieve financial sustainability and a prosperous future.

### What factors led to this situation?

**The cost of delivering services to the community is increasing faster than its ability to collect rates.** The NSW Government has pegged Council's rate increases for over 30 years (currently to 2.3% per year), and has also shifted costs to Council for which they were previously responsible.

**The funding to maintain Council's \$460 million worth of public assets has reduced in real terms.** This means non-safety related maintenance is being deferred, with assets deteriorating and reduced levels of service.

**There is a backlog of \$48 million worth of works** that need to be carried out, and this is growing by \$4 million each year, so doing nothing is not an option, at least not if we want to stay independent and show the NSW Government that we are indeed **fit for the future**.

### What's the good news?

As identified in its Community Strategic Plan, Council is looking to:

- Improve rural local roads and replace most timber bridges across the local government area over the next 30 years.
- Implement a priority road-sealing program and double regional roads funding.
- Implement new sewerage schemes for Tabulam, Mallanganee and Wiangaree.
- Improve urban stormwater and flood management, including flood studies at Bonalbo and Tabulam.
- Improve energy efficiency at community facilities.
- Upgrade Kyogle Memorial Institute Hall.

For more detail see Attachment A of the draft Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP).

Kyogle Council is preparing for a long haul to financial recovery, and is calling on your help to decide which option or mix of options to take.

### What work has taken place so far?

In 2013 Council asked the community to identify its priorities regarding infrastructure and service provision. The consultation expanded in 2014 through *Bridging the Gaps*, part of a review of Council's Community Strategic Plan and Long Term Financial Plan.

Kyogle Council commissioned an independent review of the current LTFP in April 2014. The review found that Council's financial outlook is **unsustainable** in its present form.

Council then revised its Financial Management Policy, reduced its minimum cash reserve levels and established a set of financial sustainability indicators and targets. In September 2014 the NSW Government released its reform package called "*Fit for the Future: a modern system of local government*". It set financial sustainability targets that were similar to Council's, and in some cases higher.





# What are the possible ways forward?

In reviewing its Long Term Financial Plan, Council considered a number of possibilities, including;

- Changing the way services are delivered
- Reducing levels of service
- New revenue opportunities
- Additional borrowings
- Rate increases above the 2.3% peg
- Asset disposals

The draft Long Term Financial Plan examined six basic scenarios. They ranged from keeping the status quo, to drastically cutting services, to dramatically increasing rates. The proposals now up for discussion balance levels of service with the need to generate significantly increased revenue, whether it is mainly from ratepayers or supplemented by increased State and Australian Government sources.

Information on all six scenarios is included in the draft Long Term Financial Plan, which you'll find on Council's website [kyogle.nsw.gov.au](http://kyogle.nsw.gov.au) and in hard copies kept at Council's administration centre and libraries. Scenario 6 (Balanced Service Levels) presented a case where Council could meet all the criteria set down by the NSW Government in its Fit for the Future reform package. This scenario required an increase in rates of 46% above the rate pegging limits. The scenario adopted by Council for the draft Long Term Financial Plan is based on Scenario 6, but replaces some of the own source revenue with increased external funding, reducing the rate increases required to 22% above the pegging limit.

The adopted scenario will require Kyogle Council to get approval to proceed with the proposed above pegging rate increases from the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART). This scenario does not completely satisfy the NSW Government's criteria to show that Council is financially fit for the future, but will allow Council to argue a case to remain independent based on increased funding from other levels of government:

## Key features of the draft LTFP

The following features are common to both Option One and Option Two:

- Additional borrowings of \$10M in 2016 repaid over 10 years under the NSW Government's proposed subsidised cheaper finance program.
- Clearing the infrastructure backlog by 2034.
- A significant capital renewal program and increased service levels in key areas identified by the community.
- Eliminating all timber bridges over 30 years.
- Not replacing some lower-order bridges.
- Reviewing the road network with some roads becoming sealed and others reverting to gravel.
- Rationalisation of the waste transfer stations servicing the Bonalbo, Tabulam and Mallanganee areas, with a single facility to service all areas.
- Closure of the Woodenbong landfill and conversion of the site to a waste transfer station.
- Disposal of Cedar Point Hall, Grove House and Horseshoe Creek Hall.

### Option One: 46% self-funded solution

- A fully self-sufficient model not reliant on additional State or Federal funding.
- Meets all financial sustainability targets in seven years, except for the operating balance ratio (achieved in 2034).
- Rates are projected to increase at 9% above the rate peg for the first three years, 8% in the next year, then increases of 7% for the next three years, reducing to the 2.3% rate pegging limit in 2023.
- 46 % increase in general rates above rate pegging levels by 2022, or an extra \$10.23 per week.
- 7% increase in fees and charges for water, sewerage, and waste above CPI indexation by 2022, or an extra \$2.63 per week.

### Option Two: 22% mixed funding solution

- A model requiring some rate increases plus additional State or Federal funding.
- Meets all financial sustainability targets in seven years, except for the operating balance ratio (trending towards target).
- Rates are projected to increase at 10.34% above the rate peg for the first year, then increases of 5.5% for the next four years, reducing to the 2.3% rate-pegging limit in 2021.
- 22 % increase in general rates above rate pegging levels in 2020, or an extra \$4.69 per week, and pegged after that.
- 7% increase in fees and charges for water, sewerage, and waste above CPI indexation by 2022, or an extra \$2.63 per week.

## Further information

- Details of the proposed expenditure levels in the adopted Scenario, and comparison between Scenarios, can be found in Attachment A of the draft LTFP.
- A summary of the Scenarios assessed can be found in the Introduction section of the draft LTFP.
- Details of the assumptions made in the development of Scenarios can be found in the draft LTFP under Planning Assumptions and Attachment C.



## How much will rates go up by?

The average rate currently paid is \$1,002 per assessment. Under the draft LTFP this would rise to \$1,103 in 2016, or an increase of \$1.54 per week.

With the proposed above rate pegging increases in the draft LTFP, the average rate would increase to \$1,352 by the year 2020. This represents a rise of \$244 above rate pegging, or an extra \$4.69 per week.

## Isn't there a third option of amalgamation?

Yes. As part of the NSW Government's \$1billion Fit for the Future local government reforms, they are offering financial incentives for councils to amalgamate of \$5million for each merge. Considering Council's annual shortfall of \$4million and infrastructure backlog of \$48million, this amount is not sufficient to solve Council's financial sustainability issues.

Kyogle Local Government Area is faced with considerable challenges. One third of the land area is not rateable as it is State Forest or National Park, and the number of timber bridges is high. We are also below the critical population size of 10,000 that the NSW Government sees as the minimum for independent Councils.

Kyogle Council understands from surveys in 2009 and 2012 that our local community wants to remain an independent council rather than merge with Lismore City Council or Richmond Valley Council for the following reasons:

- Potential loss of services.
- Reduced sense of being involved in the decision-making process.
- Increased isolation and detachment.
- Loss of the ward system under a merger.
- No guarantee that rates won't rise.

A more detailed comparison between the existing and projected rates and charges for neighbouring Councils is available on the Kyogle Council web site. These Councils are also required to show that they can meet the NSW Governments Fit for the Future criteria.

**The NSW Government also welcomes public submissions on its proposed local government reform package. For more information go to:**

[fitforthefuture.nsw.gov.au](http://fitforthefuture.nsw.gov.au).

Council's response to the NSW Government is due by mid-2015.

**Now is the time to speak up if you want to have your say about the future of Kyogle Council.**

## Where can I get more information?

The first place you can go to is **[kyogle.nsw.gov.au](http://kyogle.nsw.gov.au)**

There you will find the Draft Long Term Financial Plan, the Community Strategic Plan and comprehensive fact sheets covering:

- **Income**
- **Asset Management Strategy**
- **Roads and Streets**
- **Bridges**
- **Amalgamation**

### Listening Posts

Council staff would be happy to discuss any matters relating to our financial plan at the following community Listening Post sessions:

**25 October**  
Woodenbong Market

**28 October**  
Bonalbo Community Hall, 2-6pm

**1 November**  
Kyogle Farmers Markets

### Community Survey

A random telephone survey will be carried out, so please be aware that if you receive a call in the next few weeks, it will be genuine.

You will also be able to fill in a survey on our website or call in to Council's offices and pick up a hard copy.

**Submissions close  
24 November 2014**

Kyogle Council  
1 Stratheden Street  
Kyogle NSW 2474  
Tel 02 6632 1611  
Fax 02 6632 2228

[council@kyogle.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@kyogle.nsw.gov.au)

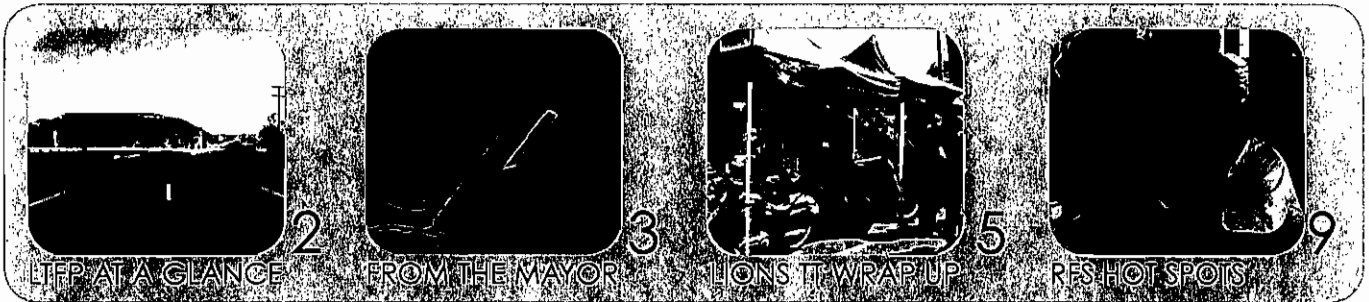




Oct/Nov 2014



## Kyogle Council Community Newsletter



### Kyogle Council ratepayers and residents are being asked to help decide the future of the council

Council is calling for community feedback on a draft *Long Term Financial Plan* which will prove to the State Government that the council is viable and can stand alone.

Under the State Government's *Fit for the Future* blueprint for local government in NSW, Kyogle Council must prove it is financially sustainable (*Fit for the Future*) or agree to amalgamate with one or more adjoining councils.

A third option is to do nothing and let the State Government decide Council's future.

Council's General Manager Arthur Piggott said the Council, backed by the results of previous community surveys which show little support for amalgamation, had developed a long

term financial plan which supported the case to remain independent.

"The plan goes a long way to meeting the financial sustainability targets set by the NSW Government and addressing Council's infrastructure backlog while setting rates that remain affordable to the local community," he said.

"While Council believes the Draft Long Term Financial Plan provides the best option for the future of the Council, we want to know what the community thinks. "The Council needs feedback from ratepayers and residents on whether or not they want to amalgamate and if they do want to remain independent whether they are willing to pay a series of above the pegged limit rate increases over the

*continued over page*



## Draft Long Term Financial Plan

*continued from previous page*

next five years to achieve that goal."

The council is looking to increase rates by 22% above the pegged limit in the five years from 2015 to 2019.

"We want everyone to take the opportunity to have their say on the Draft Long Term Financial Plan, as it is critical for the future of Kyogle Council as we know it today," Mr Piggott said.

To that end, Council has organised a "listening post" tour of the council area and will undertake a phone survey of ratepayers and residents. Information about the *Draft Long Term Financial Plan* is on Council's website, with people able to make submissions directly to council from the website. Public submissions close on Monday, 24 November, at 4pm.

### **Kyogle Council's Draft Long Term Financial Plan at a glance:**

- A series of rolling above the pegged limit rate rises over the next five years (rates to rise by 22% above the pegged limit);
- An increase in bridge replacement funding to allow the replacement of all timber bridges over a 30 year period;
- An increase in regional roads capital renewal funding to almost double the current levels;
- An increase in local roads and streets capital renewal funding to almost triple current levels;
- Provision of new sewerage schemes for Tabulam, Mallanganee and Wangaree;
- An increase in funding for community buildings.

*The draft plan also provides for cutbacks to some services including:*

- Returning some existing sealed roads to gravel after they are beyond

## Listening Posts

Kyogle Council ratepayers and residents are being invited to come along to a series of "listening posts" to learn more about and have input into Council's *Draft Long Term Financial Plan*. The "listening posts" will be manned by senior council staff and will be held at: the **Woodenbong Yowie Country Market** on Saturday, October 25; the **Bonalbo Community Hall** on Tuesday, October 28 (2-6pm); the **Kyogle Farmers Market** on Saturday, November 1. Staff will be on hand to explain to community members the various options for the future of the council, provide details on the long term financial plan and record community feedback. No appointments are necessary, just come along and have a one-on-one chat with Council staff.

routine maintenance. These would include Duck Creek Rd, Tunglebung Creek Rd, Culmaran Creek Rd and Durhams Rd.

- The closure of some bridges after they are beyond routine maintenance. These would include Alcorns Bridge on Ferndale Rd, Crane Bridge on Old Tweed Rd, Andrew Bridge on Williams Rd, Mitchell Bridge of Williams Rd, Baileys Bridge on Baileys Bridge Rd, Montgomery Bridge on Iron Pot Creek Rd and Hainleys Bridge on Culmaran Creek Rd;
- Rationalisation of the transfer station facilities serving the Bonalbo, Tabulam and Mallanganee areas with the view to providing one facility to service the whole area;
- Closure of the Woodenbong landfill and replacing it with a transfer station;
- The disposal of three community buildings – Cedar Point Hall, Grove House and Horseshoe Creek Hall – to reduce annual operating costs.

---

## Submissions on LTFP due

Public submissions on Kyogle Council's draft Long Term Financial Plan close on Monday, 24 November, 2014.

The draft plan, which aims to put Council on the path to financial sustainability, proposes a 22% above pegged limit rate rise over the next five years, substantial increases in expenditure on Council's road and bridge network and some cuts to services.

During the public display period Council has actively canvassed feedback from ratepayers and residents on the draft plan at Listening Posts held at Woodenbong, Bonalbo and Kyogle and through a community survey it commissioned. It also encouraged people to make submissions direct to Council.

That feedback will be collated and used to compile a report which will go before Council at its ordinary meeting on Monday, 8 December, 2014.



*Kyogle Council's Listening Post stall at the Woodenbong Yowie Country Market*

The Council will need to make a decision at that meeting as to whether or not it intends to apply to the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal for an above the pegged limit rate increase.

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## KMI Hall Refurbishment

*continued from previous page*

to those who served in the armed forces. The DA will be officially placed on public display for 21 days as part of the statutory assessment process, providing people with an opportunity to provide comments in relation to the proposed development. In addition to this, the architects have also been engaged to prepare options for the preparation of a "Master Plan" for the KMI building.

As part of this process, a large group of stakeholders met in June this year to discuss the issues and opportunities to be considered in the Master Plan preparation.

The feedback from these stakeholders was used to prepare a series of options

for review by the broader community.

Plans showing these options are available on Council's website and will be available at Council's offices in Stratheden Street, Kyogle.

The plans will also be featured on display in the existing foyer shop in the KMI as part of the *Creative Pop Up Gallery* project run by Arts Northern Rivers between November 24 and December 3, 2014. Council is seeking feedback on the *Master Plan* options from the community, with submissions closing on January 16, 2014. Submissions should be sent to the General Manager and can be lodged by mail to PO Box 11, Kyogle, NSW, 2474, by email to [council@kyogle.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@kyogle.nsw.gov.au) or via the "make a submission link" which is located at the bottom of every page on Council's website.



All communications to be addressed to:  
The General Manager  
PO Box 11 KYOGLE  
NSW 2474  
AUSTRALIA



ADMINISTRATION OFFICE  
Stratheden Street  
Kyogle NSW 2474 AUSTRALIA  
Phone 02 6632 1611  
Fax 02 6632 2228  
International Code (+61 2)  
Email [council@kyogle.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@kyogle.nsw.gov.au)  
Website [www.kyogle.nsw.gov.au](http://www.kyogle.nsw.gov.au)

CONTACT: Janelle McLennan  
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

LTFP  
PLEASE QUOTE THIS REFERENCE

6th November 2014

041 / 1105

Dear [REDACTED]

Kyogle Council is facing some tough decisions as it aims to achieve financial sustainability and a prosperous future.

The cost of delivering services to the community is increasing faster than its ability to collect rates and Council has an infrastructure backlog of \$48 million worth of works that is growing.

Under the State Government's local government reform package, "Fit for the Future: a modern system of local government", Council must also show that it can meet financial sustainability targets or face the prospect of amalgamation.

Council has produced a draft Long Term Financial Plan (LTFP) which puts it on the path to financial sustainability. Among other things, the draft LTFP proposes a 22% rate rise above-the-pegged-limit over the next five years, significant increases in expenditure on Council's road and bridge network, and some cuts to services including the closure of the Woodenbong landfill and conversion of the site to a waste transfer station, returning some sealed roads to gravel once they are beyond routine maintenance, and the closure of some bridges once they are beyond routine maintenance.

The draft LTFP is now on display for public comment and Council is keen to hear what the community thinks and is encouraging all ratepayers and residents to provide feedback on the draft plan. The enclosed fact sheet details the factors that led to the current situation faced by Council, actions taken by Council to date and the options for the future. It also details where you can find out more about the draft LTFP and how you can have your say.

Yours faithfully

Arthur Piggott  
**GENERAL MANAGER**

finda

Anything Goes

finda.com.au

1300 136 181

## Tributes

## Funeral Notices

**BOWLES (née Handford)**  
Pauline JeanPassed away peacefully on  
27th September 2014 in Cairns.Loving Wife to Philip (deceased). Dearly loved  
Mother of John. Cherished Daughter of  
Martha and Charlie (deceased). Loved Sister  
of Colin, Jim and Colleen.

AGED 65 YEARS

Relatives and Friends are invited to attend a  
Memorial Service at St Mark's Anglican  
Church, Barker St, Casino on Saturday  
25th of October 2014 at 10 am.**Raymond Clarence Wilson**

11/03/1952 - 04/10/2014

Sadly lost his battle with cancer aged 62 years.  
Beloved Husband of Daphne, loving Father and  
Father-in-law of Kerry (dec) and Larry and Kristi.  
Much loved Poppy of Sophie, Kellian, Lacey and  
Ben, Brother of Beryl, Mary (dec) and Susan.  
He will be sadly missed by all his family and friends.

RIP

There will be a memorial on 26th October, 2014 at  
Queen Elizabeth Park no. 2, Casino at 10.30am.  
Could cricket players please wear their team shirts.

## Funeral Directors &amp; Services

**A PRIVATE CREMATION**\$1,903 including GST / No hidden after hours rates  
Ben Little - 1300 678 443 - Dolphin Funerals

## In Memoriam

**In Loving Memory Of**  
Denise Annette Denny

21/4/1955 - 23/10/1994

20 years have passed.

In our hearts and memories

She will be with us forever

Loved and missed by

Robert, Elaine, Cristie Mustow,

Family and Friends

## Notices

## Church Services

CATHOLIC Church Casino Mass Times: Sat Vigil 8pm.  
Sunday 8am. Office hours: Mon-Thru 8.30am-4pm, Fri  
8.30am-2pm (casino@lismore.catholic.org.au).

## Meetings

THE Annual General Meeting of the Casino RSM  
Cougars RLFC will be held at the Casino RSM Club at  
5pm, Monday, November 17. B Knight, Secretary.

## Public Notices

**The Richmond River**  
**ExpressExaminer****CASINO RECEPTION HOURS**Monday-Friday 9.00am-3.00pm (02) 6662 2666  
Classifieds Deadline 2pm Monday 1300 136 181  
ROP Deadline 4pm Thursday (02) 6662 2666**View Tributes Online.**

Visit finda.com.au finda

## Notices

## Public Notices

**Kyogle Council****Draft Long Term Financial Plan 2015-2034**

At the Ordinary meeting of Council on 13 October, 2014 Council resolved to place its Draft Long Term Financial Plan 2015-2034 on public exhibition.

The public exhibition period closes 4:00 pm on Monday, November 24, 2014. The document is available on Council's website www.kyogle.nsw.gov.au. Submissions can be lodged via the Council's website. Written submissions should be addressed to the General Manager.

Copies of the draft plan are on display at the following locations throughout the council area:

Waddeville Store	Woodenbong PO	Tabulam Post Office
Cawongla Store	Wiangaree Post Office	Bonalbo Post Office
Old Bonalbo Post Office	Malanganee Store	Kyogle Council Office

Senior Council staff also will conduct a "listening post" tour of the Council area to explain the draft Long Term Financial Plan and receive community feedback. Listening posts will be held at:

- Woodenbong Yowle Country Market, on Saturday, 25 October;
- Bonalbo Community Hall, Tuesday, 28 October, 2-6pm;
- Kyogle Farmers Market, Saturday, 1 November.

No appointments are necessary, simply come along and speak one-on-one with staff.

Council will consider all submissions prior to the adoption of the Draft Long Term Financial Plan 2015-2034 at the Ordinary Council meeting on Monday, 8 December, 2014.

**Notice of Extraordinary Meeting**

The public is advised an Extraordinary Meeting of Council will be held at the Kyogle Council Chambers, Stratheden Street, Kyogle, on Monday, 27 October 2014 commencing at 5pm for the consideration of:

- Adoption of 2013/2014 Financial Statements

Arthur Piggott  
General ManagerKyogle Council  
KYOGLE NSW 2474Richmond  
Valley  
Council**LEVEL 1 WATER  
RESTRICTIONS  
CASINO, KYOGLE AND  
BONALBO**

Due to the continuing dry conditions and resultant low flows in the Richmond River and Peacock Creek residents are advised that Level 1 water restrictions for Casino, Kyogle and Bonalbo are to come into force on Midnight, Wednesday 22 October 2014 as follows:-

**Sprinklers and fixed hoses (including  
soaker hoses) shall NOT be used between  
the hours of 8am and 4pm.**

Hand held hoses may be used at any time, but to conserve water it is recommended that watering is only done during the cooler periods of early morning or evening. Exceptions are allowed for essential businesses where business hours dictate water use. Applications should be made in writing to the respective Council.

No restrictions apply for industrial or stock watering purposes.

J. Walker  
General ManagerA. Piggott  
General Manager

## Lost

LOST Jet black Siamese cross cat. Gores Rd, Spring Grove answers to Diesel. Reward, child's pet. 0412187459

## Jobs

## Community Services

## Single Female Carer

Needed. Full time position.  
No experience required.  
Must live in Casino.  
02 6662 7846

## General Vacancies

**TREE FALLER WANTED**

Part or full time tree faller for local logging operation in the Casino area. Must have own saws and ABN.

Phone Doug: 0427 376 227

## Jobs

## General Vacancies

**Pastoral Care  
Practitioner**

- Approximately 10 hours per week
- Located at St Michaels in Casino

Southern Cross Care is a not-for-profit aged care provider operating across NSW and the ACT. Our mission is to support the aspirations and needs of our residents and clients within a Christian environment.

Our Pastoral and Spiritual Care Team tend to the emotional and spiritual wellbeing of our residents by being an empathetic and patient listening presence to them.

This is a vital part of the continuum of care we provide our residents according to their needs, working within a multi-disciplinary team, family and local ministries.

We are seeking a special person to join our team who can demonstrate:

- One or more completed units of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE)
- OR
- Tertiary qualifications in a relevant discipline
- Demonstrated understanding of pastoral presence
- Knowledge and expertise in working with grief and loss, and imparting with the elderly
- Highly developed empathetic listening skills

You will receive immense job satisfaction working for a values-based organisation with a passionate care team. Come and work for an organisation committed to resident and client respect and dignity, where you will receive a competitive salary and many benefits including salary packaging to increase your take-home pay, career opportunities, training, education and development.

To apply send your resume to careers@sch.org.au by 29 October 2014.

Only successful applicants will be notified.

All staff undertake probity checks prior to commencement. We encourage applications from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.

SCC is an EEO.

www.sch.org.au

Southern  
CrossCare

## Buy &amp; Sell

## Auctions - General

**Ken Weir & Son**  
www.kenweirandson.com.au  
74 Woodlark Street  
Lismore, 2480EVERY TUESDAY:  
LISMORE CATTLE  
SALE AT 7.30AMEVERY WEDNESDAY:  
CASINO CATTLE  
SALE AT 7.30AM

THU, NOV 6th

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2 Forest Grove Road  
Sat 25/10 - 7am  
Multi house sale. Tools,  
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items, brooms, pot plants,  
spoon collection



### Comparison of Current Rates and Charges

Council	Kyogle Council	Lismore City Council	Richmond Valley Council	Clarence Valley Council
2014/15 Ordinary Rates Revenue	\$5,142,259	\$26,962,000	\$9,891,791	\$26,743,513
2014/15 Total Assessments	5133	18335	10438	25816
<b>2014/15 Average General Rate/Assessment</b>	<b>\$1,002</b>	<b>\$1,471</b>	<b>\$948</b>	<b>\$1,036</b>
2014/15 Residential Water Fixed Charge (20mm)	\$340	\$204	\$127	\$166
2014/15 water charges (\$/kL) Teir 1	\$1.30 (first 200kL)	\$2.99	\$2.83 (incl \$0.89 ROUS)	\$1.79 (up to 1.233kL/day)
2014/15 water charges (\$/kL) Teir 2	\$1.80	-	\$2.92	\$2.68 (over 1.233kL/day)
Indicative annual water charge (160kL consumption)	\$548.00	\$682.28	\$579.80	\$452.40
2014/15 Residential Sewer Charge	\$643	\$772	\$896	\$988
2014/15 Domestic Waste Charge	\$450	\$279	\$380	\$289
<b>Total Annual Charges (Urban or Serviced areas)</b>	<b>\$1,641</b>	<b>\$1,733</b>	<b>\$1,856</b>	<b>\$1,729</b>
<b>Total Annual Rates and Charges (Urban serviced areas)</b>	<b>\$2,643</b>	<b>\$3,204</b>	<b>\$2,803</b>	<b>\$2,765</b>

### Comparison of Future Rates and Charges

Projected Increases over next 7 years	As per draft LTFP V2	Imagine Lismore 10 year Plan	Richmond Valley 2025	LTFP included in 2014/2015 Operational Plan
Ordinary Rates	10.34%, 5.5%, 5.5%, 5.5%, 2.3%, 2.3%	3% each year	5.5% for 4 years, then 2.5%, note this assumed a FAG grant indexation of 2.3% for 14/15 and 2.5% after that	3% each year
Water Charges	5% for 6 years, then 3%	3% each year	5.5% for 4 years, then 3%	6.5% for 2 years, then 3%
Sewer Charges	3%, 4%, 4%, then 5% for 4 years	3% each year	3% each year	8.9% for 2 years, then 3%
Waste Charges	0%, 0%, then 2% for 5 years	3% each year	3% each year	3% each year
Ordinary Rates 2021/22	\$1,408	\$1,777	\$1,242	\$1,252
Water Charges 2021/21	\$743	\$825	\$771	\$584
Sewer Charges 2021/22	\$856	\$933	\$1,083	\$1,335
Waste Charges 2021/22	\$488	\$337	\$459	\$349
<b>Total Annual Charges (Urban or Serviced areas) 2021/22</b>	<b>\$2,087</b>	<b>\$2,095</b>	<b>\$2,313</b>	<b>\$2,268</b>
<b>Total Annual Rates and Charges 2021/22</b>	<b>\$3,495</b>	<b>\$3,872</b>	<b>\$3,555</b>	<b>\$3,520</b>

### Comparison of Other Financial Information

2014/15 Projected Operating Result (excl Capital Grants)	<b>-\$2,376,398</b>	\$1,874,000	<b>-\$1,213,793</b>	<b>-\$20,150,000</b>
2014/15 Projected Borrowing Costs	\$187,498	\$4,937,000	\$1,810,704	\$9,620,000
2014/15 Projected Total Debt	\$3,300,000	\$59,000,000	\$13,000,000	\$135,000,000
Infrastructure Assets at Current Replacement Cost	\$443,077,045	\$1,130,745,000	\$602,801,356	\$1,774,444,000
Infrastructure Backlog (12/13 Special Schedule 7)	\$48,236,212	\$23,262,000	\$27,684,000	\$253,859,000
2014/15 Annual Depreciation	\$7,575,821	\$21,219,000	\$11,124,900	\$36,478,000
Backlog Ratio	10.9%	2.1%	4.6%	14.3%
Annual Depreciation Rate	1.7%	1.9%	1.8%	2.1%
Figures Based on Achieving "Fit for the Future" Criteria	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>

## Opinion

Northern Star digital producer Alex Easton



This doesn't mean amalgamating councils is automatically bad



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## OPINION

## Mergers of councils in the wind

ALEX EASTON  
alex.easton@northernstar.com.au

AMALGAMATIONS are in the wind again with reports of the Treasurer saying he'd like to cut Sydney's 41 councils to five.

Locally, there has been chatter of mergers between some combination of the Kyogle, Richmond Valley and Lismore councils.

It's hard to dismiss talk of amalgamations. Wherever they happen they seem to operate at the level of rumour and speculation until suddenly they've happened and it's too late for anyone to complain.

Over the past few years there have been, at varying times, suggestions of amalgamations for all Northern Rivers councils, including hints at a single Northern Rivers super council. All have been met with swift, parochial resistance.

There are sound reasons for our collective lack of enthusiasm for more council mergers.

Broadly, it revolves around a fear of individual areas being homogenised, sacrificing their unique flavour for the sake of some financial efficiencies that might be found another way.

There are fears areas with lower populations could lose control of their destinies as their aspirations and desires are swamped by bigger areas.

Finally, there are concerns comparatively affluent areas could lose out by absorbing poorer areas that put pressure on resources.

Fuelling those concerns is the fact all those things have happened locally with amalgamations in the past.

However, this doesn't mean amalgamating councils is automatically bad. Brisbane City Council, for example, is enormous, yet manages to function without any of these problems.

Of course, Brisbane City Council is structured very differently from our councils and is more akin to a mini-state government than what we would recognise as a council.

Its councillors are also properly paid professional politicians.

If the State Government wants more amalgamations, it might be time to start looking at changing our models of local government along those lines.

## TOPIC OF CANCER | With Digby Hildreth

## New tack on ice critical

IT WAS peeking-through-the-fingers time during some of this week's TV docus, Ice Rush - Four Corners' sensationalist but compelling report on the spread of meth-amphetamine use in country Australia.

The scene of a middle-aged woman shaking uncontrollably while trying to find a vein in her knotted arm in which to inject made for brutal viewing (and disinterred ancient memories).

One kid had got off the gear and escaped from his criminal handlers (read bikies) who fed his habit while he cooked. He looked traumatised, eyes like pools of black oil, and doomed, sitting chain-smoking in a darkened

room while his buddy sucked on the pipe.

These individuals' stories are desperately sad, but they are just a few among hundreds of thousands trapped in ice addiction, digging imaginary insects out of their arms and faces, pulling their teeth out with pliers and causing mayhem in the lives of their families and community.

Ice makes for good shock-horror television and Ice Rush was really just an update of Four Corners' The Ice Age, its 2006 study of inner Sydney meth-heads. As then, the film-makers focused on the underclass, as if addiction were restricted to bogan and ferals.

The new angle was that

ice abuse is no longer confined to the big cities but is oozing out into rural areas. No surprises there; it's a similar US trend.

The program concentrated on regional Victoria and Tasmania but ice is here too, and not just in Struggle Street towns like Kyogle and Casino, but in affluent Byron Bay and genteel Bangalow.

I know a decent, hard-working man in his 40s who has for weeks been holed up in a caravan park, sweating and spending every cent he has, and all of his emotional and spiritual capital, on getting and using the drug.

He is powerless; except for the brief relief offered by the drug, he is increasingly shaky, jumpy, paranoid, and

his mind is a churn of despair and self-loathing.

I fear for his safety, even his life. His addiction is a mental health problem. He needs help.

The wide uptake of ice points to a terrible impoverishment in people's lives, in society, though it's nothing new: consider Hogarth's Gin Lane from the 1750s.

Four Corners' use of the inevitable cliché "epidemic" may be accurate, and ice a greater threat than ISIS. But waging war on either is ineffective: we need something more enlightened.

DIGBY HILDRETH was diagnosed with liver cancer 18 months ago.



## LETTERS | have your say

## Halal distress

I'M at a loss to understand why the distress so many of us feel, over halal funding supporting terrorists in the Middle East, are the opinions of a racist or 'bigot'.

Can the Byron Bay Cookie Co assure me that the funds from their halal certification do not go to Isis, Isis, the Islamic State or similar organisations infamous for rape, torture, beheading and crucifixion?

Next time one of the BBCC (Byron Bay Cookie Co) employees looks at a young blonde male surfer buying a cookie - perhaps it won't take much imagination to comprehend the link between the BBCC halal payment and

the beheading of a similar young man in Syria? VERITY ESS, Ballina

## On Palestine

I HAVE a book, published in 1919, called "Australia in Palestine", which is about our efforts in Palestine for them.

It talks of the Flying Corps and the ANZAC Section of the Imperial Camel Corps, being recruited from them and co-operating with them, in the greatest war yet known to history, which it was at that time.

The first chapter is called "Fighting for Palestine", which was a three-year campaign. I think that the fuss about the Anzac biscuits

is a bit confusing, as the Anzacs fought for Palestine. P. WRIGHT, Wardell

## Gone broke

IT'S a pretty poor situation when the residents of Kyogle are told they will have an increase in their rates because the Kyogle Council is too pathetic at managing its expenditure and has run out of money ... in other words, gone broke!

Why should we, the residents, have to make up the shortfall because they cannot manage their budget?

Maybe 'it's time', as Gough Whitlam once said, to appoint someone more adept at managing money to oversee their spending and

not have to have the residents make it up because they lost it. From what I see, it seems to me the council has done what it has done to the roads - patch up instead of fix up. I for one have no confidence in my local council and do not want that Jenny Dowell poking her nose into my little town. JOSEPHINE WATSON, Kyogle

## Live exports

It was written "The Humanity of a nation can be judged by the way they treat their animals". A true description of the mistreatment and terror upon live animal exports at their destination. GJ MAY, Forestdale

## WEB

RE: Battlefront over Anzac biscuits

WHY do all these other non meat-related products have to be halal certified? Sounds like an absolute rort. macadamia - Dalwood

RE: Cop cameras to reveal male victims: solicitor ABOUT time, 10 years behind the UK and USA. Good on you Sue Dakin.

malevictim - Lismore

RE: Ballina Shire Coastal pathway over budget NO surprises here.

Council is over budget on the Wigram Arcade renovation too. The Lennox Head Community Centre was a disaster, more than 100 per cent over budget.

Now they want to develop two indoor aquatic centres at an estimated "budget" of \$4 million-plus each. Funding by a 5% rates increase over two years on top of the annual increase (to be compounded forever). Council should not be taking on so many infrastructure projects.

JustGo - Lennox Hd I HAVE concern with the Skennars Head Road part, still under construction. The completed pathway has power poles in it. The pathway has been enlarged to allow for the poles, some of which are almost in the centre. Hopefully, no-one has an accident while cycling on this path as these poles create a real hazard.

Surely the poles will be removed and the holes filled? waldra47 - Lennox Head

RE: Metgasco confident of winning court case on Rosella well

AS much as we want CSG stopped, Metgasco has a good argument that the licence was suspended "for confusing a political problem with a lack of community consultation".

Outside the area politicians, from the party that approved the well in the first place, have been centrally active in revving up community protest in Bentley in order to perhaps boost their own image. This political fact could assist in Metgasco winning this case.

The anti-CSG movement needs to consider this in future. A\_League - Lismore

## facebook

facebook.com/thenorthernstar

It's no different to labels stating "May contain nuts". They're not changing their ingredients; they're advising people on whether a food group is suitable for them to eat. Get over yourselves.

Emma Betteridge, regarding Byron Bay Cookie Co being attacked for selling halal biscuits

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# Have your say on future funding

RATEPAYERS and residents in Kyogle and surrounds are being asked to have a say in the future of the council.

Kyogle Council is calling for community feedback on a draft Long Term Financial Plan which will prove to the State Government that it is viable and does not need to amalgamate.

Under the State Government's Fit for the Future blueprint for local government in NSW, Kyogle Council must prove it is financially sustainable (Fit for the Future) or agree to amalgamate with one or more adjoining councils.

A third option is to do nothing and let the State Government decide council's future.

Council's general manager Arthur Piggott said the council, backed by the results of previous community surveys which show little support for amalgamation, had developed a long-term financial plan which supported the case to remain independent.

"The plan goes a long way to meeting the financial sustainability targets set by the NSW Government and addressing the council's infrastructure backlog,

while setting rates that remain affordable to the local community," he said.

"While council believes the draft Long Term Financial Plan provides the best option for the future of the council, we want to know what the community thinks.

"The council needs feedback from ratepayers and residents on whether or not they want to amalgamate, and if they do want to remain independent, whether they are willing to pay a series of above-the-pegged limit rate increases over the next five years to achieve that goal."

The council is looking to increase rates by 22% above the pegged limit in the five years from 2015 to 2019.

"We want everyone to take the opportunity to have their say on the Draft Long Term Financial Plan, as it is critical for the future of Kyogle Council as we know it today," Mr Piggott said.

To that end, the council will conduct a "listening post" tour of the council area over the next week.

Information about the Draft Long Term Financial Plan also is on the council's website. Public submissions close on Monday, November 24, at 4pm.

## Benefit to come

SCHOOLS in the Page electorate will benefit from a \$12 million Australian Government investment to improve the focus on science, technology, engineering

and mathematics (STEM) subjects.

A science council would advise the government on areas of national strength, current and future capability



## Horse takes John to final muster

IT seems appropriate that a man who has spent most of his life around horses is taken to his final resting place by a horse.

John Brooker, of Piora, loved his horses and his cattle and was a local boy

through and through.

He was a member of the Casino Show Society for over 35 years and was a life member.

It is no surprise that hundreds turned out to the service at the Casino Lawn

Cemetery to see Mr Brooker off.

His grand-daughters Melita Roache and Katie Botfield did the eulogies and son-in-law Rodney Botfield cracked the whip.

PHOTO: HELEN TRISTUM

FINAL REST: Pat and Shane Randall take the late John Brooker to Casino cemetery.

## BILLABONG TEES

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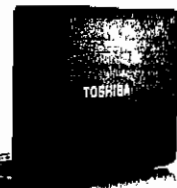
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Barker Street Casino, Ph. 6662 7885

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## Preschool gathers top award

LESS than 12 months after opening, the Alstonville Community Preschool has been nominated for the Regional Community Achievement awards and the Centre for Volunteering awards.

The preschool has also received a rating of Exceeding National Standard by the NSW Department of Education and Communities.

The preschool opened in February 2014.

## Looking for the next Coppola

IF YOU fancy yourself as the next Francis Ford Coppola, it's not too early to get your camera out and start shooting. The Byron Bay Film Festival is inviting local, national and international filmmakers to submit their creations with prizes awarded for inspiring new talent. Films of all lengths and genres are accepted. Entries close November 27. Info: [www.bbff.com.au/](http://www.bbff.com.au/) enter-bbff2015/

## Nominate someone for Oz Day awards

NOMINATIONS are now open for the Lismore City Council Australia Day Awards. Categories are: Citizen of the Year, Young Citizen of the Year, Aboriginal Citizen of the Year, Services in Community (Individual), Services in Community (Group), Sportsman (Senior), Sportsman (Junior), Sports (Team/Group/Organisation), Sustainable Environment and Art and Cultural.

## Patrols added, but not linked to shark

BYRON Shire Mayor, Simon Richardson has refuted the claim that providing a 12-month beach lifeguard service was a reactive measure in response to the fatal shark attack in Byron Bay last month. "Council have utilised statistics gathered by professional and volunteer services and recommendations made in the Coastal Public Safety Risk Assessment," Cr Richardson said.

## SURVIVAL PLAN: Massive rate hikes proposal goes to residents

# Kyogle aims high

**HAMISH BROOME**  
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**FINDING** cash to maintain its aging roads and bridges underpinned Kyogle Council's decision to vote for significant long-term rate increases at its meeting on Monday night.

The proposed 20-year financial plan includes cumulative rate hikes of 22% above maximum rate peg levels to help ease council's mounting infrastructure woes.

It's hoped the plan will satisfy new requirements under the state government's Fit for the Future reforms, qualifying it for low-interest loans and other incentives.

Despite the big rate rise, general manager Arthur Piggott said it was not the most severe option.

He said rates would need to rise by 46% beyond rate peg limits to meet all the government's criteria.

"We've got really three options," Mr Piggott said.

"One is that we meet all the local government criteria which will involve some heavy rate increases, another is to look at some moderate increases and seek other government assistance to make up the shortfall."

"Another one is to say we can't manage the situation, we need to amalgamate."

Mr Piggott said amalgama-

**ARTHUR PIGGOTT:** Our biggest concern is that we lose our representation and possibly even employment in the area

tion was an "unknown" and could see consequences beyond significant rate rises. "Our biggest concern is that we lose our representation and possibly even employment in the area."

"The council is also banking on a proposal within government to boost financial assistance grants to rural councils at the expense of more cashed-up city counterparts. Kyogle's draft plan will

now go through a 28-day community consultation process that will address the question of amalgamation.

"We definitely want to obtain some community feedback because if the majority of the community does want to see [amalgamation] happen then we certainly need to look at that," Mr Piggott said.

To get resident feedback the council is considering an online survey, listening posts at major events and functions and a phone survey.

The consultation is expected to begin later this month.

**HAVE YOUR SAY**  
northernstar.com.au

This commemorative 20-part series from The Northern Star will mark the key milestones in the build-up to the Gallipoli centenary.

### THE CENTENARY MILESTONE SERIES SCHEDULE

**Monday, October 20 2014**  
Volunteer troops prepare for embarkation from WA

**Saturday, November 1 2014**  
First major Australian Imperial Force contingent sets sail from Albany

**Saturday, November 8 2014**  
HMAS Sydney destroys Germany's Emden in Cocos Islands

**Wednesday, November 26 2014**  
Anzac forces diverted to protect Egypt's Suez Canal

**Wednesday, December 24 2014**  
Western Front troops call a truce for Christmas

**Wednesday, December 31 2014**  
Second AIF convoy departs from Albany

**Saturday, January 10 2015**  
The 11th Battalion gathers on the Giza pyramids

**Tuesday, January 13 2015**  
Churchill presents the plan to attack Turkey's Dardanelles

**Tuesday, February 3 2015**  
Australians help fight off the Turkish on the Suez

**Monday, February 16 2015**  
Lord Kitchener orders Anzac troops to ready for assault on Turkey

**Wednesday, March 4 2015**  
AIF brigade lands on Lemnos Island to prepare for Turkish occupation

**Thursday, March 12 2015**  
Lord Kitchener appoints Gen Ian Hamilton to lead Mediterranean Expeditionary Force

**Wednesday, March 18 2015**  
Decision made to send in ground troops to Gallipoli after failed navy attempts

**Wednesday, April 1 2015**  
Anzac Corps in Egypt receives orders to move to the Turkish front

**Saturday, April 11 2015**  
Anzac senior officers select troop landing sites at Gallipoli

**Saturday, April 18 2015**  
The men who helped shape the Gallipoli campaign

**Saturday, April 25 2015**  
The Anzacs hit the Gallipoli shores

Remember how the Anzac spirit was forged.  
100 Years of ANZAC  
The Spirit Lives 2014-2018



**VOICES OF ANGELS:** Helen Coyle (front) and the Bridge Street Choir will launch the video for their song Fluffy Pillow at the Winsome Hotel tomorrow night. PHOTO: CATHY ADAMS

## Video thrill lets choir members find voice

IT has taken four years but Lismore's Bridge Street Choir will launch its first video clip tomorrow night at the Winsome Hotel.

The event, Angels at the Soupie, is a major milestone for the ensemble described as the "choir for everyone".

The video clip is for the choir's original song Fluffy Pillow. Laurie Marrioti penned the lyrics for the

song while choir director wrote the Peter Lehner.

Winsome volunteer Margaret Lord said the theme for the launch night was Heaven Can Wait, and that the cafe would be serving all sorts of "white" or "angel" food.

Many choir members have already organised their outfits, so expect to see angel wings, feather boas and lots of white - although there will

be at least one "angel" dressed in black.

There was plenty of excitement during rehearsals this week and Ms Lord said it was an exciting and busy time.

"This choir reaches out to people from all walks of life," she said.

"I love the opportunity of being able to express who I am."

"It creates joy and fun."

Fellow chorister Millie Cameron agreed.

"I've been in the choir for two years now, and it's a lot of fun," she said.

**SEE IT:** The Fluffy Pillow video clip will be launched at the Winsome Hotel tomorrow night from 6pm. The cafe will be open to raise funds for Lismore Soup Kitchen.



# Kyogle Council puts amalgamation on the table

LEAH WHITE  
leah.white@northernstar.com.au

KYOGLE Council will be looking at whether to amalgamate, as the State Government asks councils to submit long-term financial sustainability reports.

Kyogle Mayor Danielle Mulholland met with Lismore City Council Mayor Jenny Dowell and Richmond Valley Mayor Ernie Bennett on Thursday for preliminary discussions on the potential opportunities and drawbacks of amalgamation.

Cr Mulholland said staff

**“This is a conversation each council needs to have with the community**

— Lismore Mayor Jenny Dowell

would present relevant information to councillors on Monday night, who would then decide whether or not to pursue amalgamation.

“This amalgamation issue is something that has to be looked at,” she said.

If Kyogle councillors de-

cided amalgamation was an option, it would then go to the community for extensive public consultation.

“Ultimately the community will make that decision,” Cr Mulholland said.

Lismore Mayor Cr Dowell said Lismore council had a

good relationship with Kyogle, but the decision to amalgamate was “very much in their hands”.

“We’ve got a really good relationship with Kyogle and Mayor Danielle Mulholland, but this is a conversation each council needs to have with the community,” she said.

“We would need to know if it was their wish to pursue a merge by the end of the year, because Lismore has to factor that in so we can propose how we are fit for

the future.”

The long-term financial sustainability reports are part of NSW Government’s Fit for the Future reforms, based on Independent Local Government Review Panel recommendations.

The review found Richmond Valley and Kyogle councils were financially “weak” and recommended Kyogle merge with Lismore or Richmond Valley.

The \$1 billion Fit for the Future reforms offers financial incentives to local coun-

cils considering a merger.

Premier Mike Baird made the announcement in September, saying one-third of the state’s councils were facing financial problems, losing more than \$1 million a day.

Councils have until June 30 to submit their proposals on how they plan to be financially sustainable in the future.

The submissions will be assessed by independent experts against independently established criteria.

CELEBRITY JUDGES: National search to find Aust’s cutest dog

## Pooches put personality on cat walk

LEAH WHITE  
leah.white@northernstar.com.au

BIG brown eyes, velvet soft ears and fluffy fur coats.

Ballina PETstock will be swarming with them this weekend as it tries to find ‘Australia’s Cutest Dog’.

The competition is being run right across the country, with store winners going on to compete in the state finals where the over-all winner will fetch the national title of Australia’s Cutest Dog.

Each entrant will be asked to fill out a registration form in-store before their pooch poses for a photo.

Ballina store manager Sandy Lay said the team was expecting dozens of entrants for the competition.

Each store will select a

### AUSTRALIA’S CUTEST DOG COMPETITION

When: Saturday and Sunday between 10am and 2pm  
Where: Ballina PETstock at the Harvey Norman Centre on Boeing Avenue

winner based on first impression, effort on the day and behaviour, unique X Factor, personality and character and expression of face and eyes.

Local store winners will receive a \$250 PETstock gift card, state finalists will receive a \$1,000 gift card, and the national winner will take home a luxury-spec Renault Koleos 4x2 Petrol CTV Bose Edition valued at \$84,990.

Finalist judges will include celebrity vet Dr Chris Brown, editor of *that’s life!* Magazine Linda Smith and PETstock founder and CEO Shane

Young.

Ms Lay said the competition was a chance to celebrate the natural beauty of Australia’s dogs in their many varied forms.

“There is no winning formula, but if there’s one piece of advice I can give entrants, it’s to encourage your dog to showcase their personality,” she said.

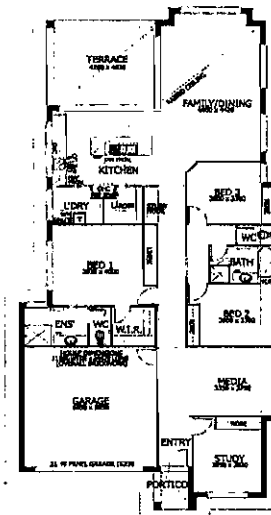
“We want to see our local pooches working it for the camera and showcasing their best features for the judges, so a dog from Ballina can go all the way to the top!”



Sophie Thomson from PETstock Ballina with her puppy Cleopatra invite people to be part of their Australia’s Cutest Dog competition.

PHOTO: CATHY ADAMS

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## Focus Groups

In March 2014, Kyogle Council established five Focus Groups to help guide long-term planning for the future development of the Kyogle Local Government Area.

The Focus Groups target the areas of:

- Ageing in Place, Disability Services and Respite Care
- Agriculture
- Governance and Community Services
- Village Life
- Visitor Attraction

The Focus Groups are made up of Councillors, staff and community representatives and have been tasked, among other things, with helping Council undertake a review of its Community Strategic Plan.

For further information about the establishment and aims of the five Focus Groups, please click [here](#).

### Ageing in Place, Disability Services and Respite Care

The function of the Focus Group is to identify, develop and action strategies to be considered or pursued in order for:

Financially sustainable, appropriate and accessible range of options (with regard to services and facilities) for the maturing population, people with disabilities and their carers

- Ageing in place services
- Transport (taxis, buses, public)
- Respite care services
- Health Services (allied and medical)
- Education and training
- Activities
- Low, medium and high care residential facilities and accommodation
- Respite care accommodation
- Disability access in public places
- Local jobs and businesses to support the associated activities, e.g. shops, repairs, laundry services
- Visitor accommodation

[Ageing In Place, Disability Services and Respite Care Focus Group Terms of Reference](#)

[Latest Ageing In Place, Disability Services and Respite Care Focus Group planning processes worksheet](#)

### Agriculture

The function of the Focus Group is to identify, develop and action strategies to be considered or pursued in order to achieve a range of economically sustainable and viable agricultural opportunities across the Kyogle LGA.

[Agriculture Focus Group Terms of Reference](#)

[Latest Agriculture Focus Group planning processes worksheet](#)

### Governance and Community Services

The function of the Focus Group is to identify, develop and action strategies to be considered or pursued in order for:



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## A plan for the future

Kyogle Council ratepayers and residents are being asked to help decide the future of the council.

Council is calling for community feedback on a draft Long Term Financial Plan which will prove to the State Government that the council is viable and can stand alone.

Under the State Government's Fit for the Future blueprint for local government in NSW, Kyogle Council must prove it is financially sustainable (Fit for the Future) or agree to amalgamate with one or more adjoining councils.

A third option is to do nothing and let the State Government decide Council's future.

Council's General Manager Arthur Piggott said the Council, backed by the results of previous community surveys which show little support for amalgamation, had developed a long term financial plan which supported the case to remain Independent.

"The plan goes a long way to meeting the financial sustainability targets set by the NSW Government and addressing Council's infrastructure backlog while setting rates that remain affordable to the local community," he said.

"While Council believes the draft Long Term Financial Plans provides the best option for the future of the Council, we want to know what the community thinks.

"The Council needs feedback from ratepayers and residents on whether or not they want to amalgamate, and if they do want to remain Independent whether they are willing to pay a series of above the pegged limit rate increases over the next five years to achieve that goal."

The council is looking to increase rates by 22% above the pegged limit in the five years from 2015 to 2019.

"We want everyone to take the opportunity to have their say on the Draft Long Term Financial Plan, as it is critical for the future of Kyogle Council as we know it today," Mr Piggott said.

To that end, Council will conduct a "listening post" tour of the council area as well as undertake a phone survey of ratepayers and residents.

The "listening posts" will be manned by senior council staff and will be held at:

the Woodenbong Yowie Country Market on Saturday, October 25;

the Bonalbo Community Hall on Tuesday, October 28 (2-6pm);

the Kyogle Farmers Market on Saturday, November 1.

Staff will be on hand to explain to community members the various options for the future of the council, provide details on the long term financial plan, and record community feedback.

No appointments are necessary, just come along and have a one-on-one chat with Council staff.

To help explain the factors which have led to the current situation faced by Council and to provide an overview of the actions Council has taken to date and the options for the future, Council has produced an easy to read fact sheet which will be made available to ratepayers and residents.

[Draft Long Term Financial Plan 2015/34](#)

[22% rate increase comparison](#)

[46% rate increase comparison](#)

To find out how the proposed 22% above the pegged limit rate rise will affect rates (including a comparison with neighbouring councils), [click here](#).

To find out how a 46 % above the pegged limit rate rise would affect rates, [click here](#).

To learn more about Council's push to achieve financial sustainability [click here](#) or its move Bridge the Gaps [click here](#).

Public submissions on the draft Long Term Financial Plan close on Monday, 24 November, at 4pm and can be lodged by clicking on the "Make a General Submission" link at the bottom of this page. Written submissions can also be sent to the General Manager, Kyogle Council, PO Box 11, Kyogle, NSW, 2474.

### The Draft Long Term Financial Plan at a glance

A series of rolling above the pegged limit rate rises over the next five years (rates to rise by 22% above the pegged limit);

An increase in bridge replacement funding to allow the replacement of all timber bridges over a 30 year period;

- An increase in regional roads capital renewal funding to almost double the current levels;
- An increase in local roads and streets capital renewal funding to almost triple current levels;
- Provision of new sewerage schemes for Tabulam, Mallanganee and Wiangaree;
- An increase in funding for community buildings.

The draft plan also provides for cutbacks to some services including:

- Returning some existing sealed roads to gravel after they are beyond routine maintenance. These would include Duck Creek Road, Tunglebung Creek Road, Culmaran Creek Road, and Durhams Road.
- The closure of some bridges after they are beyond routine maintenance. These would include Alcorns Bridge on Ferndale Road, Crane Bridge on Old Tweed Road, Andrew Bridge on Williams Road, Mitchell Bridge of Williams Road, Baileys Bridge on Baileys Bridge Road, Montgomery Bridge on Iron Pot Creek Road, and Hainleys Bridge on Culmaran Creek Road;
- Rationalisation of the transfer station facilities serving the Bonalbo, Tabulam and Mallanganee areas with the view to providing one facility to service the whole area;
- Closure of the Woodenbong landfill and replacing it with a transfer station;
- The disposal of three community buildings – Cedar Point Hall, Grove House, and Horseshoe Creek Hall -- to reduce annual operating costs.

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## FACT SHEET 1 *Income*

Kyogle Council is a multi-purpose Council servicing a Local Government Area (LGA) of 3,589km<sup>2</sup>, 2,628km<sup>2</sup> of which is rateable land and 961km<sup>2</sup> of which is non-rateable land. Of the non-rateable land, 926km<sup>2</sup> (or 26% of the total LGA) is State Forest and National Parks. There are 5,118 separate rateable assessments within the LGA.

Council obtains its income revenue through various sources. The primary sources are general rates, fees and charges for specific services and external grant funding. The revenue Council receives from your rates and charges provides funds for the broad range of services and projects it delivers to our local communities. In addition to this rates revenue, Council receives various grants from the State and Federal Governments, such as an annual untied Financial Assistance Grant to help cover administration costs as well as specific

Council endeavours to maximise the revenue received through external grants, there is no other level of government with the capacity to address the funding shortfalls identified across the local government sector throughout Australia.

It is possible for Councils to look to increase their general rates above the annually pegged levels, but this can only be done with the approval of the NSW Government and only where a genuine need for the increase has been identified and the local communities have been consulted.

For the 2013/2014 financial year, Council has estimated that it will collect \$5.1M in general rate revenue, resulting in a net amount of \$4.91M after allowing for concessions.

*The table below shows average rate comparisons with other Northern Rivers Councils for the 2011/12 financial year, net of pension and other concessions*

	BALLINA	BYRON	KYOGLE	LISMORE	RICHMOND VALLEY	TWEED	NORTHERN RIVERS
<b>Area (km<sup>2</sup>)</b>	485	566	3,584	1,288	3,047	1,308	10,277
<b>Ratepayers</b>	17,280	14,714	5,106	18,219	10,401	38,800	104,520
<b>Rate Income ('000)</b>	14,788	16,131	4,541	23,253	7,636	45,798	112,147
<b>Av. Rate</b>	\$856	\$1,096	\$889	\$1,276	\$734	\$1,180	\$1,072

purpose grants such as Roads to Recovery and Black Spot Project Grants.

The revenue generated from water charges, sewer charges, stormwater charges and waste charges is used to fund those specific services only. General rate revenue however, is used to provide funding for a range of general services including items such as roads, recreational facilities, economic development, emergency services and administration.

Council's general rates are subject to rate pegging by the NSW Government. This means that the Council is not allowed to increase the total amount of general rates collected from its ratepayers by more than the "pegged" amount, which is set annually by IPART (usually around 3%). Whilst the NSW Government is reviewing the way that general rates and grants apply to Local Government, these remain essentially consistent from year to year, with increases linked to pegged amounts determined by the State Government. Whilst

Council is constantly receiving requests from our residents for improved and/or increased services. The vast majority of these requests are for basic essentials such as roads, bridges and drainage. As part of the NSW Government's Integrated Planning and Reporting requirements, Council prepared detailed Asset Management Plans and an Asset Management Strategy in 2012. This process identified an annual funding shortfall of \$4.6M over the next 10 years, an amount necessary to maintain the infrastructure assets in their present condition. If Council is to remain sustainable in the long term and deliver the expectations of our communities and the visions of Council, additional income must be sourced. The alternative is a reduction in service levels and further deterioration of our infrastructure such as roads and bridges. Based on the feedback from the residents and ratepayers and through assessment of the infrastructure assets under our control,



## Kyogle Council Sustaining our LGA

Council has identified a list of priority works across the major functions of roads, bridges, urban streets, drainage, parks and gardens, community buildings and swimming pools. These works total over \$40M, with over \$10M of them being identified as "Very High Priority". If these projects were to be delivered over a 20 year period, this would require around an additional \$2M per year.

It seems clear that residents, ratepayers, Councillors and Council staff all know what needs to be done; the issue is how we find the funds to actually do it. There are five main options available to Council and the local communities to address the funding shortfall and these are:

- maintain rates at the current pegged levels and continue to make the most of the funds that we have available to spend, accepting

No one single option would be a solution to the problem on its own, and a combination of several of these options will be the best way to find the sort of balance required to address our challenges. As such, Council is looking at a number of options for raising its own source revenue through above rate pegging increases. If ratepayers were to contribute additional rates over and above the "pegged" amount for each of the next 5 years, the following table outlines the estimated additional annual income and rates that could be achieved, including a total additional income over the 10 year period and the total additional rates expressed as an amount in dollars per week. The total impact proposed is between \$4 and \$8 per week for the average ratepayer.

YEAR	BASE LINE		OPTION 1 – 15%		OPTION 2 – 24%		OPTION 3 – 30%	
	Current Long Term Financial Plan		3% per annum above rate pegging for 5 yrs (15% total)		4.5% per annum above rate pegging for 5 yrs (24% total)		5.5% per annum above rate pegging for 5 yrs (30% total)	
	Rate Pegging Increases	Annual Rate Income	Average Additional Rates	Total Additional Income	Average Additional Rates	Total Additional Income	Average Additional Rates	Total Additional Income
2013/14	3.40%	5,147,335	0	0	0	0	0	0
2014/15	3.00%	5,301,755	29	150,302	45	230,630	56	285,677
2015/16	3.00%	5,460,808	61	314,011	95	485,431	118	604,350
2016/17	3.00%	5,624,632	96	492,056	150	766,418	187	959,097
2017/18	3.00%	5,793,371	134	685,425	210	1,075,766	264	1,353,266
2018/19	3.00%	5,967,172	175	895,169	277	1,415,815	350	1,790,503
2019/20	3.00%	6,146,187	180	922,024	285	1,458,290	360	1,844,218
2020/21	3.00%	6,330,573	186	949,685	293	1,502,038	371	1,899,544
2021/22	3.00%	6,520,490	191	978,175	302	1,547,100	382	1,956,531
2022/23	3.00%	6,716,105	197	1,007,521	311	1,593,512	394	2,015,227
		<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$4/week</b>	<b>6,394,369</b>	<b>\$6/week</b>	<b>10,075,000</b>	<b>\$8/week</b>	<b>12,708,413</b>

that service levels will reduce and asset disposals may be required; or

- increase our rates in order to increase the funds available so that we can address more of our communities' expectations; or
- continue to endeavour to leverage additional funding from external grants; or
- utilise the funds held as cash reserves to address the highest priority areas in the short term; or
- continue to demonstrate our commitment to continuous improvement through the ongoing efficiency and effectiveness of Council's operations to ensure the best value for money in the delivery of services.

The options proposed for above pegging increases are modest, with none of them seeking to raise sufficient revenue to cover the whole funding shortfall. The expectation is that Council will still be pursuing the best combination of the methods outlined above, but it is also recognised that the main issue that will impact on our ratepayers is the increase in general rates above rate pegging. Council is now seeking feedback from ratepayers and the many communities within the LGA on their willingness to contribute to solving the challenges we face through additional contributions of funding.



## FACT SHEET 2

### *Asset Management Strategy*

Kyogle Council is a multipurpose Council that delivers a wide range of services to its local communities. In order to deliver these services, a wide range of infrastructure type assets are required, such as roads and bridges, buildings and other structures, footpaths, pipes, playgrounds, plant and machinery. In 2012, Council prepared a series of detailed Asset Management Plans for these infrastructure assets using the following groupings:

- Buildings and Community Facilities
- Parks and reserves
- Plant Equipment and Emergency Services
- Stormwater and Flood Management
- Transport
- Waste Management Services
- Water Supply Services
- Sewerage Services

These infrastructure assets have a total combined replacement value of approximately \$417M, with \$298M of this being Transport-related assets such as roads and bridges. The annual cost to maintain and operate these assets over their life time is \$17.2M per year. Council's current *Long Term Financial Plan* provides \$13.9M per year of expenditure for this purpose. This presents a funding shortfall of \$3.3M per year over the life of the assets.

There is also a \$42.9M backlog of asset renewal and upgrade expenditure, required to bring these assets to what would be considered a satisfactory standard. The vast majority of this backlog is associated with Council's Transport-related assets such as roads and bridges. In order to address this backlog over time, Council's *Asset Management Strategy* has identified that an additional \$1.3M per year is required, bringing the annual funding shortfall to a total of \$4.6M per year over the next 10 years.

The current 10 year forward outlook is that current service levels can be maintained for most services within the current budget allocation for the next 10 years, with the exception of Transport. Because of the significance of the issues relating to Transport

assets, separate fact sheets have been prepared providing additional details in relation to Council's road and bridges assets. Council obtains funding for these assets through various sources, primarily;

- general rates;
- fees and charges for specific services; and
- external grant funding.

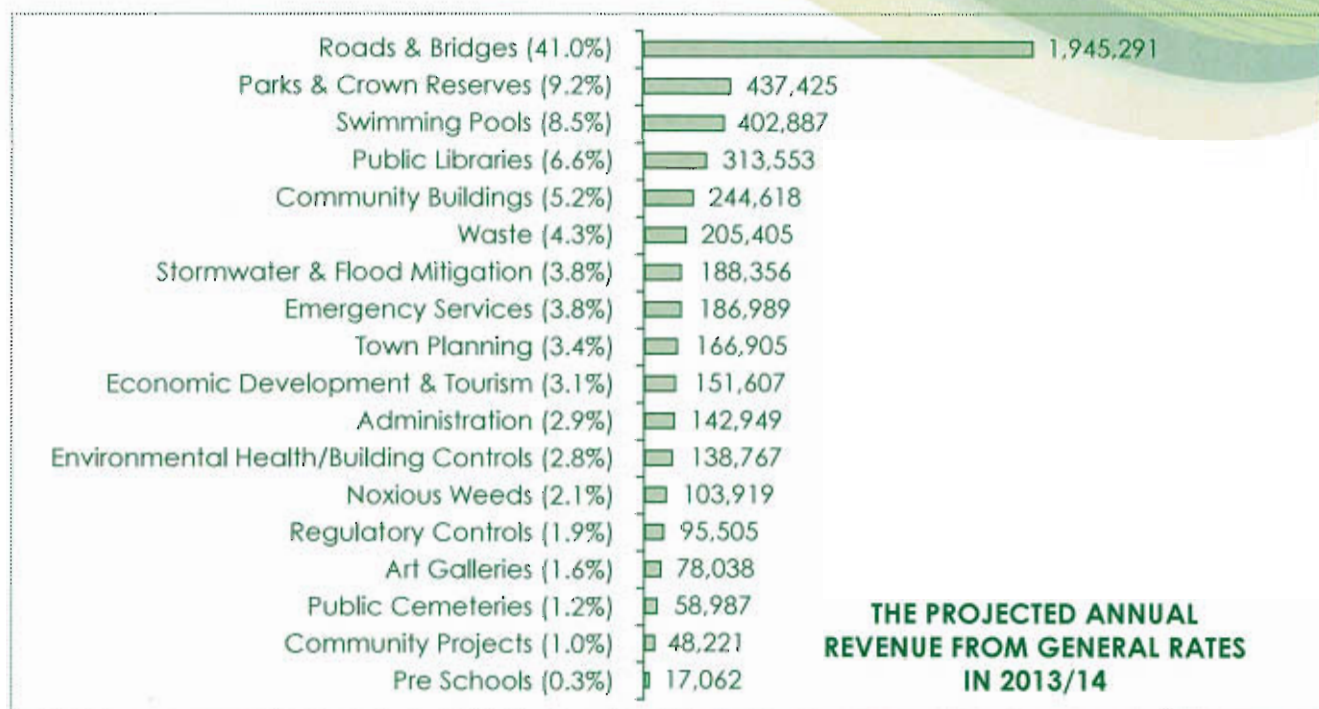
Services such as Water, Sewerage and Waste are funded through fees and charges and specific purpose external grants. As such, these services are accounted for separately to those funded by revenue raised through general rates and general purpose grants. Whilst the NSW Government is reviewing the way that general rates and grants apply to Local Government, these remain essentially consistent from year to year, with increases linked to pegged amounts determined by the State Government. Whilst Council endeavours to maximise the revenue received through external grants, there is no other level of government with the capacity to address the funding shortfalls identified across the local government sector throughout Australia. This leaves Council with little option but to pursue an increase in its own source revenue, generated through general purpose rates. It is possible for Councils to increase their general rates above the annually pegged levels, but this can only be done with the approval of the NSW Government, and only where a genuine need for the increase has been identified, and the local communities have been consulted.

The projected annual revenue from general rates in the 2013/14 financial year is \$4.91M. The budgets for expenditure of this revenue across Council's various functions are shown in the figure at the top of the next page.

As can be seen from this figure, the level of expenditure on roads and bridges is of most significance. It is also important to understand that some of these services are compulsory and must be delivered by Council in accordance with legislative requirements and obligations. That is to say that Council does not have the option to withdraw or reduce these service levels. Some services are part-compulsory and part-optional, whilst others are entirely optional. In these areas Council can consider reducing service levels provided to the local communities or removing the services altogether.



## Kyogle Council *Sustaining our LGA*



Council has developed a strategy to address the issues associated with the management of its \$417M worth of infrastructure assets. This strategy requires the local communities within the Kyogle Local Government Area to work with Council in developing a balance between the service levels we provide, the funding available, and the level of risk we are willing to accept. As part of the review of the *Community Strategic Plan*, Council is now seeking input from its communities on what changes to services might be acceptable to them, what services they may be prepared to pay more for, and how much they may be prepared to pay.

Council's Asset Management Strategy identifies a number of options available for the long term management of its infrastructure assets such as:

- reviewing the function and condition appropriate for each asset group taking into account the level of utilisation;
- demolition and disposal of assets that are not critical or not delivering the required service levels; and
- improving assets where the improvement provides a reduction in life cycle costs, or a greater resilience to damage or deterioration in condition.

Council's mission, goals and objectives have also been considered within the overall

asset management planning process. It is important to recognise that the provision and maintenance of public infrastructure is critical to the economic, cultural, social and environmental needs of the local communities. Provision of services that meet the needs of our various communities is critical in maintaining their way of life. Council has limited resources and these same communities need to provide Council with feedback so that we are able to set priorities for the allocation of these resources.



### FACT SHEET 3

## Roads and Streets

Council maintains a road network of 1,319km made up of State Roads, Regional Roads and Local Roads. The State Road network is maintained by Council on behalf of the Roads and Maritime Services (formerly the Roads and Traffic Authority) and the Regional and Local Road networks are owned and maintained by Council. The road network is broken down as follows:

The road network is in a state of decline. The current funding is not sufficient to maintain the road network and as such, Council cannot deliver the level of service expected by its communities. Funding for renewals is well below that required to preserve the assets that remain in fair to good condition. Many of these assets are at or near the end of their useful life and require significant expenditure to bring them up to a satisfactory standard. The network contains a number of narrow and winding roads and streets which do not

ROAD CLASS	Sealed Road Length (km)	Unsealed Road Length (km)	Urban Streets Length (km)	Sub-Total by Road Class (km)
State Highways	112	0	3	115
Regional Roads	106	15	7	128
Local Roads	216	807	53	1,076
<b>Sub-Total by Type (km)</b>	<b>434</b>	<b>822</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>1,319</b>

Within these roads and streets there are also other significant assets that include:

- 109 causeways with a total length of 1,628m on Local Roads;
- 253 Grids and 79 Gates on Local Roads (maintained by the Permit holders);
- 4,102 drainage structures with a total length of 35.5km on Local and Regional Roads;
- 27.2km of guardrail and safety fence on Local and Regional Roads;
- 6,164 items of road side furniture such as signs, bus shelters and seats; and
- 15.2km of footpaths and cycleways.

In 2012 Council completed a *Transport Asset Management Plan* covering its network of roads and streets, as well as bridges. The financial analysis undertaken as part of this plan can be summarised as follows:

- The total replacement cost of the existing assets is \$298M. This is made up of \$96M worth of bridges, \$17M worth of urban streets and footpaths and \$185M worth of rural roads and drainage;
- The annual funding shortfall over the next ten years is \$4.05M per year. \$3.0M of this shortfall is associated with the capital replacement, or renewal, of existing assets; and
- \$70M worth of these assets are in poor to very poor condition.

meet current engineering standards, or the expectations of the residents and road users. Funding for annual maintenance is also below that required to maintain the assets in their existing condition, or to ensure that rates of deterioration do not increase. If funding levels cannot be increased, reduced service levels need to be agreed to in consultation with the local communities.

The current budget for the maintenance of roads and streets is \$2.7M, made up of \$695,000 for Regional Roads, \$1,562,000 for Rural Local Roads and \$478,000 for Urban Streets. These allocations are required to cover the costs of routine works such as pothole patching, slashing, spraying, grading, patch gravelling, clearing drains, street lighting, signage, guardrail, guide posts and line marking. The funds available severely limit the extent of work that Council can undertake each year and Council struggles to meet the expectations of its communities.

The impact of the high frequency of heavy rainfall events we have experienced over recent years also needs to be acknowledged in any discussion on the financial requirements for the ongoing maintenance of Council's road network. Council has received \$12.6M in Natural Disaster funding for the restoration of damage to roads and streets between 2008 and 2012, an average of \$2.5M per year. Despite the disruption to the road network at varying levels during this time, the injection of



## Kyogle Council Sustaining our LGA

funds of this magnitude has allowed Council to achieve significant efficiencies by combining its maintenance works with flood damage restoration works. This has meant that more was able to be achieved with Council's funding than would have otherwise been possible. In some areas, primarily unsealed roads, this has resulted in the condition of roads generally not changing from their pre-2008 condition, with some areas improving slightly where expenditure has been focused. However, relying on this funding source on an ongoing basis in the future brings great uncertainty and risk. If weather patterns revert to a more regular rainfall pattern that still causes damage to the road network, but does not result in Natural Disaster declarations, Council could see a rapid deterioration of the condition of the road network over the medium term (5-10 years) as it would not have the funds to repair some damaged areas, and this in turn often leads to accelerated rates of deterioration of the roads. This is particularly of concern in relation to the unsealed road network.

*Council's Asset Management Strategy* identifies a number of options available for the long term management of its roads and streets that can be achieved within the current budget. These can be summarised as follows:

- focus rehabilitation and upgrade expenditure on the highest trafficked roads and streets linked to the major arterial roads, acknowledging that other areas will not be able to be considered;

to fully implement any of these programs, and the long term life cycle cost benefits from these programs will not fully eventuate unless they are implemented in full. The programs identified are:

- Initial sealing of the most heavily trafficked unsealed roads – \$7M program, at an average cost of \$300,000/km, implemented over ten years;
- Improve drainage infrastructure on rural roads in order to reduce the impact of heavy rain, ensure adequate width for passing vehicles and to make grading easier and more efficient on the unsealed roads – \$4M program implemented over 20 years;
- Widen narrow sealed pavements to allow vehicles to pass without the need to drive on the unsealed shoulders, reducing shoulder wear and avoiding accelerated deterioration of pavements – \$5M program over 10 years;
- Provide kerb and guttering and widen narrow urban streets – \$2M program over 10 years; and
- Reseal existing sealed roads that are still in fair to good condition, so that the wearing surface remains intact, reducing potholing, cracking and ingress of moisture that lead to accelerated deterioration of the underlying pavement, causing potholing, rutting, shoving and deformation of the road – \$30,000/km over a network of \$386km and at a reseal frequency of once every 10 years.

Strategic Expenditure Area	Ideal Annual Expenditure	Current Annual Expenditure	Current Annual Shortfall
Initial Sealing of heavily trafficked unsealed roads	\$700,000	\$0	\$700,000
Improve drainage infrastructure on rural roads	\$200,000	\$31,000	\$169,000
Widen narrow sealed rural roads to two lane width	\$500,000	\$300,000	\$200,000
Provide kerb and guttering and widen narrow streets	\$200,000	\$75,000	\$125,000
Resealing of existing sealed roads in fair to good condition	\$1,200,000	\$535,000	\$665,000
<b>Sub-Totals</b>	<b>\$2,800,000</b>	<b>\$941,000</b>	<b>\$1,859,000</b>

- focus maintenance expenditure on highest utilised roads and allow the condition of the less utilised roads to deteriorate; and
- imposition of reduced speed limits on sections of poorer quality road.

Outlined below are a number of capital works programs identified by Council where improvements can be made to the existing road network that will lead to a reduction in the long term cost of maintaining roads and streets. At present there is not sufficient funding

Council continues to strive to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the work methods applied to its roads and streets. We have also identified cost effective programs and strategies that can be implemented with modest amounts of additional funding, that will allow Council to deliver the type of road network that can foster a safe, happy growing community, and stimulate the economy of the area. The challenge now is to source the additional revenue required to deliver these programs over the next 10 years.



## FACT SHEET 4 – Bridges

The road network within the Kyogle Local Government Area contains a total of 380 bridges with a combined length of over 7.1km. The bridge network is made up as follows:

Road Class	Number of Timber bridges	Length of Timber Bridges (m)	Number of Concrete Bridges	Length of Concrete Bridges (m)	Sub-Total by Road Class (Number of bridges)	Sub-Total by Road Class (Length of bridges)
State Highways	0	0	28	892	28	892
Regional Roads	5	80	21	498	26	578
Local Roads	207	2,991	119	2,651	326	5,642
<b>Sub-Totals</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>3,071</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>4,041</b>	<b>380</b>	<b>7,112</b>

Council is financially responsible for the bridges on Local and Regional Roads, which have a total of 352 bridges. Of these, 212 are constructed from timber. These timber bridges represent the single biggest challenge facing Kyogle Council, from both a financial sustainability and risk exposure perspective. Many of these timber bridges were constructed between the 1930s and 1950s and are near the end of their useful lives. Council has a bridge management strategy that has been in place since 2004, but funding levels mean that many of the remaining timber bridges will not be able to be replaced before they are beyond economical repair. Council prepared a Transport Asset Management Plan in 2012 and identified the following strategies for the long term management of these bridges:

- Increased structural condition inspections in order to establish clear priorities for maintenance and replacements and allow assessment of load bearing capacities and risk of failure;
- Focus expenditure on maintenance and replacements to the highest trafficked roads and streets, working away from major arterial roads;
- Compilation of data on heavy vehicle usage across the network with a focus on school bus routes, milk tanker routes and timber haulage routes to assist in the strategic decision making process;
- Imposition of weight and speed limits on deteriorating bridges and other structures when required;
- Demolition and disposal of bridges where alternate routes provide acceptable means of access; and

- Eliminate remaining timber bridges and replace with concrete and steel structures that provide a 100 year design life reducing the annual maintenance requirements and ongoing renewal costs.

At present, Council's bridge replacement program is focused on the replacement of smaller single span structures, many of which are able to be replaced with concrete pipe culverts rather than bridge structures, in an attempt to reduce the overall number of timber bridges. This strategy has worked well over the last 10 years, reducing the number of timber bridges by an average of 9 per year, from 304 in 2003 to 212 in 2013. The bridges replaced during this period also included a significant number of larger multi-span timber bridges on Regional Roads (Clarence Way and Mount Lindesay Road) that were funded 50/50 by the NSW Government through their Regional Road Timber Bridge Replacement Program, which no longer exists. Council will continue to lobby both the State and Federal Governments for funding to assist with the replacement of timber bridges, however the message from the current NSW Government has been made clear by the Minister for Roads and Ports, The Hon. Mr Duncan Gay MP, who stated in April this year:

*"We're doing what we can to help local government in NSW but Councils need to make clear decisions as to where funding should be allocated in their local area. Councils also receive funding from their local rates and the Federal Government and if bridges are deteriorating or need replacing, Councils need to prioritise funding for the work."*

Council undertakes an extensive program of planned maintenance of its timber bridges, using skilled staff and specialist plant and equipment. Council also promotes efforts to maximise efficiency and effectiveness in this



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area, but despite this, the resources available are not sufficient to halt the deteriorating condition of these timber bridges.

Council has also increased its capacity to design and construct replacement bridge structures over the last 10 years. This has proven to deliver the best value for money for the local communities, as well as providing some local employment and a decrease in Council's dependency on external contractors and suppliers. We have also increased Council's capacity to manage external contracts for design and construction of larger structures, allowing Council to take advantage of opportunities for additional funding when they eventuate, as was the case with the former NSW Government's *Regional Road Timber Bridge Replacement Program*.

Of the 212 timber bridges that remain, 66 are multiple-span bridges with an average replacement cost of \$425,000 each. These multi-span timber structures present particular challenges, as they have timber piers and supporting structures that are often mid-stream and/or at elevated height and are difficult to access for maintenance and repairs. Whereas the decking and girders are relatively simple to remove and replace, these timber pier-supporting structures are more complex. This means that over the life-time of these structures, the girders and decking may have been replaced several times, but these piers may never have been replaced, and these are the oldest timber elements that remain in service. Council has recently developed an innovative solution to this challenge that allows these timber piers to be replaced by galvanised steel piers, without demolishing the structure and also keeping the bridge open with limited service during the works. The resulting steel structures have been designed such that they can support a concrete deck structure when the funding is available for the replacement of the remaining timber components. A recent example is the timber bridge at Grieves Crossing on Grady's Creek Road at The Risk.

Council's current funding levels for bridges are \$880,000 per year for replacements and \$556,000 per year for maintenance. At this level of expenditure it will take another 58 years to replace the remaining timber bridges. In this time period, many of these will need to have

weight limits imposed, or be closed altogether. This could have significant impacts on the local economy and the health and wellbeing of the affected communities. In order to see the timber bridges replaced in the next 20 years, the replacement budget would need to be \$2.45M, which is an additional \$1.6M per year to the bridge replacement program.

There is a long term economic benefit to Council if this could be achieved. As the number of timber bridges is reduced, the requirement for maintenance and upkeep of the concrete and steel structures which replace them will also reduce. This could see the current \$550,000 per year allocated for maintenance, reduced to around \$200,000 per year, an ongoing saving of around \$350,000 per year. As these replacement structures also have a longer life than the existing timber structures, the annual funding for replacements over the life cycle of the new structures will reduce from the \$2.45M required for the next 20 years, down to \$1M per year, an ongoing saving of \$1.45M per year. After 20 years, this would see the annual costs associated with bridges reduced by \$1.8M per year. In simple terms, an additional \$32M investment over the next 20 years, would be offset by an ongoing saving of \$1.8M per year thereafter, making the payback period for the \$32M investment a further 17 years. When planning for assets with a life of 100 years, this is a significant return on investment, which would contribute greatly to the sustainability of the local communities and the local economy.

Council will always strive for innovative solutions to the challenges that a bridge network of this magnitude presents, to ensure that the best value for money can be achieved from the available funds. However, the current funding levels are not sufficient to maintain the bridges in their current condition, or make any improvements to the overall condition of the bridge network as a whole. This means that the remaining life of many of these structures will expire before we can afford to replace them, leading to closures, weight limits, risk of failure and the social and economic impacts that go along with each of these. There are many bridges, but every bridge is the most important bridge to somebody.



## FACT SHEET 5 –

### *Amalgamation*

As you may now be aware the State Government has appointed the *Independent Local Government Review Panel* (ILGRP) to examine and make recommendations on the reform of Local Government, including possible amalgamations of Councils in NSW.

The ILGRP has produced an interim report that proposes Kyogle Council consider amalgamating with Richmond Valley and/or Lismore City Councils.

Council has previously canvassed the communities across the Local Government Area (LGA) on their level of support for an amalgamation with one or more adjoining Councils. The results of the last two residents and ratepayers surveys are as follows:

- In the 2009 survey, 26% were in favour of an amalgamation; and
- In the 2012 survey, 28% were in favour of an amalgamation.

In order to further canvas the communities across the LGA in the current survey, Council has prepared a brief list of points, for and against, for people to consider before completing the survey questions relating to amalgamations. The lists provided are not intended to be exhaustive, and are general across the local government sector. There will be a varying level of relevance to the issues and challenges facing Kyogle Council and the other Councils in the region, and also variation from one Council in the region to the other. These main points for and against are set out below.

#### **POINTS FOR AMALGAMATION**

- Larger Councils are considered to be more robust, stronger and more effective organisations.
- Larger local Councils may have cost advantages from economies of scale.
- Some local Councils lack financial viability because they have a high proportion of low income households and/or have responsibility for large, low density areas.
- Research shows that up to half of NSW Councils could be financially unsustainable

with significant concerns about large infrastructure backlogs.

- The relative increases in operational expenditure across the local government sector is higher than the increase in capital expenditure on infrastructure asset replacement and renewals.
- Allows for cross-subsidisation from areas of more sustainable own-source revenue to other areas.
- Easier for the State Government to manage less Councils.
- May provide access to a substantial package of incentives from the State Government.

#### **POINTS AGAINST AMALGAMATION**

- Small Councils can be as cost effective as large ones and provide greater and more personal levels of service than do large areas.
- Amalgamation could have serious consequences for local employment and services, particularly in rural villages and remote areas.
- Larger organisations are behaviourally less constrained and less transparent than small ones. Incompetence and corruption occur more often in large Councils.
- Small Councils tend to be innovative in management plans, financial planning, out-sourcing work to the market and comprehensive asset management.
- Different communities have different preferences and needs. Such service differentials are better achieved by small local areas than by larger areas.
- Small communities generate much greater trust and social capital.
- Small Councils make better use of volunteers per head of population in community work.
- Amalgamation models adopted in Queensland, South Australia, Western Australia and Victoria are arguably unsuccessful. Queensland is currently undergoing a process of de-amalgamation of their super-Councils.



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### ALTERNATIVES

An alternative to amalgamation that keeps the local in local government while improving efficiency is through the use of shared service centres where Councils take a regional approach to service delivery.

The best example of NSW Councils using a shared service centre is Hunter Councils in the Hunter Valley where 11 Councils share legal services, procurement, training and other services. Hunter Councils' shared service centre is run as a business, with the 11 Councils represented on its board.

This could be achieved through the County Council provisions that are being recommended by the ILGRP to replace the current system of Regional Organisations of Council (ROC's). The existing County Council provisions of the Local Government Act allow the structure and functions of a County Council to be tailored to the particular needs and circumstances of a region. The Panel believes that the membership of County Councils should be compulsory and automatically comprise the Mayors of Member Councils and Chairs of Local Boards.

The Panel recommends that, at a minimum, each County Council should have the following set of core functions:

- strategic regional and sub-regional planning;
- regional advocacy, inter-government relations and promoting collaboration with State and Federal agencies in infrastructure and service provision;
- management of, or technical support for, water utilities;
- road network planning and major projects;
- waste and environmental management (including weeds and floodplain management);
- regional economic development;
- library services; and
- high level corporate services.

The new multi-purpose bodies would incorporate and replace existing County Councils such as Far North Coast Weeds, Rous Water and Richmond River County Council.

The Panel makes it clear that County Councils are NOT an additional tier of government: rather, their role is to work alongside their member Councils as a joint entity to undertake selected functions.

In its submission to the ILGRP report "Future Directions for NSW Local Government – Twenty Essential Steps" in July this year, Council had this to say about the Regional County Council proposal:

*Council recognises that there is a need for change to provide improved regional co-operation and that Local Government needs a body to provide stronger lobbying power at a regional level. Council generally supports the proposed concept of the Regional County Council model, but also recognises that there is a need for any such model to be designed to suit the specific needs of the region. Council is of the opinion that this is likely to result in increased contributions to the regional body for the constituent Councils and consideration as to how these costs can be met without impacting upon existing budgets needs to occur. Council is willing to be part of a trial process to develop the model that best suits the needs of the Northern Rivers region.*

In relation to the proposal for amalgamations, Council's submission had this to say:

*Evidence of a material benefit to the local community needs to be provided to support the recommendation for amalgamation. There also needs to be information provided on what incentives are on offer for Councils who enter into voluntary amalgamations.*