

**NARROMINE SHIRE COUNCIL SPECIAL RATE VARIATION PROPOSAL - UPDATE**

Council has been consulting with the community since November 2014 regarding a proposed application to the State Government for an increase in general rate income by way of a Special Rate Variation. An update on the process is provided as follows -

Three public meetings have been held and information has been provided via Council's website. Council has received community feedback at these public meetings, written submissions and survey responses, in relation to levels of support for the proposed special variation to the rate income we receive each year. Ratepayers will also have received two newsletters over the past two months with information in relation to the proposed Special Rate Variation and updates, including a summary of feedback and Council responses to a number of the issues raised to date. These newsletters are available on Council's website.

In consideration of the feedback received and financial requirements, Council resolved at its December 2014 meeting to **reduce** the proposal for Special Rate Variation to a 5.9% rate increase for 2015/16 (comprising the 2.4% rate peg as now determined by the State Government for 2015 plus an additional 3.5%) and 6.5% for 2016/17 (comprising 3% typical rate peg plus an additional 3.5%). This gives Council an **additional** \$170,000 income in the first year and an **additional** \$185,000 income in the second year.

In summary, if the proposal proceeds, there would be two years of increases to general rates from 2015/16 to 2016/17. In the following year (ie 2017/18) the revised total rate would increase by the normal rate pegging percentage (estimated at 3% per annum). This means that the increases for 2015/16 and 2016/17 remain as a permanent increase to general rates. The cumulative percentage increase to rates over the two years will be 12.78%, whereas without the Special Rate Variation of the additional 3.5%, the cumulative increase over the two years would be 5.47%.

Narromine Mayor, Cr Bill McAnally emphasised that *"the proposed increase addresses recommendations in recent NSW State Government reviews and is important for long term financial sustainability and to maintain council services to the community as Council strives to be "Fit for the Future".*"

The funds raised by the proposed Special Rate Variation will be used to address ongoing operating deficits, offset interest payments on road infrastructure works under the Local Infrastructure Renewal Scheme subsidy program and to address the revenue shortfall resulting from the Federal Governments recent decision to freeze payments to councils for Federal Assistance Grants (FAG).

More information on the proposed Special Rate Variation is available on Council's website [www.narromine.nsw.gov.au](http://www.narromine.nsw.gov.au). The community is encouraged to provide feedback by completing a survey or sending a written submission to Council:

- Email: [mail@narromine.nsw.gov.au](mailto:mail@narromine.nsw.gov.au)
- Complete an online survey at [www.narromine.nsw.gov.au/special\\_rate\\_variation](http://www.narromine.nsw.gov.au/special_rate_variation)
- Make a Written Submission to Narromine Shire Council:
  - PO Box 115 Narromine NSW 2821
  - Fax: 02 68899998
  - Council office: 124 Dandaloo St Narromine NSW 2821

Submissions close at 5 pm on 5 February 2015. All submissions received will be forwarded to IPART as part of Council's application. Council will consider community feedback and its proposed application for the Special Rate Variation at its meeting on 11 February 2015. For further information please contact Yvonne Clarke on 02 68899999.

**End of Media Release**

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## **Mayor's message**

### **Proposed special rate variation – Have your say**

**Your feedback is invited on an important initiative by council to apply for a special rate variation.**

A range of reviews are being conducted into how councils can remain viable and strong while maintaining the current range of services to the community. Council is assessing all options available to us for financial sustainability and to be "Fit for the Future".

Council resolved at its November meeting to consult with our community about applying to the state government for a proposed Special Rate Variation for two years to ensure our financial sustainability.

If the proposal for a special rate proceeds, there would be an increase in the general rate of 6.5% for 2015/16 and 6.5% for 2016/17 which include the annual assumed rate peg increase. This represents a cumulative increase of 13.42% over the two years. (In comparison, without the special rate variation the general rate would increase by the standard assumed rate of 3% per annum or a cumulative increase of 6.09% over the two years).

The proposed special rate variation would mean that the average residential rate will increase by around \$40 per year for two years. You can check the impact on your own rates on the "Rate Checker" on Council's website.

It is proposed that the increases will be held as a permanent increase to rates. From 2017/18 onwards only the normal rate peg increase will apply.

The funds raised by a proposed Special Rate Variation will be used to address ongoing operating deficits, offset interest payments on road infrastructure works under the Local Infrastructure Renewal Scheme subsidy program and to address the revenue shortfall resulting from the Federal Governments recent decision to freeze payments to councils for Federal Assistance Grants (FAG).

More information on the proposed Special Rate Variation is available on Council's website at [www.narromine.nsw.gov.au](http://www.narromine.nsw.gov.au)

#### Have your say - How to provide feedback?

This is an important initiative and we encourage feedback from all ratepayers and residents of the Narromine Shire through one or more of the following opportunities:

- Public meetings are being held to provide an opportunity for questions, more information and to discuss the proposal.

**Narromine Golf Club on the 4<sup>th</sup> December 2014 – 6pm to 7 pm**

**Trangie Bowling Club on the 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2014 – 6pm to 7pm**

**Tomingley Community Hall on the 1<sup>st</sup> December 2014 – 6pm to 7pm**

- An online survey is available on council's website at [www.narromine.nsw.gov.au](http://www.narromine.nsw.gov.au)
- Written submissions - to the General Manager, Narromine Council:

Email [mail@narromine.nsw.gov.au](mailto:mail@narromine.nsw.gov.au)

Post: PO Box 115, Narromine. NSW. 2821

Fax: 02 68899998

Council Offices: 120/124 Dandaloo St, Narromine. NSW. 2821

Submissions close on 5 February 2015.