

24 January, 2014

Our ref: A13/6149

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Dear Ratepayer,

## Proposed Special Rate Variation - **Property Address**

Councillor Laurie Bishop Mayor of Armidale Dumaresq Council sent a letter to ratepayers on 16 December 2013, advising that Council was considering applying for a Special Rate Variation and outlined three options.

The letter and attached fact sheet outlined the case for the proposed increases, which supported the Community Strategic Vision and goal to have sustainable public infrastructure essential for the provision of excellent lifestyle and sustainable growth.

After careful consideration of feedback received during council's community engagement into the proposed Special Rate Variation, Council has narrowed down the options to one. Council will now move forward with the proposed option being 10% increase over and above rate peg for 2014/2015 for seven years and an additional 10% over rate peg for 2015/2016 for seven years.

The proposed increase if ultimately proceeded with, following further community feedback, would be submitted for consideration by Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal.

Feedback from the community to date has shown a majority support for an increase; an acknowledgement that an increase is necessary. There was little support for allowing the continual deterioration of public assets.

Council is conscious of the financial pressures within the community and if proceeding with the Special Rate Variation, Council will explore hardship options to relieve some pressure for low income ratepayers and rural properties. In making the decision to proceed however, Council viewed it had an overriding duty of care to maintain stewardship over community assets and not leave a financial burden for future generations.

The Special Rate Variation is for Council to increase its total permissible income by 20% from the collection of rates. The specific impact of the rate variation on your individual rates account is dependant upon a number of factors, the main one being your land valuation. New Land Valuations are being issued by the Valuer General for the 2014-2015 financial year however based on the current information available to Council the estimated change in your rates in the first year is expected to be approximately **\$-----.00** if the special rate variation increase is approved.

Submissions can be made by using one of the above contact mediums, with submissions closing 5.00pm Friday, 14 February 2014. If you require further information on the Special Rate Variation contact Armidale Dumaresq Council Chief Finance & Information Officer Keith Lockyer on 6770 3854 or email [council@armidale.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@armidale.nsw.gov.au)

Yours sincerely,

Shane Burns

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shane Burns". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'S'.

**General Manager**