

**Public Meeting of 25 September 2014
Extract from Meeting Notes**

GM then went on to address the meeting and discuss the powerpoint presentation.

The slide on **Working Funds** was queried by 3 ratepayers. Asked did the working funds include major items or one off expenditures.

GM: replied that there were no capital works included in the graph.

Ratepayer: On town rate notices, there would also be additional charges on sewer and water?

GM: 10% rate rise is on general rate, but yes there will be a rise in the other funds of 3% and 5%

GM: Predications made exclude capital works and big ticket items. It is a maintenance only budget.

Ratepayer: \$900,000 for pool?

GM: Explained money will have to be sourced externally, or it will not be going ahead.

GM: explained the Expenditure Graph

Ratepayer: Water and sewer services-questioned their inclusion in expenditure. Legislation needs to be circumvented.

GM: Advised that this will not and cannot happen

GM AND DTS: spoke to slide on road expenses

Ratepayer: Asked if costings were for Council to do the work or for the work being outsourced to contractors?

GM: Advised that Council does their own work. It is about 1/3 more expensive for external contractors to do maintenance work than for Council to do their own.

Ratepayer: Asked for an explanation as to which roads get external funding

DTS: explained how much external funding we received and for which roads. Spoke about how the grants work, which roads they apply to, etc.

Ratepayer: Asked what is Council's contribution to above if there is a shortfall.

DTS: Advised if the road is not Council's asset, then Council does not contribute to any shortfall.

Cr Henery: Advised that we privately contract to RMS and are a preferred contractor.

GM: advised that Council being a preferred contractor may change, and if this does happen big contractors will squeeze us out

Ratepayer: Enquired if Council had any poor equipment. He said that a ratepayer had to get a grader from out of area to do works, as he waited 6 months for Council to do works.

DTS: Said that we have lost operators, but are in the process of training new operators.

Ratepayer: said that figures can be moved around to make them say what you want.

GM: Said no, we do not manipulate figures.

DTS: Spoke about the pie charts on sealed and gravel road conditions.

Ratepayer: Doesn't agree with rate rise, but does agree that our roads, amenities etc are very good. He is prepared to accept rate rise of 10% but is concerned that we will be amalgamated.

GM: advised that JSC is very well respected at State level and with other LG areas. If we are smart and successful, the State Government may leave us alone, but we need to keep our heads above water financially, as discussed earlier with 'own source income' and doing external works for other Councils, RMS to bring in external money

Ratepayer: 21% rate rise over 2 years! Too much!

GM: Allowed 3% cap, so 7% above cap. We need the additional 7% over 2 years.

Ratepayer: What can Council sell to make up the shortfall of \$150,000 for 2 years?

Land Valuations

Ratepayer: Increase to his land valuation of 29%

GM: explained how land valuations don't affect Council rates. Can still only collect cap (say 2.3%) above last year's rating income over the whole Shire.

Ratepayer: So even after all that has been said, Council is still planning to go for a 10% rise?

GM: No different plan at this stage, unless instruction comes from Council.

Ratepayer: Then Council isn't listening.

Ratepayer: Jerilderie needs to become more viable. Too many empty shops and houses. Need to capitalise on what we have.

GM: Spoke about how Councillors and staff do their best, but we are one of the few Councils who don't have an Economic Development Officer due to no funds.

GM: Asked for the opinion of the meeting on the 10% rate rise

Ratepayer: If it is necessary to maintain the high standards, we need the 10% increase.

A show of hands saw 12 hands raised in agreement

An approximate amount of 40 opposed

There were some who abstained from voting.

GM: Said that reduction of services would happen if there is no 10% increase

Ratepayer: Spoke about road repair and increase in costs 260%?

A Ratepayer directed a question to another Ratepayer: Asked him to speak to the meeting about his concerns.

Ratepayer: Said that the town of Jerilderie, and JSC are second to none. A lot of money has been spent in the last 10-15 years on improvements for the town. There is no further need for large capital expenditure-it has all been done.

He said that he considered a reasonable proposal the rate cap and 3% above cap for the next three (3) years instead of cap and 7% for next 2 years. He stated that it is a charge that will affect ratepayers not only for the two years, but will impact for much longer. He asked again, are Councillors not listening?

He finished by saying he is happy with amalgamations, but only if you are the one in control.