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COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT – OUTCOMES REPORTS
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1. Introduction

CT Management Group undertook elements of the Liverpool Plains Shire Council (LPSC) Special Rate Variation (SRV) Project Community Engagement in October and November 2022 to support the proposed rate rise scenarios. The following activities occurred:

- Direct mailout to Rate Payers – Mayoral letter and SRV Flyer
- LPSC SRV Webpage
- SRV Web-based survey
- Community Information Sessions (8 sessions held across 7 locations)
- Distribution of SRV Pamphlets throughout the community and at the Council office
- Posts on the LPSC Facebook page informing the community of the SRV proposal and Community Information Sessions
- Opportunity for the community to provide Email and/or Postal submissions to LPSC as part of the SRV engagement.

LPSC and CT Management Group considered whether there were any specific groups within the community that warranted the need for holding tailored and individual SRV meetings (i.e., a rate payers association or other special interest groups). No such groups were identified or known to LPSC, thus no such meetings were held.

The Community Engagement activities sought to capture the overall sentiment from the LPSC community in relation to the SRV scenarios, and to provide Council with an indication of the community's position regarding such. In the event that Council resolves to proceed with an SRV application, the inclusion of the findings in this report are proposed to support the SRV application to IPART.

LPSC determined that conducting a Telephone Survey as part of the engagement activities was not deemed to be a cost-effective option for Council given the expense associated with engaging a telephone survey company versus the recommended sample size and likelihood of the responses noting a preference that Council does not proceed with an SRV.

2. Community Engagement elements

The LPSC SRV activities consisted of the following elements:

- **LPSC Website information (see Appendix A for further details):** information on the need for an SRV, the process, the opportunities to obtain further information, and the opportunities to provide input. The following general information elements were contained on the website:
    - Details on the SRV proposal
    - What is an SRV
    - What LPSC are proposing in terms of the SRV
    - LPSC's financial position
    - What the SRV funds will and won't be used for
    - What will happen to services if the SRV is not approved
    - Details on the Community Information Sessions
    - Feedback Opportunities
    - IPART (how to access further information)
    - Access to the SRV web-based survey
    - Access to Frequently Asked Questions, which included responses to the following:
        - What has Council decided to do?
        - What is a Special Rate Variation (SRV) and Rates Pegging?
        - What is the need for a special rate variation?
        - What will happen if the special rate variation is not implemented?
        - What are the next steps in the application process?
        - Where can I find out more information?

- **Facebook posts (see Appendix B):** Notices were posted on Council's Facebook site in the lead-up to the Community Information Sessions and throughout the engagement period to notify the community of the SRV details and engagement opportunities.

- **Mayoral Letter and SRV Pamphlet (see Appendix C):** A Mayoral Letter and SRV Pamphlet was posted to all LPSC Rate Payers from 7 November 2022 notifying them of Council's intention to apply for an SRV. It also provided information on where to access SRV information, the SRV Community Information Sessions, and how to provide Council with input on the SRV proposal. This information was distributed to 4,239 rate payers in total.

- **SRV Pamphlets (see Appendix D):** paper copies of Pamphlets providing information on the SRV proposal, details on the Community Information Sessions, where to access further information, and how to provide input to Council were distributed and made available via the following:

    - Copies available in the LPSC office (60 Station Street, Quirindi), the Quirindi Library (193 George Street, Quirindi), and the Werris Creek Library (59a Single Street, Werris Creek).
    - Copies were also distributed amongst the community via various avenues.

- **Newspaper advertisements (see Appendix E):** three (3) newspaper advertisements were released in local papers to inform the community of the SRV scenarios and where they were able to access information and provide a submission. The details of the newspaper advertisements are as follows:

    - **Quirindi Advocate 9/11/22 –** advertisement covering two full pages
    - **Quirindi Advocate 16/11/22 –** advertisement covering two full pages
    - **Northern Daily Leader 11/11/22 –** advertisement covering one full page

- **Community Information Sessions – Town Hall style meetings:** 8 meetings were held in towns/villages throughout the LPSC area to provide the community with the opportunity to receive a presentation detailing the SRV scenarios and giving them the opportunity to ask questions. The meetings were held at times deemed to be convenient to the community in an attempt to maximise the number of community members likely to attend the sessions. A copy of the PowerPoint Presentation provided at the respective Community Information Sessions is provided in **Appendix F.** The sessions were held as follows:

SRV Community Information Session Locations	Day/date	Timing
Quirindi	Monday 21 November 2022	5.15pm-6.45pm
Wallabadah	Monday 21 November 2022	7:30pm-9:00pm
Werris Creek	Tuesday 22 November 2022	5.15pm-6.45pm
Currabubula	Tuesday 22 November 2022	7:30pm-9:00pm
Premer	Wednesday 23 November 2022	5.15pm-6.45pm
Spring Ridge	Wednesday 23 November 2022	7:30pm-9:00pm
Quirindi	Thursday 24 November 2022	7.30am – 9.00am
Willow Tree	Thursday 24 November 2022	5.15pm-6.45pm

3. Input and Feedback opportunities

The LPSC community were given numerous avenues through which to provide input and feedback on the SRV proposal. In summary, those options were as follows:

- LPSC website – via a Web-based survey.
- Written correspondence – via writing to Council regarding their views and providing such via post or in-person to the LPSC Quirindi Office at 60 Station Street, Quirindi.
- Email correspondence – via emailing Council at specialvariation@liverpoolplains.nsw.gov.au
- In-person – via the Community Information Sessions (8 sessions held across 7 locations).

LPSC received the following responses to the various input and feedback opportunities:

- LPSC website – Web-based survey: 39 responses.
- Written correspondence – to Council at 60 Station Street, Quirindi: 3 responses
- Email correspondence – via emailing Council at specialvariation@liverpoolplains.nsw.gov.au: 9 responses
- In-person – attendance at the Community Information Sessions was as follows (115 persons in total):

SRV Community Information Session Locations	Day/date	Time	Number of community members in attendance
Quirindi	Monday 21 November 2022	5.15pm-6.45pm	36
Wallabadah	Monday 21 November 2022	7:30pm-9:00pm	19
Werris Creek	Tuesday 22 November 2022	5.15pm-6.45pm	18
Currabubula	Tuesday 22 November 2022	7:30pm-9:00pm	8
Premer	Wednesday 23 November 2022	5.15pm-6.45pm	3
Spring Ridge	Wednesday 23 November 2022	7:30pm-9:00pm	9
Quirindi	Thursday 24 November 2022	7.30am – 9.00am	11
Willow Tree	Thursday 24 November 2022	5.15pm-6.45pm	11

A list of the questions asked by the community members at the respective Community Information Sessions is provided in **Appendix G**.

4. Community Engagement Outcomes

The overall response from the community to the proposed SRV was one of concern and not wanting it to occur. The community expressed concern regarding many issues ranging from the impact on pensioners, general affordability, concern about Council not delivering services efficiently, concern that Council may need to seek further rate increases in the future, the impact on residents given the current inflationary pressures on living expenses, and more.

Some members of the community raised the potential need for Council to consider amalgamation with an adjoining Council to try and create a more financially sustainable entity.

Specific comments/responses received from the community are contained in **Appendix G and Appendix H**.

In terms of the outcomes stemming from the Community Engagement activities, CT Management Group offers the following commentary:

- The Mayor, General Manager and members of the Executive Team, were in attendance at all Community Information Sessions. They were active listeners to the concerns of the community and took on board those concerns. In some cases, the Mayor, General Manager and Directors responded to specific questions from the community and provided further in-site into specific local issues to help community members understand the measures Council have implemented to improve productivity and to contain costs.
- The Council representatives in attendance at the Community Information Sessions noted the comments from the community and understood the need to continue to demonstrate that they are receiving value for money from their rates.
- There was some recognition that Council are gradually improving their performance and that factors such as drought, floods, COVID-19 and general inflationary pressures outside of the control of Council are also contributing to the angst the community feel in relation any further increases to the cost of living.

From the 39 community responses to the Web-based SRV Survey, the following summary findings are provided to give a glimpse into the community's position in relation to the SRV proposal:

Question: How supportive are you of Council proceeding with the respective options?

- Option 1 - Existing SRV increase retained: Majority of respondents were not at all supportive.
- Option 2 - Removal of temporary SRV: Majority of respondents were very supportive.
- Option 3 - Existing SRV increase retained, plus rate peg and 5% SRV in 2024-25: Majority of respondents were not at all supportive.

Question: Please rank the 3 SRV Options in order of preference

- Option 1 - Existing SRV increase retained: Majority of respondents noted as the 2nd preference option.
- Option 2 - Removal of temporary SRV: Majority of respondents noted as the 1st preference option.
- Option 3 - Existing SRV increase retained, plus rate peg and 5% SRV in 2024-25: Majority of respondents noted as the 3rd preference option.

Question: Respondents asked to indicate which areas are perceived to be a priority for Council to address. (those items receiving significant responses have been highlighted)

Community's perceived priority areas - Yes / No	Yes	No
Roads	35	1
Bridges	20	11
Parks	25	9
Sports & Recreation facilities	26	8
Community Centres/Halls	17	16
Library Services	16	16
Public Toilets	25	7
Economic Development	14	17
Waste Management	26	7
Development assessment	9	20
Stormwater and drainage	20	10

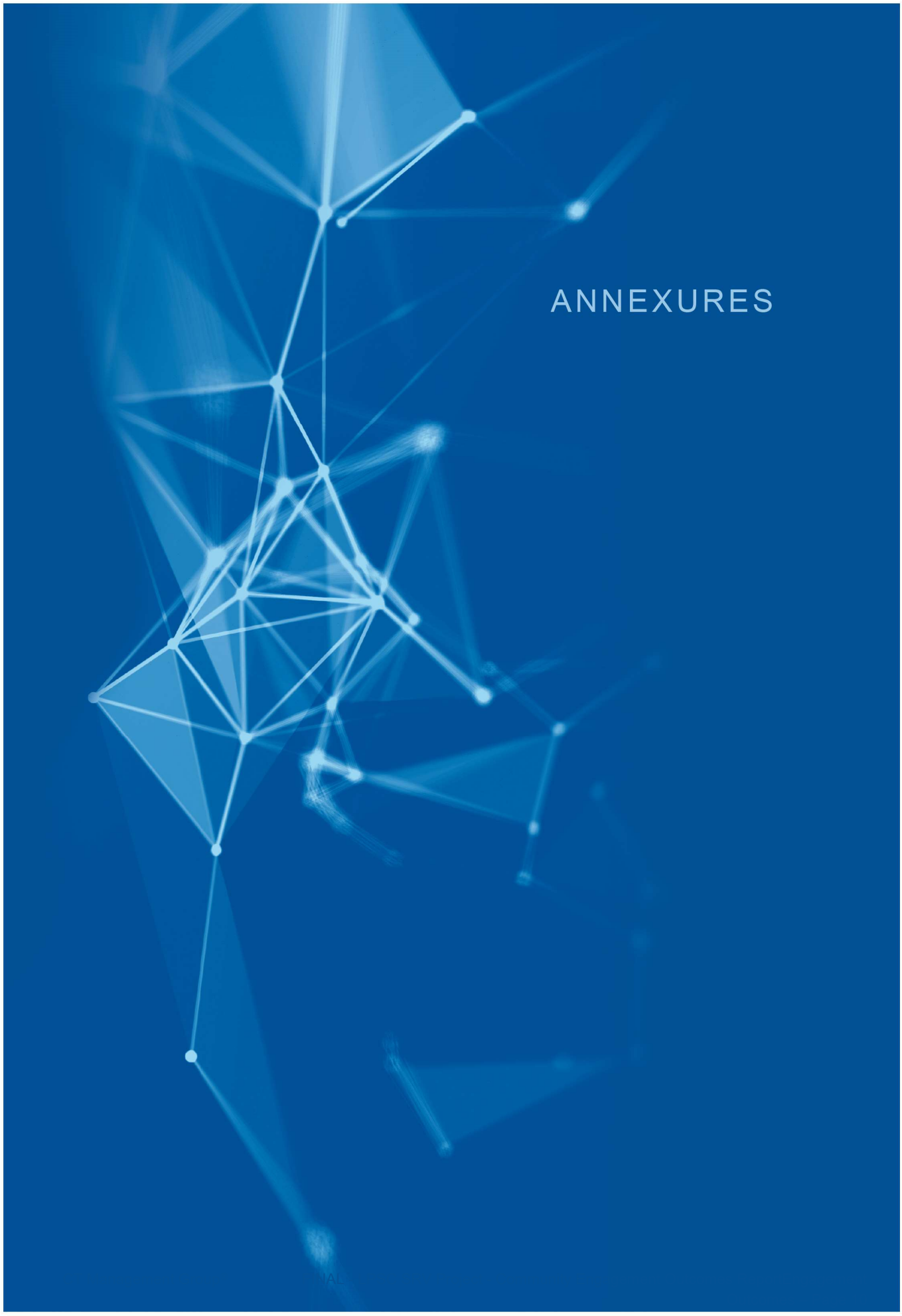
Customer Service	22	9

Question: Respondents asked to indicate how satisfied they are with the performance of the below services (1 = low satisfaction and 5 = high satisfaction).

Satisfaction with service performance	1 - Low	2 - Reasonable	3 - Average	4 - Good	5 - High
Roads	3	7	12	3	1
Bridges	2	4	20	6	2
Parks	4	7	13	12	1
Sports & Recreation facilities	6	6	15	10	
Community Centres/Halls	5	10	17	2	1
Library Services	8	2	7	11	6
Public Toilets	7	6	13	7	1
Economic Development	8	10	14	1	2
Waste Management	8	6	13	8	1
Development assesment	8	4	19	1	2
Stormwater and drainage	6	11	12	3	3
Customer Service	17	5	8	4	2

Question: Respondents asked to indicate whether Council should invest more, the same, or less in the specific service areas.

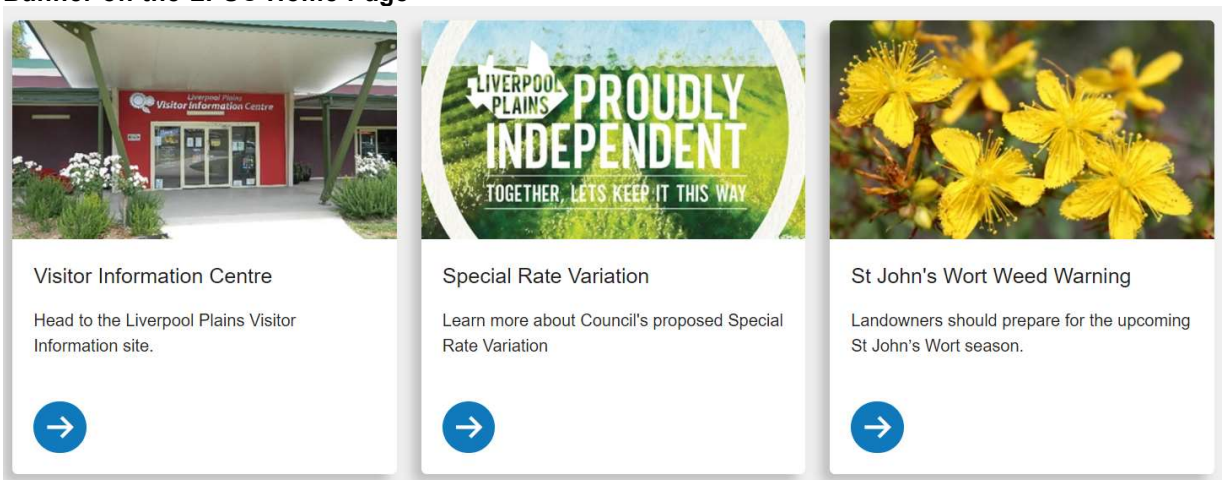
Should Council invest more, the same or less in the following:	More	Same	Less
Roads	28	11	
Bridges	5	27	5
Parks	7	27	4
Sports & Recreation facilities	6	26	6
Community Centres/Halls	9	19	9
Library Services	2	18	18
Public Toilets	16	20	2
Economic Development	10	18	9
Waste Management	15	18	5
Development assessment	5	23	8
Stormwater and drainage	16	21	
Customer Service	16	18	3



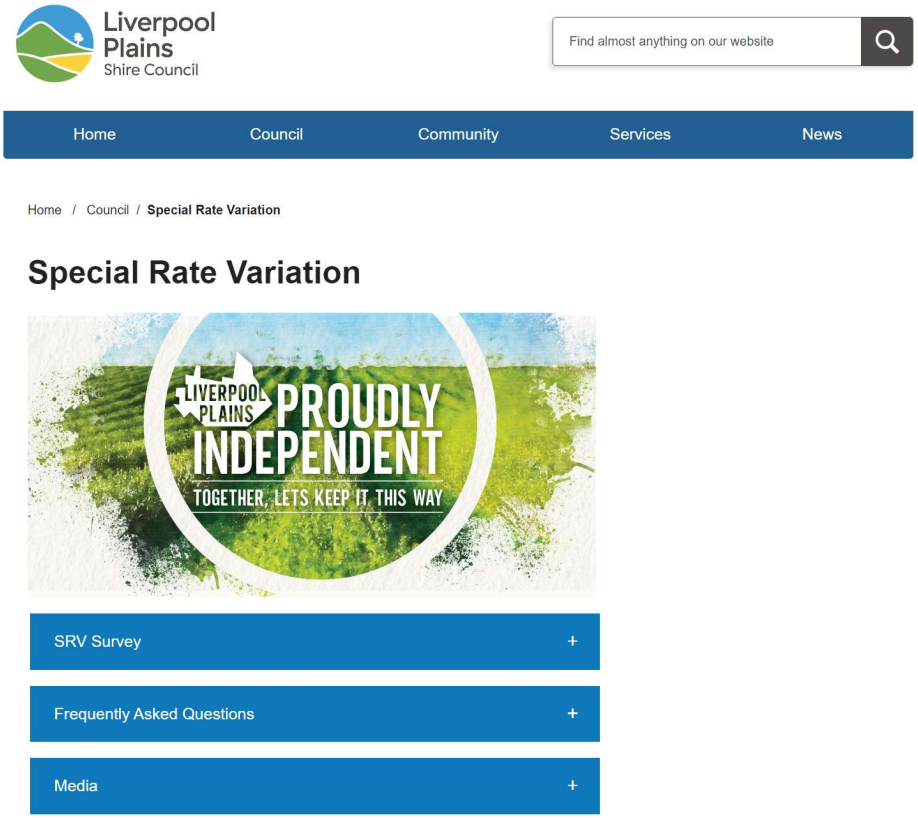
ANNEXURES

Appendix A – Community Engagement Materials

Banner on the LPSC Home Page



SRV Information Page – LPSC website



Liverpool Plains is currently proposing to apply for a Special Rate Variation (SRV)

At the Ordinary Council Meeting held 26 October 2022, Liverpool Plains Shire Council resolved to notify the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) of its intention to apply for an SRV in 2023.

This site contains background information on our decision to consult on a proposed SRV. Further details and resources will be added to the page over the coming weeks to assist you in making an informed decision. Below is a list of engagement opportunities and guidance on how you can provide feedback through a formal submission to Council and/or IPART.

What is an SRV?

A SRV allows a council to increase its general income above the rate peg to provide the services and infrastructure desired by their communities. SRV's can be either for a single year or over multiple years and can be permanent or temporary.

What are we proposing?

Council intends to apply for a permanent SRV to effectively maintain the current rates levels enabled by a temporary SRV expiring on 30 June 2023 and to increase rates by the State Government announced rate peg of 3.7% in 2023/24.

Council will need to submit the application by the deadline of 3rd February 2023.

Our Long-Term Financial Plan and Asset Management Plans reflect the proposed SRV, and these documents are available to access via the following links:

- Long-Term Financial Plan
- Asset Management Plans

Our financial position

Over the past two years Council has undertaken a significant productivity improvement and cost containment project to become more sustainable. There is still more work to be done, and Council is mindful of the impact on the community if these measures impact too greatly on valuable services.

Council has successfully reviewed many of the services it provides and modified our delivery approach to ensure the efficient and effective use of rate payer funds. We have also increased our productivity in many operational areas, delivering more with less resources.

Liverpool Plains is delivering more for less, however there is still the need to secure the level of funding necessary to ensure that we can continue to maintain and renew our asset base.

What the SRV funds will and won't be used for

The proposed SRV will generate a net additional revenue of approximately $334,000 in 2023/24 by retaining the previous temporary SRV and adopting the rate peg amount of 3.7 per cent. These funds will be used to maintain and renew local road infrastructure.

The SRV will apply to your general rates only and will not apply to the waste management, water and sewerage charges on your rates notices. These services are funded through direct fees and charges.

What will happen to the services if the SRV is not approved by IPART?

Without additional revenue Council will need to constrain expenditure on services and its maintenance on assets, which will result in prioritising critical assets.

Services that are not the core statutory requirements of Council will need to be reviewed, including swimming pools, gymnasium, parks and gardens and sport and recreational facilities.

Community Information Sessions

Council will be facilitating the following Community Information Sessions in November to provide details on Council's Financial position, the SRV options, the progress Council has made in improving productivity and delivery cost containment.

Location	Date	Time	Venue
Quirindi	21 November 2022	5.15pm - 6.45pm	Quirindi Library Community Hub, 193 George Street, Quirindi
Wallabadah	21 November 2022	7:30pm – 9.00pm	Wallabadah Village Hall Martyn Street, Wallabadah
Werris Creek	22 November 2022	5.15pm - 6.45pm	Railway Institute Hall Anzac Parade, Werris Creek
Currabubula	22 November 2022	7:30pm – 9.00pm	Currabubula War Memorial Hall Davis Street, Currabubula
Premer	23 November 2022	5.15pm - 6.45pm	CWA Rooms Ellerslie Street, Premer
Spring Ridge	23 November 2022	7:30pm – 9.00pm	Spring Ridge Hall Darby Road, Spring Ridge
Quirindi	24 November 2022	7.30am - 9.00am	Quirindi Library Community Hub, 193 George Street, Quirindi
Willow Tree	24 November 2022	5.15pm - 6.45pm	Willow Tree Hall New England Highway, Willow Tree

Feedback Opportunities

Council wish to provide the community with the following avenues through which to provide feedback on the SRV options:

Via email to: specialvariation@liverpoolplains.nsw.gov.au

Via post - addressed to : The General Manger

Special Rate Variation submission

60 Station Street

Quirindi NSW 2343

Web-base survey: https://www.liverpoolplains.nsw.gov.au/Council/special-variation

Additionally, the community will have the opportunity to provide submissions to IPART following Council submitting the SRV application. This will occur during February 2023.

IPART

Further information on the SRV process, including fact sheets and information papers are available on the IPART website that can be accessed via the following link:

https://www.ipart.nsw.gov.au/Home/Industries/Local-Government/For-Councils/Apply-for-a-special-variation-or-minimum-rate-increase

SRV Survey

SRV Survey

Council is proposing to prepare an application to IPART to retain the previously approved temporary rates increase from 2021/22 and 2022/23, adopting the NSW Government announced rate peg amount of 3.7% in 2023/24.

The proposed SRV will be used to fund our existing services and enhance maintenance on assets including:

- Grading unsealed local roads to meet existing service levels;
- Additional maintenance of rural roads, such as bitumen maintenance, drainage, patching, roadside slashing, gravel maintenance, and vegetation management;
- Roadwork and renewal of urban streets;
- Additional bitumen resealing and gravel re-sheeting to keep our roads at a good standard and prevent them from deteriorating; and
- Culverts, causeways, drainage and footpath renewal.

The proposed permanent SRV will apply to your general rates only and will not apply to the waste management, water and sewerage charges on your rates notices. SRV funds would not be used on waste management, water and sewerage services, which are all funded through direct fees and charges.

If the SRV is not approved, Council will need to defer necessary capital works, as well as revise the range and levels of services to avoid a deteriorating cash position – which is not sustainable in the long term as assets deteriorate further.

Council has considered three options as part of it's Long-Term Financial Plan:

- **Option 1: Existing SRV increases retained:** Models the revenue increases from the temporary SRV expiring at 30 June 2023 becoming permanent and adopting the rate peg in following years. This scenario generates additional cash of $12.85 million over a 10-year period. This scenario requires continued cost containment strategies to achieve NSW Office of Local Government Financial sustainability benchmarks and marginal financial sustainability.
- **Option 2: Removal of temporary SRV:** Models the removal of the temporary SRV and the increase in revenue being limited to the rate peg, which is proposed to be 3.7 per cent in 2023-2024. This model does not provide a sustainable future in either the short term or long term and would mean a significant reduction in Council own-source revenue for services and asset management in 2023-24 (approx. impact will be a revenue decrease of $0.8M)
- **Option 3: Existing SRV increases retain, rate peg in 2023-24 and 5% SRV in 2024-2025:** Models the extension of the temporary SRV approved by IPART permanently with an additional permanent SRV at 5 per cent in 2025-2026 and increases year on year of the rate peg. This option was considered financially sustainable in the long-term.

SRV Project Survey

SRV Project Survey

Q1. How supportive are you of Council proceeding with Option 1? Required

- ◯ Very supportive
- ◯ Supportive
- ◯ Somewhat supportive
- ◯ Not very supportive
- ◯ Not at all supportive

Q2. How supportive are you of Council proceeding with Option 2? Required

- ◯ Very supportive
- ◯ Supportive
- ◯ Somewhat supportive
- ◯ Not very supportive
- ◯ Not at all supportive

Q3.a How supportive are you of Council proceeding with Option 3? Required

- ◯ Very supportive
- ◯ Supportive
- ◯ Somewhat supportive
- ◯ Not very supportive
- ◯ Not at all supportive

Q3.b Please rank the 3 Options in order of preference: Required

- ☐ Option 1 – Existing SRV increases retained: Council can maintain it's existing level of services and asset management conditional upon ongoing cost containment and productivity efficiencies being achieved.
- ☐ Option 2 – Removal of temporary SRV: Our assets would continue to decline with more assets being in a poor condition. The focus would be on managing risk, including the possible closure and removal of unsafe assets and a reduction of services.

☐ Option 3 – Existing SRV increases retain, rate peg in 2023-24 and 5% SRV in 2024-2025: Would provide funds for Council to undertake the required renewal and maintenance of our roads, bridges and community assets into the future, and additional investment in new infrastructure whilst allowing council to meet relevant sustainability benchmarks.

Q3.c What is your reason for choosing that option as your highest preference? Required

Enter answer here

Q4.a Prior to visiting this web-page, were you aware that Council was exploring community sentiment towards a Special Rate Variation?

- ◯ Yes
- ◯ No (If no, go to Q5)
- ◯ Not sure (If not sure, go to Q5)

Q5.a Aside from the areas that Council knows need to be addressed, Council is also looking to understand what the community perceives to be the priority areas within the Shire. Please indicate which of these you think should be prioritised by Council

	Yes	No
Roads	◯	◯
Bridges	◯	◯
Parks	◯	◯
Sports & Recreation Facilities	◯	◯
Community Centres/Halls	◯	◯
Library Services	◯	◯
Public Toilets	◯	◯
Economic Development	◯	◯
Waste management	◯	◯
Development assessment	◯	◯
Stormwater and drainage	◯	◯
Customer Service	◯	◯

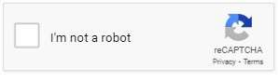
Q5.b Please indicate how satisfied you are with the performance of the below services. The satisfaction scale is from 1 to 5, where 1 = low satisfaction and 5 = high satisfaction

	1	2	3	4	5
Roads	○	○	○	○	○
Bridges	○	○	○	○	○
Parks	○	○	○	○	○
Sports & Recreation Facilities	○	○	○	○	○
Community Centres/Halls	○	○	○	○	○
Library Services	○	○	○	○	○
Public Toilets	○	○	○	○	○
Economic Development	○	○	○	○	○
Waste management	○	○	○	○	○
Development assessment	○	○	○	○	○
Stormwater and drainage	○	○	○	○	○
Customer Service	○	○	○	○	○

Q5.c Please indicate whether Council should invest more, the same, or less in that area

	More	Same	Less
Roads	○	○	○
Bridges	○	○	○
Parks	○	○	○
Sports & Recreation Facilities	○	○	○
Community Centres/Halls	○	○	○
Library Services	○	○	○
Public Toilets	○	○	○
Economic Development	○	○	○
Waste management	○	○	○
Development assessment	○	○	○
Stormwater and drainage	○	○	○
Customer Service	○	○	○

Please complete the following:



Submit

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Frequently Asked Questions

What has Council decided to do?

At the Ordinary Meeting on 26 October 2022 the Council decided to proceed with notifying IPART that the Council intends to apply for a permanent special rate variation (SRV) to effectively maintain the current rates levels enabled by a temporary SRV expiring on 30 June 2023 and increase rates by the State Government announced rate peg of 3.7% in 2023/24.

Following the period of community engagement, Council has requested to receive a report on the community engagement outcomes, following which a further decision will be made by the Council to submit the application by the deadline of 3rd February 2023.

What is a Special Rate Variation (SRV) and Rates Pegging?

Rates increase every year in line with an amount set by the State Government. This amount is calculated every year and is called the 'rates peg'. It is decided by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART). The rates peg applied to the 2022/23 financial year will be 3.7%.

Councils can apply to IPART for a Special Rate Variation (SRV) to seek additional funds above the rates peg. Any rate increase above the rates peg amount is called a 'Special Rate Variation' (SRV).

What is the need for a special rate variation?

Liverpool Plains Shire Council has a significant deficit in the Comprehensive Income Statement. In the 2020/21 financial year the Council produced a slender favourable net operating result but the adjusted underlying deficit (excluding capital income) remained significant at ($3.5M) which was in line with previous year. Independent reports and financial sustainability performance measures continue to indicate that Council is challenged with achieving a financially sustainable position.

If adjusted underlying deficits continue, Council can only avoid a deteriorating cash position by delaying/avoiding necessary capital expenditure (renewing assets), reducing services or being heavily reliant upon grants. This is not sustainable. Council aims to correct the operating position to maintenance of existing levels of service.

Since the implementation of the 2021/22 Special Rate Variation, Council have significantly reduced operating costs and further improved organisational efficiency in an effort to reduce the rate burden on residents. However, the revenue base of the Council needs to be increased to address the operating deficit, and in doing so, ensure sufficient cash is available to maintain the community infrastructure and services.

Without the increase in the revenue base of Council, and to address the asset management requirements, Council experience a revenue decrease by $0.8M in 2023/24. Such an impact would have significant implications for Council to maintain existing services and asset management levels both in 2023/24 and into the future.

What will happen if the special rate variation is not implemented?

Council will need to defer necessary capital works, as well as revise the range and levels of services provided to the community to avoid a deteriorating cash position which is not sustainable in the long term.

What are the next steps in the application process?

A range of community engagement methods will be implemented in November 2022, after which the final reports will be prepared for Council's consideration and a decision on whether to submit the SRV application or not.

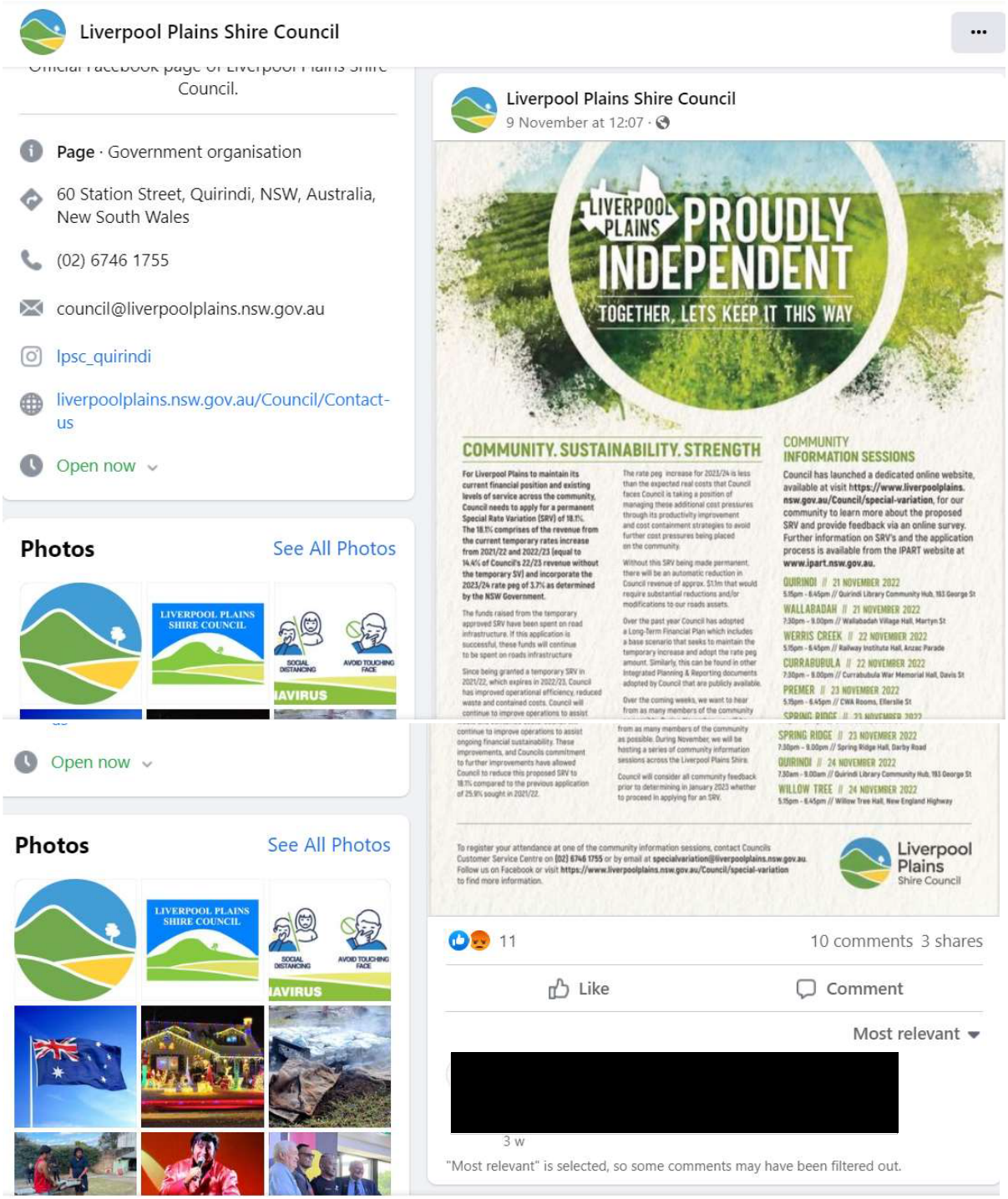
Where can I find out more information?

Council's website will be continually updated with relevant information regarding the SRV. To seek addition information please email your request through to specialvariation@liverpoolplains.nsw.gov.au

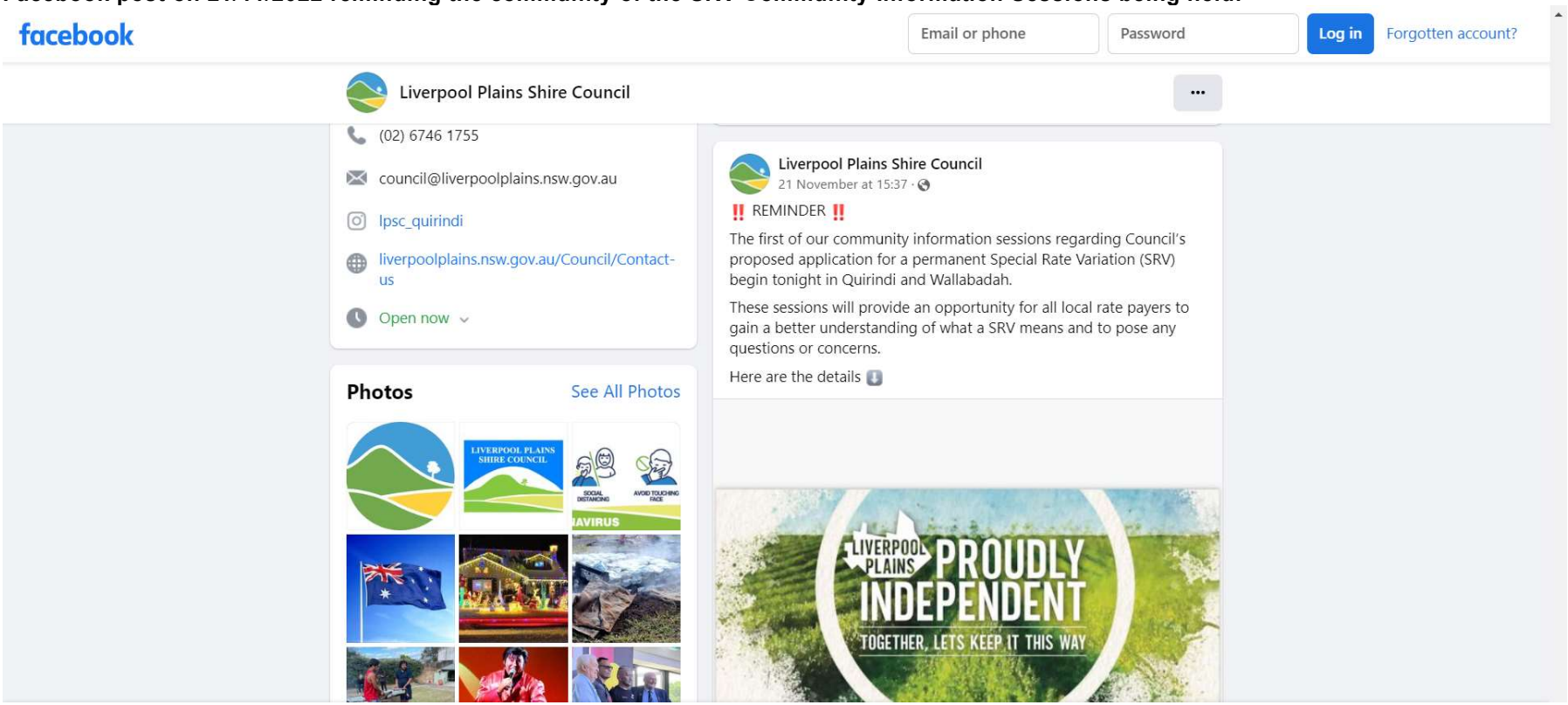
Further information about the SRV process is on the IPART website at the following address - https://www.ipart.nsw.gov.au/Home/Industries/Local-Government/Special-Variations

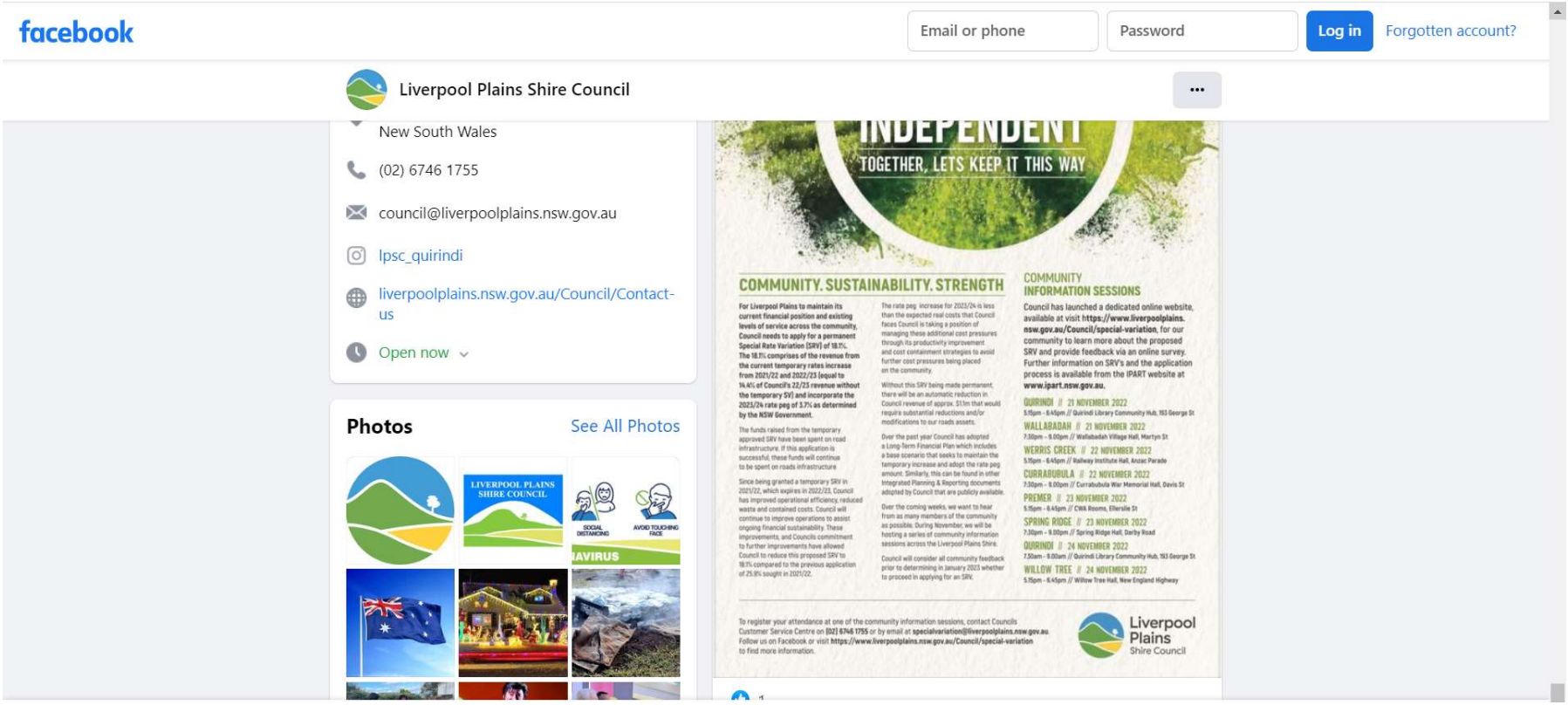
Appendix B – Facebook Posts

Facebook post on 9/11/2022 to notify the community of the SRV proposal and Community Information Sessions:



Facebook post on 21/11/2022 reminding the community of the SRV Community Information Sessions being held:




facebook
Email or phone
Password
Log in
Forgotten account?
Liverpool Plains Shire Council
New South Wales
(02) 6746 1755
council@liverpoolplains.nsw.gov.au
lpsc_quirindi
liverpoolplains.nsw.gov.au/Council/Contact-us
Open now
Photos
See All Photos
INDEPENDENT
TOGETHER, LETS KEEP IT THIS WAY
COMMUNITY. SUSTAINABILITY. STRENGTH
For Liverpool Plains to maintain its current financial position and existing levels of service across the community, Council needs to apply for a permanent Special Rate Variation (SRV) of 18.1%. The 18.1% comprises of the revenue from the current temporary rates increase from 2021/22 and 2022/23 (equal to 14.4% of Council's 22/23 revenue without the temporary SV) and incorporate the 2023/24 rate peg of 3.7% as determined by the NSW Government.
The funds raised from the temporary approved SRV have been spent on road infrastructure. If this application is successful, these funds will continue to be spent on roads infrastructure
Since being granted a temporary SRV in 2021/22, which expires in 2022/23, Council has improved operational efficiency, reduced waste and contained costs. Council will continue to improve operations to assist ongoing financial sustainability. These improvements, and Councils commitment to further improvements have allowed Council to reduce this proposed SRV to 18.1% compared to the previous application of 25.9% sought in 2021/22.
The rate peg increase for 2023/24 is less than the expected real costs that Council faces Council is taking a position of managing these additional cost pressures through its productivity improvement and cost containment strategies to avoid further cost pressures being placed on the community.
Without this SRV being made permanent, there will be an automatic reduction in Council revenue of approx. $1m that would require substantial reductions and/or modifications to our roads assets.
Over the past year Council has adopted a Long-Term Financial Plan which includes a base scenario that seeks to maintain the temporary increase and adopt the rate peg amount. Similarly, this can be found in other Integrated Planning & Reporting documents adopted by Council that are publicly available.
Over the coming weeks, we want to hear from as many members of the community as possible. During November, we will be hosting a series of community information sessions across the Liverpool Plains Shire.
Council will consider all community feedback prior to determining in January 2023 whether to proceed in applying for an SRV.
COMMUNITY INFORMATION SESSIONS
Council has launched a dedicated online website, available at visit https://www.liverpoolplains.nsw.gov.au/Council/special-variation, for our community to learn more about the proposed SRV and provide feedback via an online survey. Further information on SRV's and the application process is available from the IPART website at www.ipart.nsw.gov.au.
QUIRINDI // 21 NOVEMBER 2022
5.15pm - 6.45pm // Quirindi Library Community Hub, 193 George St
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WILLOW TREE // 24 NOVEMBER 2022
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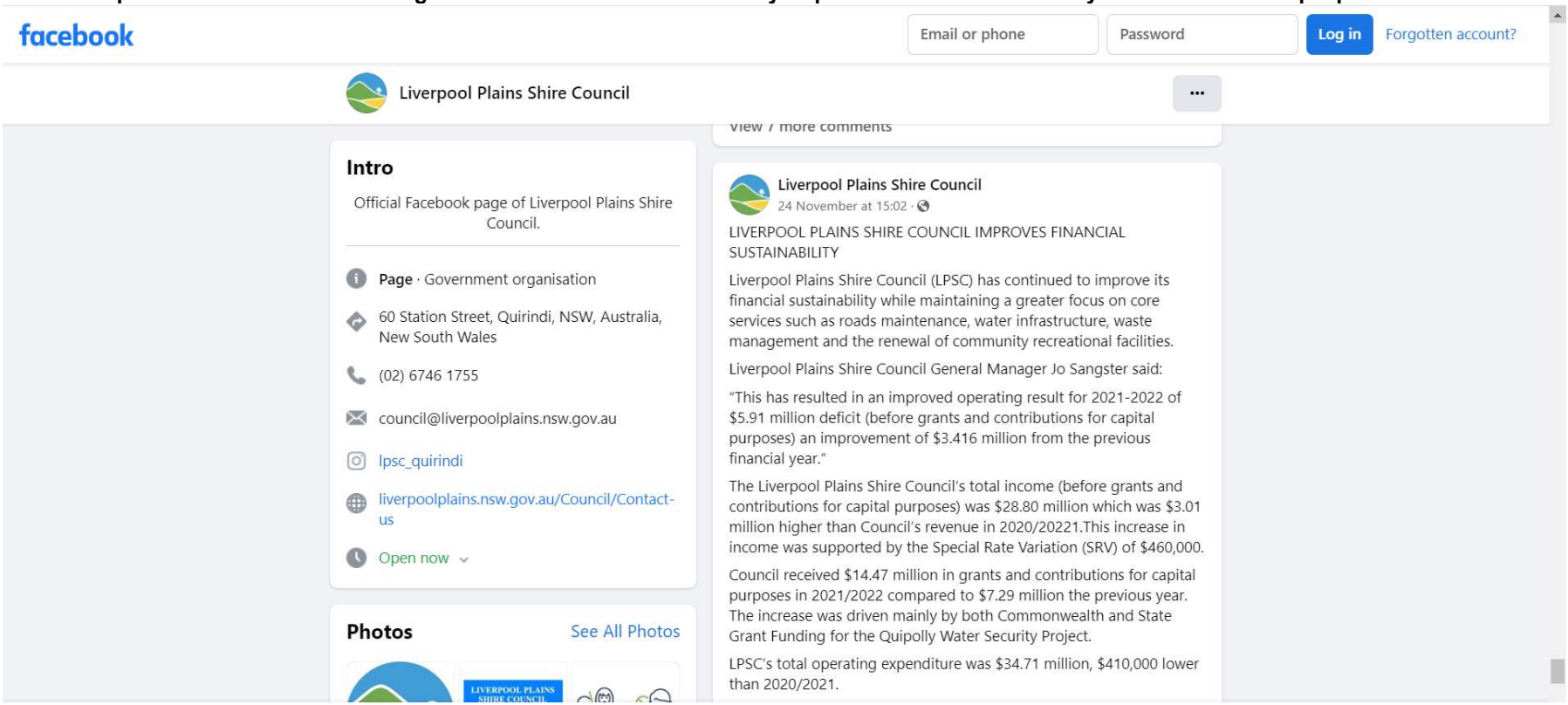
To register your attendance at one of the community information sessions, contact Councils Customer Service Centre on (02) 6746 1755 or by email at specialvariation@liverpoolplains.nsw.gov.au. Follow us on Facebook or visit https://www.liverpoolplains.nsw.gov.au/Council/special-variation to find more information.
Liverpool Plains Shire Council

Facebook post on 24/11/2022 outlining LPSC's Financial Sustainability improvements and how they relate to the SRV proposal:



facebook

Email or phone | Password | Log in | Forgotten account?

Liverpool Plains Shire Council

(02) 6746 1755

council@liverpoolplains.nsw.gov.au

lpsc_quirindi

liverpoolplains.nsw.gov.au/Council/Contact-us

Open now

Photos See All Photos

LPSC's total operating expenditure was $34.71 million, $410,000 lower than 2020/2021.

While reducing expenditure and improving service delivery has also been a major priority within a challenging and ever-changing environment with Covid-19 and numerous extreme weather events.

"We are proud of these improved financial results under what have been tough circumstances for our nation with the Covid-19 pandemic and adverse weather patterns.

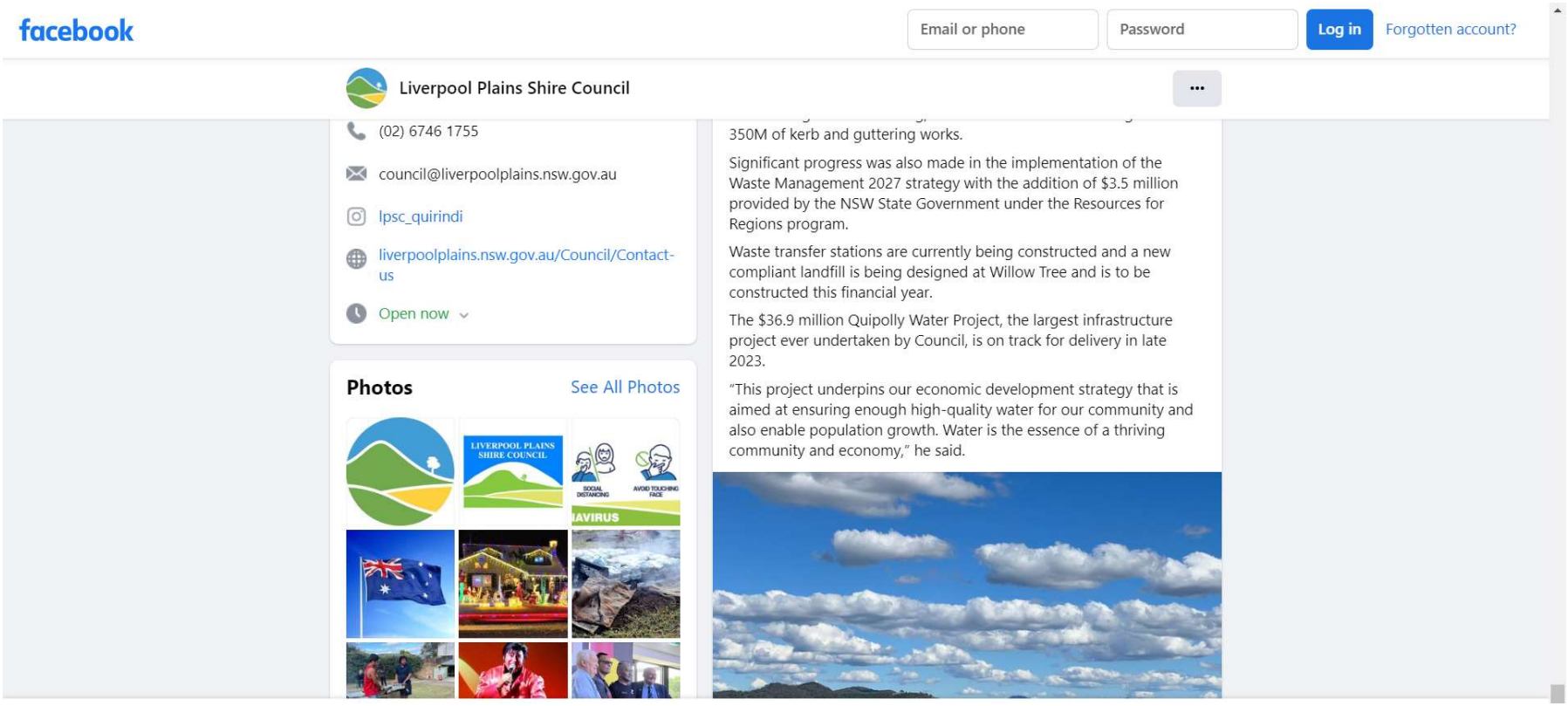
"The $3.416 million turnaround in our operating result shows a very positive improvement in our financial sustainability and has been achieved without compromising our service delivery and maintenance of key assets for the community," said Ms Sangster.

LPSC Mayor Councillor Doug Hawkins OAM commended his fellow Liverpool Plains Shire Councillors and staff for their concerted efforts throughout the year for improved sustainability.

"We have all worked hard together to make our Shire more financially sustainable. This takes great commitment and focus and a genuine passion for our local community and its future and for that I am very grateful," said Mayor Hawkins.

Last financial year Council continued to focus on better maintaining its 1300KM of roads and delivered 21.84KM of sealed road rehabilitation, 48.4KM of gravel re-sheeting, 25.07KM of bitumen resealing and 350M of kerb and guttering works.

Significant progress was also made in the implementation of the Waste Management 2027 strategy with the addition of $3.5 million provided by the NSW State Government under the Resources for


facebook
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350M of kerb and guttering works.
Significant progress was also made in the implementation of the Waste Management 2027 strategy with the addition of $3.5 million provided by the NSW State Government under the Resources for Regions program.
Waste transfer stations are currently being constructed and a new compliant landfill is being designed at Willow Tree and is to be constructed this financial year.
The $36.9 million Quipolly Water Project, the largest infrastructure project ever undertaken by Council, is on track for delivery in late 2023.
"This project underpins our economic development strategy that is aimed at ensuring enough high-quality water for our community and also enable population growth. Water is the essence of a thriving community and economy," he said.

Appendix C – Mayoral Letter

Mayoral Letter and SRV flyer – distributed via post to 4,239 rate payers from 7 November 2022 onwards.

<Printers Insert Council banner>
<Printers Insert Recipient and Council details>
<Printers insert Date>
<Rated Property – Property address>

Dear <Printers Insert Name>,

The purpose of this letter is to inform you and encourage your participation and feedback on the proposed permanent Special Variation (SV) (otherwise known as a Special Rate Variation, or SRV) to be implemented in the 2023/24 Budget and financial year which will have an impact on rates and Council's income.

By way of background, Council currently has a temporary SRV in place that will automatically reduce on 30 June 2023. If Council was to take no action it would significantly reduce Council's income at 30 June 2023 and require a substantial reduction in Council services and reduce Councils ability for key community infrastructure renewal and maintenance. Council needs to apply for an SRV to make the temporary rate increase from 2021/22 and 2022/23 (total of 18.1%) permanent.

The 18.1% comprises of the revenue from the current temporary rates increase from 2021/22 and 2022/23 (equal to 14.4% of Councils 2022/23 revenue without the temporary SV) and incorporate the 2023/24 rate peg of 3.7% as determined by the NSW Government.

The NSW Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) set the rate peg increase amount, which for 2023/24 is 3.7%. This amount is required to partially offset significant supply cost pressures and external impacts on Council's expenditure. In this way, Council will pursue a strategy to adopt an annual increase less than its own cost increases to assist our community amidst real and present cost of living pressures we are all facing.

The additional income received through making the previous SRV permanent and applying the (IPART) 2023/24 rate peg increase of 3.7% to the rates will be used to renew and maintain Council's road infrastructure.

Elected Councillors together with Council staff have over the past 12 months extensively reviewed Council's financial position and future financial sustainability challenges. Major cost saving measures, productivity improvements and operational efficiencies have been achieved and Council is dedicated to continuing these efforts moving forward.

Council officers and delegates will undertake a community engagement process during November 2022 to provide further information on the SRV proposal.

All are invited to participate and receive further information on the SRV proposal that has been foreshadowed in our Integrated Planning & Reporting key documents. The locations, dates and times proposed for the in-person community engagement sessions are as follows:

Location	Date	Time	Venue
Quirindi	21 November 2022	5.15pm - 6.45pm	Quirindi Library Community Hub, 193 George Street, Quirindi
Wallabadah	21 November 2022	7:30pm – 9.00pm	Wallabadah Village Hall Martyn Street, Wallabadah

Location	Date	Time	Venue
Werris Creek	22 November 2022	5.15pm - 6.45pm	Railway Institute Hall Anzac Parade, Werris Creek
Currabubula	22 November 2022	7:30pm – 9.00pm	Currabubula War Memorial Hall Davis Street, Currabubula
Premer	23 November 2022	5.15pm - 6.45pm	CWA Rooms Ellerslie Street, Premer
Spring Ridge	23 November 2022	7:30pm – 9.00pm	Spring Ridge Hall Darby Road, Spring Ridge
Quirindi	24 November 2022	7.30am - 9.00am	Quirindi Library Community Hub, 193 George Street, Quirindi
Willow Tree	24 November 2022	5.15pm - 6.45pm	Willow Tree Hall New England Highway, Willow Tree

Council also has the following dedicated online location where you can inform yourself and provide feedback:

Council website: https://www.liverpoolplains.nsw.gov.au/Council/special-variation

Additionally, the community can also provide feedback via the following avenues:

Email: specialvariation@liverpoolplains.nsw.gov.au

Postal response: Attention:- The General Manager
Special Rate Variation feedback
60 Station Street
QUIRINDI NSW 2343

I encourage you to access further information about the SRV and Council's financial position via Councils website.

You will see further information across Councils platforms and distribution channels and have the opportunity to provide feedback which is important to us.

Your faithfully,

Cr Doug Hawkins, OAM
Mayor

COMMUNITY. SUSTAINABILITY. STRENGTH

For Liverpool Plains to maintain its current financial position and existing levels of service across the community, Council needs to apply for a Special Rate Variation (SRV) of 18.1% The 18.1% comprises of the revenue from the current temporary rates increase from 2021/22 and 2022/23 (equal to 14.4% of Councils 22/23 revenue without the temporary SV) and incorporate the 2023/24 rate peg of 3.7% as determined by the NSW Government.

The funds raised from the temporary approved SRV have been spent on road infrastructure. If this application is successful, these funds will continue to be spent on roads infrastructure

Since being granted a temporary SRV in 2021/22, which expires in 2022/23, Council has improved operational efficiency, reduced waste and contained costs. Council will continue to improve operations to assist ongoing financial sustainability. These improvements, and Councils commitment to further improvements have allowed Council to reduce this proposed SRV to 18.1% compared to the previous application of 25.9% sought in 2021/22.

The rate peg increase for 2023/24 is less than the expected real costs that Council faces Council is taking a position of managing these additional cost pressures through its productivity improvement and cost containment strategies to avoid further cost pressures being placed on the community.

Without this SRV being made permanent, there will be an automatic reduction in Council revenue of approx. $1.1m that would require substantial reductions and/or modifications to our roads assets.

Over the past year Council has adopted a Long-Term Financial Plan which includes a base scenario that seeks to maintain the temporary increase and adopt the rate peg amount. Similarly, this can be found in other Integrated Planning & Reporting documents adopted by Council that are publicly available.

Over the coming weeks, we want to hear from as many members of the community as possible. During November, we will be hosting a series of community information sessions across the Liverpool Plains Shire.

Council will consider all community feedback prior to determining in January 2023 whether to proceed in applying for an SRV.

COMMUNITY INFORMATION SESSIONS

Council has launched a dedicated online website, available at visit **https://www.liverpoolplains.nsw.gov.au/Council/special-variation**, for our community to learn more about the proposed SRV and provide feedback via an online survey. Further information on SRV's and the application process is available from the IPART website at **www.ipart.nsw.gov.au.**

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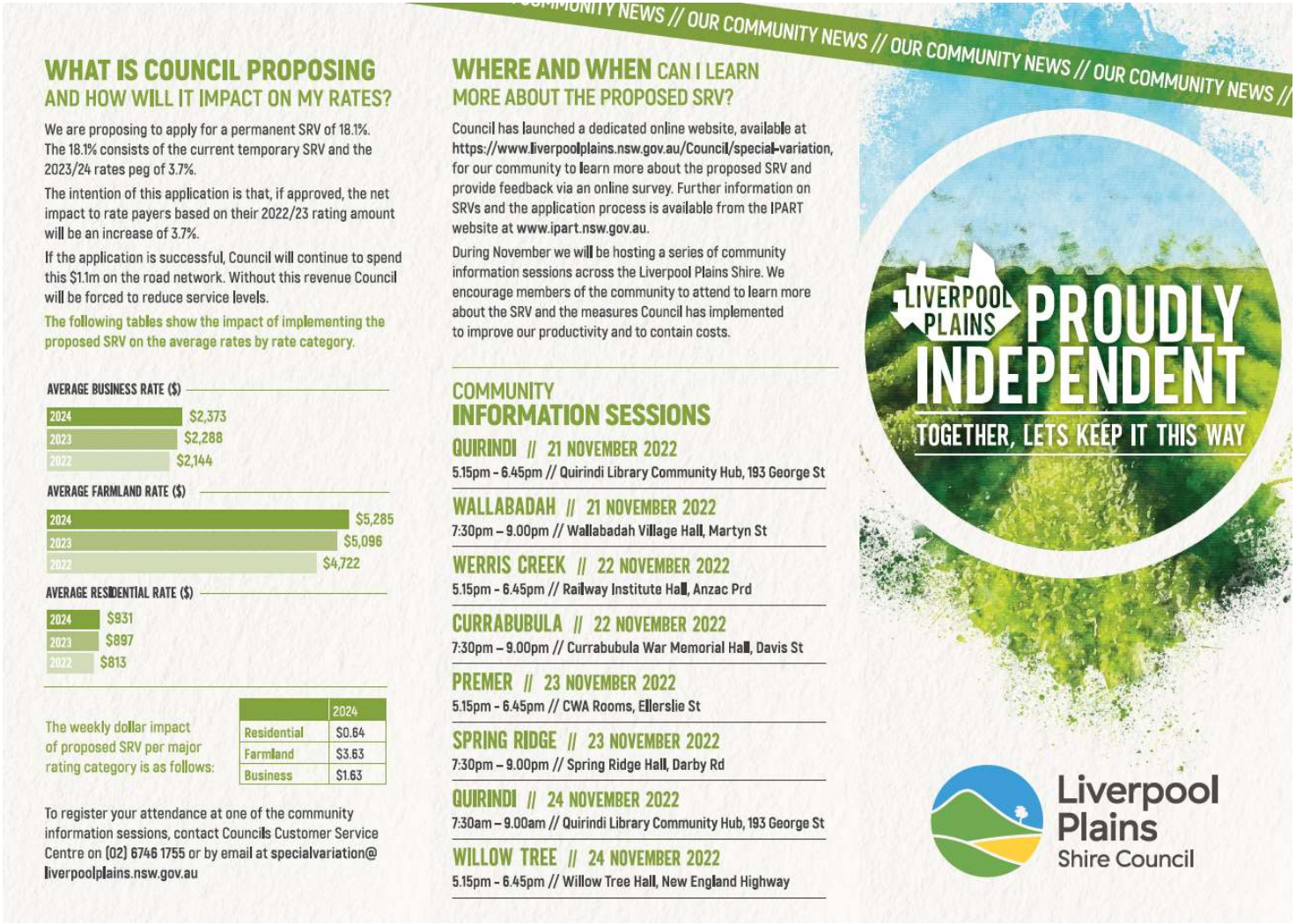
To register your attendance at one of the community information sessions, contact Councils Customer Service Centre on (02) 6746 1755 or by email at specialvariation@liverpoolplains.nsw.gov.au. Follow us on Facebook or visit https://www.liverpoolplains.nsw.gov.au/Council/special-variation to find more information.

To register your attendance at one of the community information sessions, contact Council's Customer Service Centre on **(02) 6746 1755** or by email at **lpsc@lpsc.nsw.gov.au.**

Follow us on facebook or visit **www.oursay.org/LiverpoolPlains** to find more information

Liverpool Plains Shire Council

Appendix D – SRV Pamphlets / Flyer



COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY STRENGTH

For Liverpool Plains to maintain its current financial position and existing levels of service across the community, Council needs to increase revenue.

Council is proposing to apply for a Special Rate Variation (SRV). If approved, the SRV will retain the current temporary rates increase from 2021/22 and 2022/23 (i.e., make the SRV permanent) and adopt the announced 2023/24 IPART rate peg amount of 3.7%.

This will enable us to continue maintaining our public infrastructure and provide our community with certainty for a positive and sustainable future.

WHAT IS AN SRV AND RATE PEGGING?

The annual increase of rates is calculated by the NSW Government and is referred to as the 'rate peg'. The amount is decided by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART). The rate peg announced for Liverpool Plains in the 2023/24 financial year is 3.7%.

If a council deems its revenue base to be insufficient for its future purposes, it can apply to IPART to increase overall rate revenue by more than the rate peg. This is known as a Special Variation (SV), or otherwise known as a Special Rate Variation (SRV).

In order to apply for an SRV, councils must demonstrate to the community and IPART the need for the increase and how they have implemented improvements to be more efficient and productive.

WHY DO WE NEED AN SRV?

Since being granted a temporary SRV in 2021/22, which expires in 2022/23, Council has made significant efforts to improve operational efficiency, reduce waste and contain costs. Moving forward Council will need to continue such efforts to ensure ongoing financial sustainability. These past efforts, and those envisioned for the future, have resulted in Council reducing the overall rate impact in this proposed SRV compared to that previously sought in 2021/22.

The proposed SRV will significantly contribute to Council being able to continue to deliver the services it currently provides to the community while also addressing asset renewal requirements. The SRV funds are also needed to continue efforts to effectively renew and maintain Councils deteriorating assets to ensure ongoing use for the community.

The SRV increase in 2023/24 is substantially less than conservative estimates relating to supply cost increases currently being experienced by Liverpool Plains. Council will take a position of absorbing these additional cost pressures through its productivity improvement and cost containment strategies to avoid further cost pressures being placed on the community.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF THE SRV IS NOT IMPLEMENTED?

Without the SRV being made permanent there will be an automatic reduction in Council revenue in 2023/24 of $1.1M approximately. A reduction of this magnitude would require substantial reductions and/or modifications to existing services, and impact Councils ability to maintain and renew its existing community assets.

WHAT WILL THE SRV FUNDS BE USED FOR?

The proposed SRV is anticipated to generate net additional revenue of approximately $300,000. in 2023/24. Through retaining the previous SRV and obtaining the rate peg amount of 3.7%, Liverpool Plains Shire will use the funds for maintenance and renewal of local roads including:

- Grading unsealed local roads to meet existing service levels;
- Additional maintenance of rural roads, such as bitumen maintenance, drainage, patching, roadside slashing, gravel maintenance, and vegetation management;
- Roadwork and renewal of urban streets;
- Additional bitumen resealing and gravel re-sheeting to keep our roads at a good standard and to prevent them from deteriorating;
- Culverts, causeways, drainage and footpath renewal.

If implemented, the SRV will apply to your general rates only and will not apply to the waste management or water and sewerage charges on your rates notices. Waste management and water and sewerage services are all funded through direct fees and charges.

WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS IN THE APPLICATION PROCESS?

Council will consider the input received from the community as part of the SRV community engagement process occurring in November and December. The elected Council will then receive a report providing details on the SRV and the community engagement and then resolve whether to make an SRV application to IPART in February 2023.

We want to hear from as many members of the community as possible. A range of community engagement methods will be implemented over the coming weeks to provide the community with information and to obtain feedback. Further information is available on the dedicated online website, available at **https://www.liverpoolplains.nsw.gov.au/Council/special-variation**. Additionally, further information on SRV's and the application process is available from the IPART website at **www.ipart.nsw.gov.au**.

COUNCILS SOLUTION TO ENSURING A SECURE FUTURE FOR THE COMMUNITY

The additional funds received through the SRV will enable Council to maintain the level of services and infrastructure that our community is so proud of.

Council have made significant productivity improvements over the last 2-years to ensure the efficient and effective use of rate payer funds. Council has successfully reviewed many of the services it provides and modified our delivery approach to obtain savings. Additionally, we have greatly increased our operational works productivity across many of Councils' functional areas which has resulted in further savings.

Liverpool Plains is delivering more for less, despite this we still the need to secure the funding necessary to ensure that we can continue to maintain and renew our road assets. Council is mindful of the impact of further cost containment measures and how they may impact on the community, so there is a need for balance between cost cutting and increasing fees and charges, versus seeking moderate income increases through an SRV process.

WHERE AND WHEN ARE THE COMMUNITY INFORMATION SESSIONS?

During the exhibition period for the SRV options, we will be facilitating a series of community information sessions across the Liverpool Plains Shire. We encourage members of the community to attend to learn more about the SRV and the measures Council have implemented to improve our productivity and to contain costs.

OUR COMMUNITY NEWS // OUR COMMUNITY NEWS // OUR COMMUNITY NEWS // OUR COMMUNITY NEWS //

COMMUNITY INFORMATION SESSIONS

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WHERE CAN I FIND OUT MORE INFORMATION?

Visit Councils website **https://www.liverpoolplains.nsw.gov.au/Council/special-variation**, to obtain further relevant information regarding the SRV and to provide your feedback to the online survey.

Further information about the SRV process is on the IPART website at the following address - **https://www.ipart.nsw.gov.au/Home/Industries/Local-Government/For-Ratepayers/Special-Variations.**

Liverpool Plains Shire Council

COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY STRENGTH

For Liverpool Plains to remain financially sustainable and to maintain our current level of services a Special Rate Variation (SRV) is being considered by Council. If approved, it will result in a permanent increase in the rates along with Council implementing the annual IPART rate peg amount (3.7% in 2023/24).

The SRV will enable Council to maintain the services and facilities our community values.

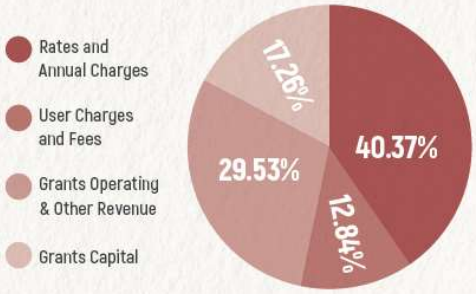
WHY DO WE NEED TO SPEND SO MUCH ON ASSETS?

Despite Council's attempts to achieve long-term financial sustainability our community assets are aging and deteriorating. Approximately $8-10M a year needs to be spent on our existing assets to ensure they meet the needs of our community. A Capital Works Plan (part of our Asset Management Plan) has been developed addressing the needs of our Roads and Footpaths (Transportation), Buildings and Recreation facilities, Fleet and Plant, Aerodrome, and other assets.

The SRV will ensure that there is sufficient funds to address the maintenance and replacement of our ageing infrastructure.

WHERE DOES COUNCIL GET IT'S FUNDING FROM?

Council has been very successful in attracting grant funding for new and upgraded assets. We are currently projecting to spend approximately $8.3M on Council assets (excluding water & sewer) in 2023/24 on assets:



We can not rely on grant funding like this to maintain our assets in the future. However, with a successful SRV, our Capital Works Plan will see an additional $12.8M spent on assets over the next 10 years.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THE SERVICES IF THE SRV IS NOT APPROVED BY IPART?

Without additional revenue Council will need to constrain expenditure on services and its maintenance on assets, which will result in prioritising critical assets.

Services that are not the core statutory requirements of Council will need to be reviewed, including swimming pools, gymnasium, parks, sporting and recreational facilities.

The Capital Works Plan ensures we can maintain the services valued by the community, when they fall due so we are also able to maintain current service levels.

	2024 $'000	2025 $'000	2026 $'000	2027 $'000
Buildings	200	200	150	150
Plant, Machinery and equipment	850	850	850	850
Fixtures, fittings and furniture	30	30	30	30
Computers and Telecommunications	86	86	86	86
Roads	6,075	6,037	6,093	6,149
Bridges	0	0	0	0
Footpaths and Cycleways	69	69	69	69
Other Structures	725	425	600	300
Stormwater	228	142	142	454
Waste	3,600	150	420	285

WHAT IS COUNCIL PROPOSING
AND HOW WILL IT IMPACT ON MY RATES?

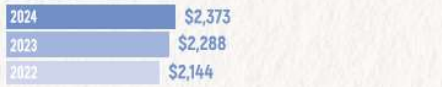
We are proposing to apply for a permanent SRV of 18.1%. The 18.1% consists of the current temporary SRV and the 2023/24 rates peg of 3.7%.

The intention of this application is that, if approved, the net impact to rate payers based on their 2022/23 rating amount will be an increase of 3.7%.

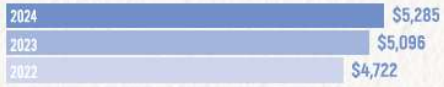
If the application is successful, Council will continue to spend this $1.1m on the road network. Without this revenue Council will be forced to reduce service levels.

The following tables show the impact of implementing the proposed SRV on the average rates by rate category.

AVERAGE BUSINESS RATE ($)



AVERAGE FARMLAND RATE ($)



AVERAGE RESIDENTIAL RATE ($)

The weekly dollar impact of proposed SRV per major rating category is as follows:

	2024
Residential	$0.64
Farmland	$3.63
Business	$1.63

To register your attendance at one of the community information sessions, contact Councils Customer Service Centre on (02) 6746 1755 or by email at specialvariation@liverpoolplains.nsw.gov.au

WHERE AND WHEN CAN I LEARN
MORE ABOUT THE PROPOSED SRV?

Council has launched a dedicated online website, available at https://www.liverpoolplains.nsw.gov.au/Council/special-variation, for our community to learn more about the proposed SRV and provide feedback via an online survey. Further information on SRV's and the application process is available from the IPART website at www.ipart.nsw.gov.au.

During November, we will be hosting a series of community information sessions across the Liverpool Plains Shire. We encourage members of the community to attend to learn more about the SRV and the measures Council have implemented to improve our productivity and to contain costs.

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5.15pm - 6.45pm // Railway Institute Hall, Anzac Prd

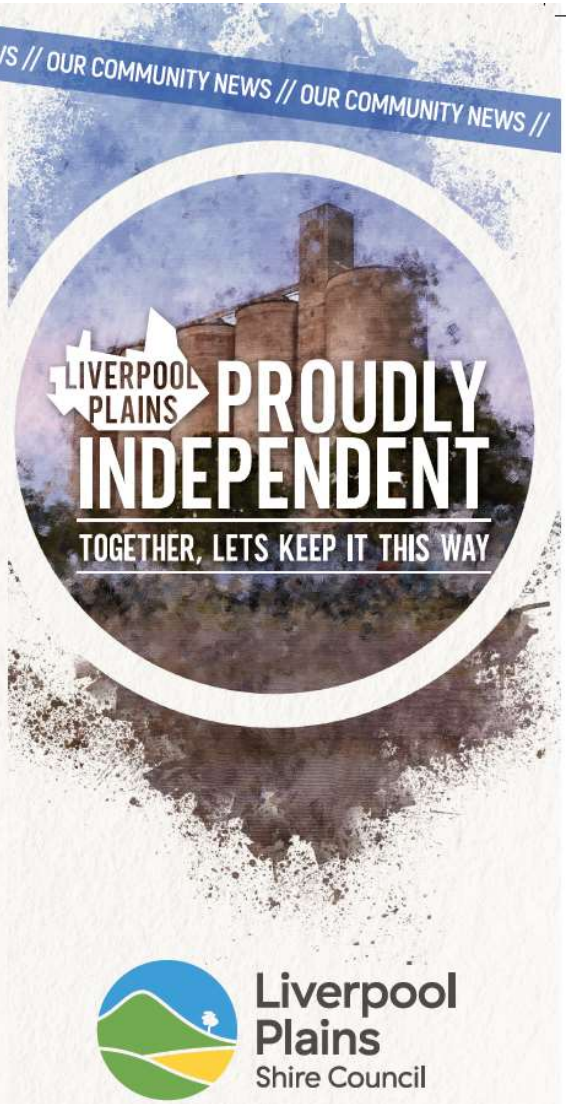
CURRABUBULA // 22 NOVEMBER 2022
7:30pm – 9.00pm // Currabubula War Memorial Hall, Davis St

PREMER // 23 NOVEMBER 2022
5.15pm - 6.45pm // CWA Rooms, Ellerslie St

SPRING RIDGE // 23 NOVEMBER 2022
7:30pm – 9.00pm // Spring Ridge Hall, Darby Rd

QUIRINDI // 24 NOVEMBER 2022
7:30am – 9.00am // Quirindi Library Community Hub, 193 George St

WILLOW TREE // 24 NOVEMBER 2022
5.15pm - 6.45pm // Willow Tree Hall, New England Highway



COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY STRENGTH

For Liverpool Plains to maintain its current financial position and existing levels of service across the community, Council needs to increase revenue.

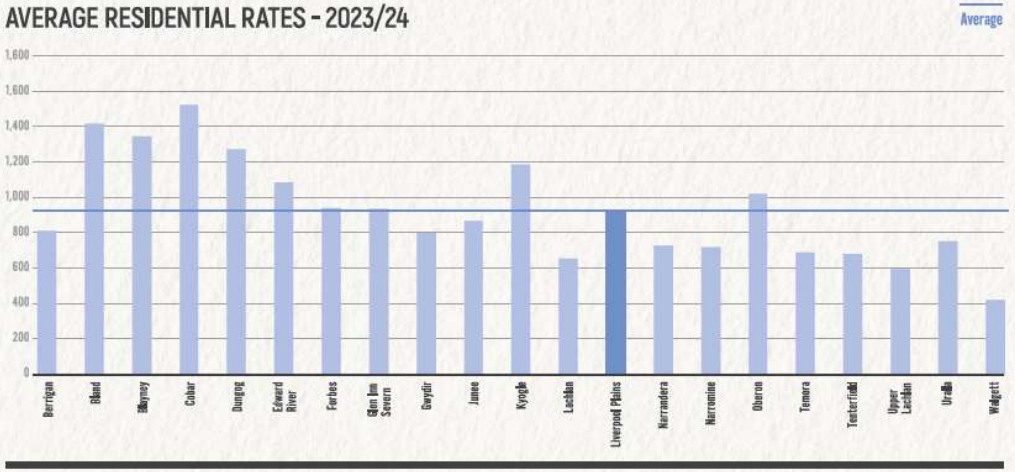
Council is proposing to apply for a Special Rate Variation (SRV). If approved, the SRV will retain the current temporary rates increase from 2021/22 and 2022/23 (i.e. make the SRV permanent) and adopt future NSW Government rate peg amounts.

This will enable us to continue maintaining our public infrastructure and provide our community with certainty for a positive and sustainable future.

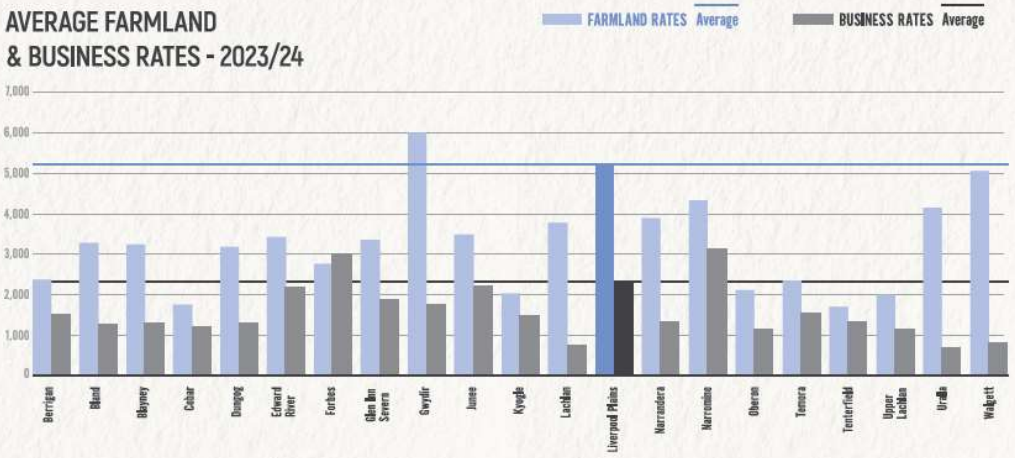
HOW DO OUR RATES COMPARE TO OTHER COUNCILS?

The following graphs show how we expect the average rates in LPSC to compare to other Councils following implementation of the first year of the SRV in 2023/24.

AVERAGE RESIDENTIAL RATES - 2023/24



AVERAGE FARMLAND & BUSINESS RATES - 2023/24



COMMUNITY. SUSTAINABILITY. STRENGTH

For Liverpool Plains to maintain its current financial position and existing levels of service across the community, Council needs to apply for a Special Variation (SV) otherwise known as a Special Rate Variation (SRV), for the 2023/24 financial year. This is to avoid the loss of revenue from the current temporary rates increases expiring at 30 June 2023 (i.e., make the increases permanent) and adopt the 2023/24 rate peg of 3.7% as determined by the NSW Government.

Since being granted a temporary SRV in 2021/22, Council has made significant efforts to improve operational efficiency, reduce waste and contain costs. Moving forward Council will continue such efforts to assist ongoing financial sustainability. These improvements, and those envisioned for the future, have resulted in Council reducing the overall rate impact in this proposed SRV compared to that previously sought in 2021/22. The annual increase of rates is calculated by the NSW Government and is referred to as the 'rate peg'. The amount is decided by the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART). The rate peg applied to the 2023/24 financial year will be 3.7%.

Council is proposing to apply for a permanent SRV of 18.1%, which comprises of the revenue from the current temporary rates increase from 2021/22 and 2022/23 (equal to 14.4% of Council's 22/23 revenue without the temporary SV) and incorporating the 2023/24 rate peg of 3.7% as determined by IPART. The proposed SRV will generate an additional 3.7%, approximately. $300,000 in 2023/24 based on Councils 2022/23 revenue in line with the rate peg. Similarly, ratepayers will be impacted with a net increase of 3.7% in 2023/24 in line with the rate peg.

Without this SRV being made permanent, there will be an automatic reduction in Council revenue in 2023/24 approximately. ($1.1M) that would otherwise occur if no SRV application is made. A reduction of this magnitude would require substantial reductions and/or modifications to existing services, and impact Councils ability to maintain and renew its existing community assets.

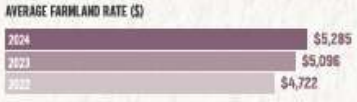
Over the past year Council has adopted a Long-Term Financial Plan which aligns with Councils proposed 2023/24 SRV. Similarly, this can be found in other Integrated Planning & Reporting documents adopted by Council that are publicly available.

SRV funds will be spent on our road assets.

Over the coming weeks we want to hear from as many members of the community as possible. During November we will be hosting a series of community information sessions across the Liverpool Plains Shire.

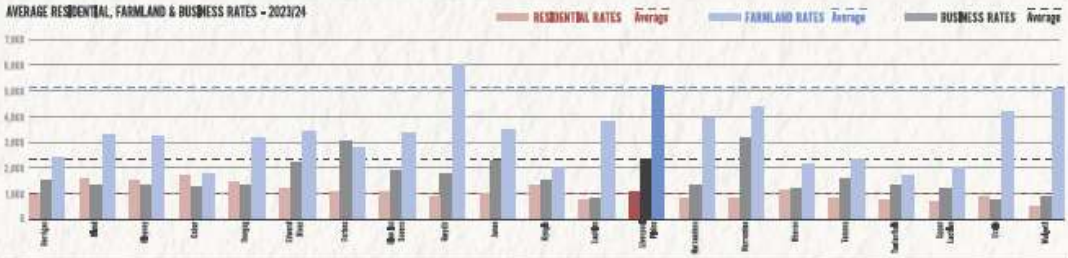
Council will consider all community feedback prior to determining, in January 2023, whether to proceed in applying for an SRV.

Council has launched a dedicated online website available at **https://www.liverpoolplains.nsw.gov.au/Council/special-variation**, for our community to learn more about the proposed SRV and to provide feedback via an online survey. Further information on SRV's and the application process is available from the IPART website at **www.ipart.nsw.gov.au**



The weekly dollar impact of proposed SRV per major rating category is as follows:

	2024
Residential	$0.64
Farmland	$3.63
Business	$1.63



To register your attendance at one of the community information sessions, contact Councils Customer Service Centre on **(02) 6746 1755** or by email at **specialvariation@liverpoolplains.nsw.gov.au**. Follow us on Facebook or visit **https://www.liverpoolplains.nsw.gov.au/Council/special-variation** to find more information.

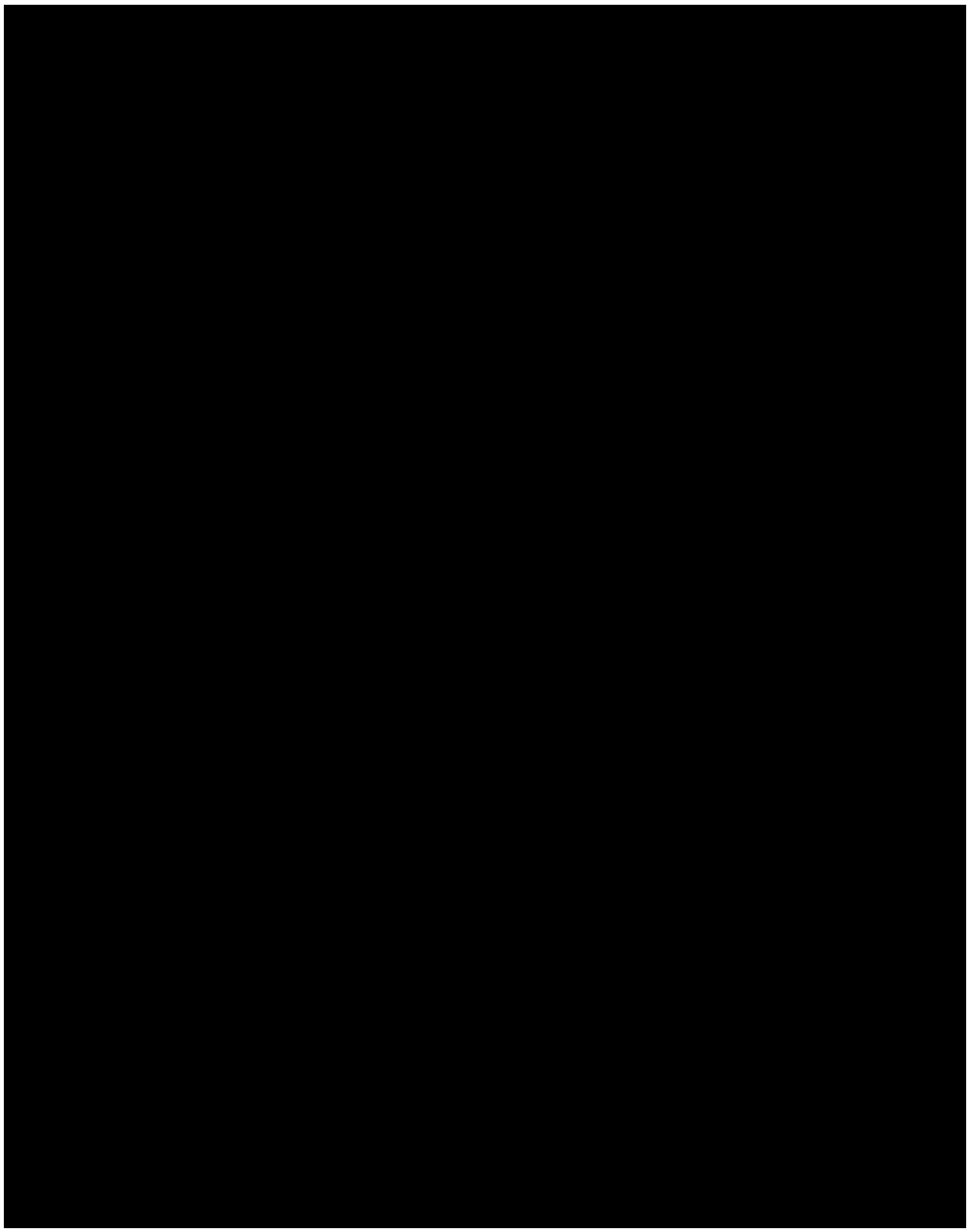
Liverpool Plains Shire Council

Appendix E – SRV Newspaper Advertisement/s

3 newspaper advertisements were released in the local papers as follows:

- **Quirindi Advocate 9/11/22 –** advertisement covering two full pages
- **Quirindi Advocate 16/11/22 –** advertisement covering two full pages
- **Northern Daily Leader 11/11/22 –** advertisement covering one full page

The advertisements consisted of the information contained in the previous Appendix informing the community of the SRV scenarios and where they were able to access information and how they could provide a submission.



Appendix F – Community Information Sessions PowerPoint presentation

Proposal: Making the 2020/21 Special Rate Variation permanent

November 2022

Introduction

Councillor Doug Hawkins OAM – Mayor

Welcome and background:

- Acknowledgement of Country
- SRV Background – 2020/21 application
- Council productivity improvement and cost containment to date.

Presentation Outline

- What is an SRV?
- Why Council are proposing an SRV.
- Details - previous SRV (2021/22 & 2022/23)
- SRV impact on the average rates.
- Why the SRV is needed/what it will be spent on.
- What Council have done to reduce the impact.
- Productivity Improvements and Cost Containment.
- What will happen if Council doesn't obtain the SRV.
- Comparison with other similar Council's.
- Next steps and community input.

What is a Special Rate Variation?

The Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal (IPART) establishes the “rate peg” each year which limits the amount councils can increase their rate revenue by from one year to the next.

Councils can apply to IPART to increase overall rate revenue by more than the rate peg. This is known as a Special Rate Variation (SRV)(or Special Variation – SV).

What is the Proposal?

Council has acknowledged the need to maintain the $1.1mil expenditure on the road infrastructure. LPSC is seeking to apply to make the SRV permanent or will need to reduce services by $1.1mil. Following a detailed review of our financial position, the 5th Liverpool Plains Shire Council has the intention to apply for a SRV of 18.1% for 2023/24.
The 18.1% comprises of:

- Making permanent a temporary increase over 2021/22 and 2022/23 (net impact of 14.4% above the otherwise granted rate pegs); and
- In 2023/24 including the rate peg of 3.7% as determined by the NSW Government.

What about the last SRV?

In 2021 IPART approved a two-year temporary SRV.
Funds raised to date have been expended on our road infrastructure:

2021/22

Rural Road Reseals	$272,000
Urban Street Reseals	$193,000

2022/23

Bridge Road Bridge Replacement	$100,000
Gurton Street Bridge Replacement	$125,000
Rural Road Reseals	$250,000
Rural Sealed Road Rehabilitations	$500,000

What is the Impact on Average Rates?

General rates will increase by the rate peg amount (3.7% in 2023-24).
Making the previous SRV permanent, plus adding the rate peg equates to an 18.1% rates increase.

Average Net Weekly Dollar impact of increase per SV	2024 SV Proposed
Residential	$ 0.64
Farmland	$ 3.63
Business	$ 1.63

Why does Council need to make the temporary SRV permanent?

Without this 2023/24 SRV, there will be an automatic reduction in Council revenue of approx. $1.1m due to expiring temporary SRV.

Whilst Council revenue would see a 3.7% increase on the reduced base in 2023/24, the net loss in overall revenue of approx. $800k would either:
1. Reduce key road renewal and maintenance; or
2. Reduce Council services to maintain vital road works.

What has Council done to reduce the impact on ratepayers?

Council improved its operating position by approx. $4mil over the past 2 financial years.

Council's have limited means to generate significant additional revenue for recurrent expenses.

The biggest opportunity Council has to reduce the impact, is via cost-avoidance and productivity efficiency improvements to reduce how much it must further seek from ratepayers to meet it's existing set of community obligations.

Productivity Improvements and Cost Containment

Council have identified and implemented a number of initiatives over the last 2 years to reduce expenditure and refocus on core business.
Items include:

- Service Reviews and improvements
- Roads operational efficiency improvements
- Review of State and Federal Government contracted services
- Review of Fees and Charges to reflect increases in service delivery costs

What Will the SRV be Spent On?

In 2023-2024 the SRV funds will be used to renew and maintain Council's road assets.

If implemented, the SRV will apply to your general rates only and will not apply to the waste management, water and sewerage charges on your rates notices.

Improved Maintenance

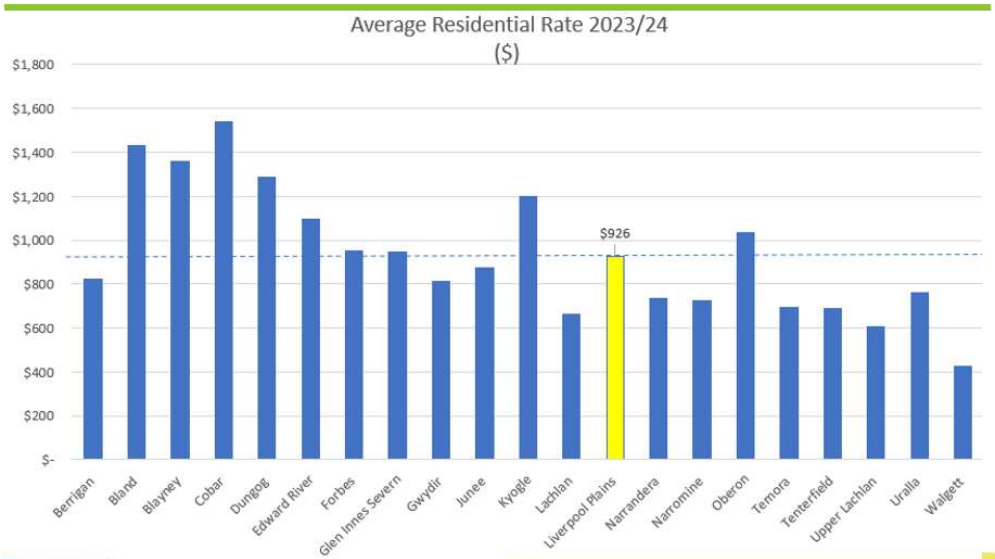
- Grading unsealed local roads to meet existing services;
- Additional maintenance of rural roads, such as bitumen maintenance, drainage, patching, roadside slashing, gravel maintenance, and vegetation management;
- Roadwork and renewal of urban streets;
- Additional bitumen resealing and gravel re-sheeting;
- Culverts, causeways, drainage and footpath renewal.

What Will Happen If the SRV Is Not Approved?

Council will need to defer necessary capital works, as well as revise the range and levels of services to avoid a deteriorating cash position – which is not sustainable in the long term.

Deteriorating assets may not be replaced, leading to a decrease in services provided.

How do we Compare to Other Councils?



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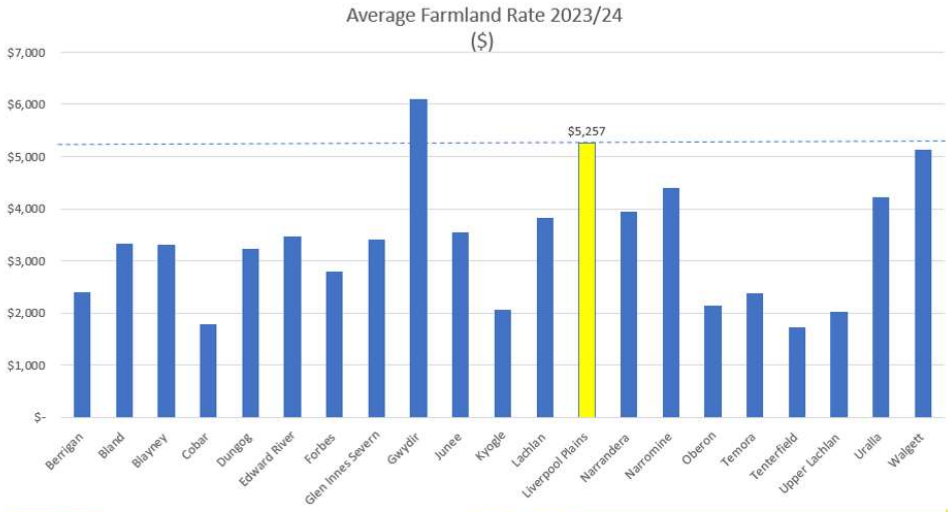

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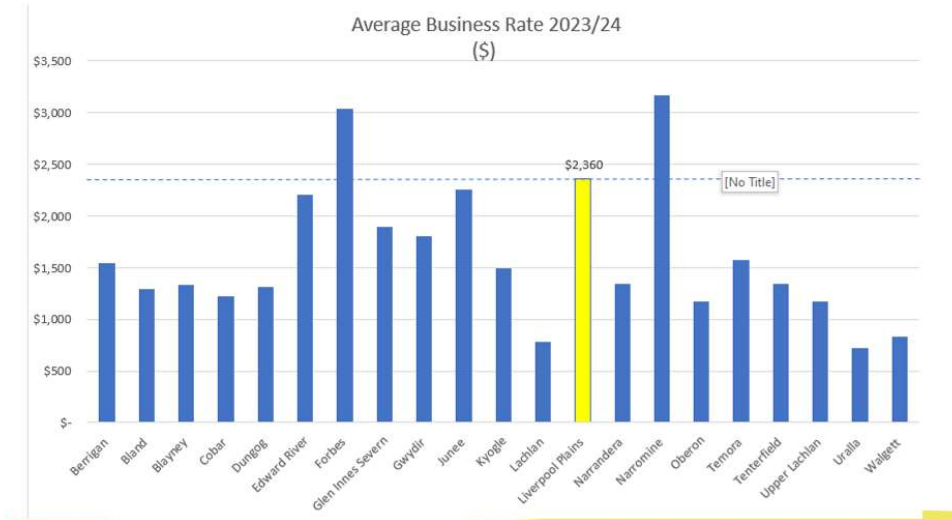


Where can I seek further information?

- The LTFP, Asset Management Plan and other information is available on Council's dedicated website: https://www.liverpoolplains.nsw.gov.au/Council/Accessing-Council-information/Strategies-plans-and-publications

- More information as to the Special Variation (SV) process that Councils need to comply with can be found at: https://www.ipart.nsw.gov.au/Home/Industries/Local-Government/For-Ratepayers

What are the Next Steps in the Application Process?

Council wants to hear from the community via the following:

- Complete the survey at (https://www.liverpoolplains.nsw.gov.au/Council/special-variation)
- Email Council at: specialvariation@liverpoolplains.nsw.gov.au
- Write to Council at:

  The General Manager
  Liverpool Plains Shire Council
  60 Station Street
  Quirindi NSW 2343

Council will consider all submissions prior to 04/12/2022.

What are the Next Steps in the Application Process?

- After reviewing submissions, Council will make a determination on whether to apply to make the temporary SRV permanent. Then a submission must be made to IPART.
- IPART will undertake its own independent consultation in February and March 2023 ahead of making a determination.
- On receipt of determination, Council will be able to finalise it's 2023/24 operational plan and budget.

Appendix G – Community Information Session Meetings

Quirindi (Session 1) – Monday 21 November 2022 (5.15pm – 6.45pm)

Attendance: 36 community members

Community comments/questions:

- Concern that there is no mention of attempting to encourage more residents to the community, therefore increasing our ratepayer base.
- The shire has an aging population, and the community feels there are not enough services to support this cohort.
- The Home Support Service delivery has declined since the LPSC handed the service to GoCo Community Care.
- The slashing and mowing services on rural roads have gotten worse.
- What guarantee is there that we won't be here in two years' time with Council asking for another SRV?
- Would like Council to take better care of ratepayers and not take on more assets that they have to maintain – go back to basics such as roads, rubbish and water.
- What was the matter with LPSC being amalgamated?
- Would amalgamation make the rates cheaper?
- Would a $1.1m deficit mean a reduction in roads maintenance?
- There were questions around the calculations of the temporary SRV and the rate peg.
- How is the $4m Productivity Improvement and Cost Containment made up – where was it saved?
- Do we receive more services/benefits from the rate peg?
- Are the figures quoted for 2022/23 to fix roads real? I don't believe $500k would fix 500 metres of road, so how far is the quoted savings going to go?
- Is the Council satisfied it has the technical ability to expend the extra money raised by the SRV and the rate peg on the roads?
- Does Council have a plan to expand the community?
- Complaints about paying for water access and tip fees on top of those already charged in the rates.
- Does the extra money raised include expenditure on mowing/slashing the rural roads?
- What happened to the roads Council was going to hand back to the state government? Has this been done?
- Why are some roads in the same condition they were 80 years ago? Lowes Creek Road just to name one.
- The areas, particularly some roads and causeways, which have been flooded during the recent rain have been changed over the years and areas which have not flooded previously have flooded recently.
- Why won't Council waive fees or provide collection of damaged goods to areas which have never flooded before but have now due to the changes in the direction of the water?
- What is the percentage of costs for administration staff compared to outdoor staff?

Wallabadah (Session 2) – Monday 21 November 2022 (7.30pm – 9.00pm)

Attendance: 19 community members

Community comments/questions:

- What guarantee is there that our opinions are taken into consideration and passed on to IPART?
- What was the percentage of people who thought the SRV was a bad idea last time?
- Where are last year's financial statements?
- Is Council aware when the valuer general's office will be undertaking valuations?
- Am I better or worse off with this increase?
- What improvements can we expect to see in Wallabadah?

- Wallabadah has only a couple of streets with kerb and guttering, why? Many people have lived and died in Wallabadah and have never had kerb and guttering.
- Why is there still no streetlight at the Wallabadah School?
- We don't even have sewerage services; we must spend $10k for a septic tank.
- Why are the services diminishing whilst the rates are increasing?
- Why does Quirindi get new buildings and improvements, and nothing is new or improved in Wallabadah?
- From a Council perspective, does Council have to continue to increase the rates?
- What percentage/portion of the rate increase will go into the Council budget and what percentage will go into roads?
- Is the $1.1m generated sustainable into the future?
- Where was the $4m savings made? How many people have been sacked? How many graders and grader operators are there working in the shire?
- When will Woodton Road be graded?
- Why do we have consultants do the presentation as opposed to Council staff?
- Is there a process in place for those who cannot pay their rates?

Werris Creek (Session 3) – Tuesday 22 November 2022 (5.15pm – 6.45pm)

Attendance: 18 community members

Community comments/questions:

- How will IPART make their determination?
- Why would we make a submission to Council and not directly to IPART?
- What's to stop Council from going for another SRV from the community?
- Ratepayers don't have the option to "shop around (for cheaper rates)", so what impact will this have on pensioners?
- Is the Council financially viable enough if it doesn't get the SRV increase?
- Will this money be used to fix the roads due to the flood damage?
- Explanation of 16% figures don't add up with IPART documents.
- Is the problem Council having due to a small rate base?
- Will the SRV money mean a better road structure or will it go to the current road network?
- Do you have to specify which roads the money will be spent on?

Currabubula (Session 4) – Tuesday 22 November 2022 (7.30pm – 9.00pm)

Attendance: 8 community members

Community comments/questions:

- Feedback/suggestion that Council should have held remote MS Teams meetings for those unable to attend the Community Information Sessions in person.
- How many kilometres of road will be able to be worked on with the $1.1m?
- What grant funding does Council look for?
- What is the cost of CT Management?
- Could Council staff have delivered the sessions?
- Are some roads being handed back to the State government?
- Why is the rate increase higher for farmers/farmland?
- If the SRV is not granted, what services will be cut?
- Is there anything in the future forecast to make maintaining the roads better/less costly?

Premer – Wednesday 23 November 2022 (5.15pm – 6.45pm)

Attendance: 3 community members

Community comments/questions:

- How will Council manage the landowners and road users exacerbating the damage to the roads until repairs are made?
- Why would Council send the rate bill out to residents, then the SRV notice the following week?
- Question to Page 10, paragraph 3 of the SRV presentation.
- Council needs to improve its' performance for IPART to approve the SRV.
- Does this bypass the process to have his approved?
- Do you realise Premer will be 100 years old in 2024? With the roads in the condition they are in, travellers will not be able to attend a birthday celebration for the town. When will the road repairs be completed?
- Why are the consultants trying to convince us that IPART is a good system when clearly the system needs improving?

Spring Ridge – Wednesday 23 November 2022 (7.30pm – 9.00pm)

Attendance: 9 community members

Community comments/questions:

- Most farmers are harvesting at the moment and the damaged roads are only going to further deteriorate. What will Council do now to prevent these roads from becoming unsafe to use? How will that impact the trucks that have no choice but to use these roads?
- Do IPART consultants acknowledge that the rate peg is unsustainable in general? Are Councils using a system that is practical and sustainable or how is this reviewed?
- Are Liverpool Plains Shire Council still applying for grants? Are the grants being accessed both State and Federal?
- Will residents that live off the grid and do not have access to Council water, sewerage, bin collection and road maintenance still have to pay the same percentage as those that have access to these services? If so, how is that fair?
- Are our current rates being used on road repairs and if so, what is the percentage?
- Is the new property value increase going to be before or after the 3.7% is activated?
- Why are council going to repair instead of resheet the roads that require more than a repair to get by? The lack of productivity and quality of work is costly, how will this be managed and monitored?

Quirindi (Session 7) – Thursday 24 November 2022 (7.30am – 9.00am)

Attendance: 11 community members

Community comments/questions:

- What kind of support is there for small business?
- What is the benefit to my business? Or other businesses? How will an increase in rates impact my business?
- What if people are experiencing financial hardship due to illness, is there any support for them?
- What was the conflict of interest stated?
- Why are we not getting free childcare? Mobile childcare? Day care?
- My wife, a qualified childcare worker, applied for a job at Eastside Childcare six months ago and has not heard from Council. Why?
- Council priorities are not about the community.
- If the NSW government gives money to Council to spend on roads, then will the SRV money collected be spent on other Council owned assets? (instead of roads)
- Why doesn't Council hold more community meetings?
- Has Council reduced staffing numbers to make savings?
- Does IPART charge a fee to apply for an SRV?

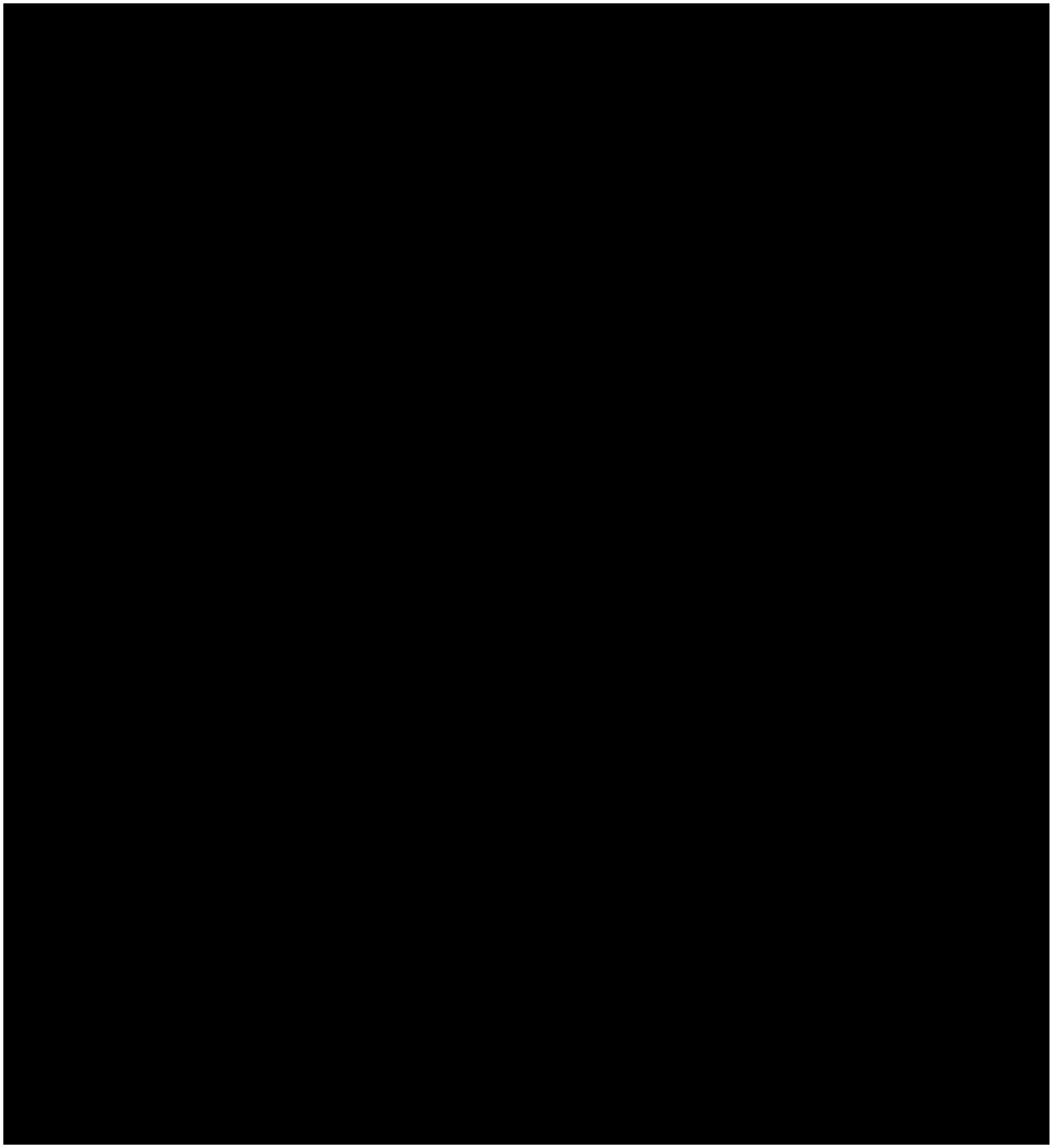
- Does Council use its own staff to do the work to apply for the SRV?
- The town planner did not know the regulations when asked about a planning matter.
- How is it economically responsible to have a Council staff member following the slasher in a $90k vehicle? Why are there seven new $90k vehicles purchased just for someone to drive around following the slasher?
- How many Council staff work outdoors?
- How many Council staff work indoors?
- What is the vision of Council regarding utilising all assets and maintaining them, not just the road network? The Council owned land, properties, Royal Theatre, swimming pools and others. There is no maintenance done on these assets, particularly the swimming pool during its closure over the winter months, the gardens in town are not kept up, the Theatre is not being maintained.
- Where is the investment in the town and its assets?
- Who gives direction to the road crew as to which roads get attention?
- Why are some roads graded and not gravelled? Particularly Lowes Creek Road and Black Gully Road. These roads have been ruined for four years due to a lack of maintenance.
- Why are B-doubles allowed to drive down the main street and Hill Street in Quirindi?
- The corner of Hill and Pryor Streets have been patched but not fixed and it is very noisy when vehicles drive over this part of the road.
- People would be happy to pay more if they could see where the money is being spent and they could see results.
- Where is the list of specific improvements?

Willow Tree (Session 8) – Thursday 24 November 2022 (5.15pm – 6.45pm)

Attendance: 11 community members

Community comments/questions:

- Work that was last graded early 2021 on Angle Rd, when will it be fixed?
- Roads that have washed away on Merriwa Road and are preventing cattle trucks from accessing properties are now affecting the farmers income. How can you guarantee this won't happen again, and if the road is simply repaired to its previous condition that needed major work? The farmers will receive the largest rate rise because of the size and value of their property. What is Council doing to relieve the pressure on the farming community with this rate rise request?
- After the roads are repaired, what will happen to the revenue that is generated?
- If the SRV isn't applied, where will the financial cuts be made within Councils' spending?
- Has Council looked at other ways to make extra revenue other than the SRV?
- How does Council determine if 3.7% is going to cover asset management with the continuous price rises of materials?
- Where is the quality indicator for repair or renewal of roads? How will we know it will last so we aren't met with another SRV in the future?
- Will roads be resurfaced or just patched, as the patch work is just washing away with heavy vehicle movement and the severe rains we have had?
- In terms of budgets, is there an accurate forecast of budgeting for future financial plans?
- For example, a 2-year, 5-year or 10-year plan.
- Why do rate payers pay for a vehicle in front and a vehicle behind a grader?
- If 50 Councils out of 162 are applying for the SRV, is there a figure on how many are Rural compared to Residential or Metropolitan? Is there a growth graph to show these statistics? Is there documentation of the spending broken down for public viewing?
- The difference between Residential rates and Farming rates is large. Farms don't have storm water drains and our roads are severely damaged as a result.
- Why do farmers rates go up so much when we don't have road services, when roads are what need to be our priority?



Appendix H – SRV Web-based survey results summary

Question: How supportive are you of Council proceeding with the respective options?

	Very supportive	Supportive	Somewhat supportive	Not very supportive	Not at all supportive
Option 1 - Existing SRV increase retained	5	4	1	4	25
Option 2 - Removal of temporary SRV	16	7	6	3	7
Option 3 - Existing SRV increase retained, plusrate peg and 5% SRV in 2024-25	2	1	4	5	27

Question: Please rank the 3 SRV Options in order of preference

Order of Preference	1st preference	2nd preference	3rd preference
Option 1	8	24	7
Option 2	27	5	7
Option 3	4	10	25

See the written responses at the end of this Appendix item to view the reasons why respondents chose their specific highest preference option.

Question: Respondents asked to indicate which areas are perceived to be a priority for Council to address.

Community's perceived priority areas - Yes / No	Yes	No
Roads	35	1
Bridges	20	11
Parks	25	9
Sports & Recreation facilities	26	8
Community Centres/Halls	17	16
Library Services	16	16
Public Toilets	25	7
Economic Development	14	17
Waste Management	26	7
Development assessment	9	20
Stormwater and drainage	20	10
Customer Service	22	9

Question: Respondents asked to indicate how satisfied they are with the performance of the below services (1 = low satisfaction and 5 = high satisfaction).

Satisfaction with service performance	1 - Low	2 - Reasonable	3 - Average	4 - Good	5 - High
Roads	3	7	12	3	1
Bridges	2	4	20	6	2
Parks	4	7	13	12	1
Sports & Recreation facilities	6	6	15	10	
Community Centres/Halls	5	10	17	2	1
Library Services	8	2	7	11	6
Public Toilets	7	6	13	7	1
Economic Development	8	10	14	1	2
Waste Management	8	6	13	8	1
Development assessment	8	4	19	1	2
Stormwater and drainage	6	11	12	3	3
Customer Service	17	5	8	4	2

Question: Respondents asked to indicate whether Council should invest more, the same, or less in the specific service areas.

Should Council invest more, the same or less in the following:	More	Same	Less
Roads	28	11	
Bridges	5	27	5
Parks	7	27	4
Sports & Recreation facilities	6	26	6
Community Centres/Halls	9	19	9
Library Services	2	18	18
Public Toilets	16	20	2
Economic Development	10	18	9
Waste Management	15	18	5
Development assessment	5	23	8
Stormwater and drainage	16	21	
Customer Service	16	18	3

Written responses noting the reasons why respondents chose their specific highest preference option for the 3 SRV Options provided.

It sounds the best for us as we can't afford anymore. And we get higher water bills when you come and use our water to flush your clogged sewer system we don't get a reduction
We receive only very intermittent road services at the moment (not even annually) - no other council services, when you receive no services, increasing them by any % point still means near to zero.
If it is not adopted and Options 2& 3 adopted it would mean that I would probably sell the rental property I have in the area or increase the resent to cover my outgoings. Plus seeing that Werris Creek is sadly neglected by the Council it would lead to the further decay of a great little town.
Financial reasons. We do not get a pay rise to fund extra rates payments. Where does council think we will get the extra money from? Council should learn to budget with what they have the same as the rest of us do.
Have a farm end of Phillips creek rd don't get any benefits of council facilities and dirt roads have never been upgraded to bitumen
We are already paying more in rates then Tamworth. We pay $100.00 for the land fill and still have to pay when dumping rubbish.
Council have had the increase they wanted for 2 years with the promise to fix the roads in that time with the extra money. That has obviously not be done and I do not want to pay the council any further or extra money for their inability to manage funds. They are not fit for the future. I'm tired of the council being unable to manage funds then threaten the community with if you don't vote for this we will take away services to the towns. Thanks to the many volunteers in the towns and villages that attend to mowing the parks, cleaning the local cemetery and whatever else is needed to keep the towns and villages presentable. Why do I need to vote above I do not want the rate rise. Both other options are offensive. Council will use these to their advantage and say people voted for whatever it is they want. We do not need any new resources in Quirindi that will require further ongoing maintenance whilst the other towns and villages go without or the council allow what we have to rot and moulder as they are simply not interested in the upkeep when they can build brand new in Quirindi.
You cannot keep putting your hand out for more money when you don't spend the money you have got well. The General Manager's salary package is a classic example of no accountability and lack of direction. Honestly an amalgamation with Gunnedah Shire Council would be the preferred options. [redacted] I think the council needs a complete clean out from the top. [redacted]. Quirindi and Werris Creek need better main roads through the place to attract future businesses that can inject money and growth, instead of a potholed Main Street and empty shops. Honestly ask yourselves are you doing a good job at leading the council or are you just running it into the ground as well as the communities associated with it. Think about it
Because the rates are already really high. Council has had the benefit of increased revenue via SRV but continuing at that increased rate it is not affordable for those living in this area.
Least Money
Our roads are vital avenues of transport and communication
I am not happy with council on what they do around the shire
Option 1 is ridiculous considering how much it already costs to live here in a town that offers nothing. Option 2 might not be the best thing for Quirindi but it seems the best out of these 3 options

[redacted]
I would still like to seem the town maintained and would hate to see lower priority areas that promote community engagement, suffer.
It has been seen that council did not spent SRV Moneys effective over the last two years
I won't support any option until the dead wood in the office is cut back. I requested a payment summary of our rates paid 5 months ago and I still haven't received it. I also kept getting bills from Meals on wheels that wasn't be paid, only to find that council didn't have a current agreement with Australian Unity. If the staff can't do the job properly, then I can't support anything. This incompetence cost us $6,000. Not happy at all. Majority of all other councils can and do manage without continuing to hit the members of the shire through drought, mouse plague, Covid lockdown and restrictions and now flooding. Please join the real world and be realistic about the general streams of income in this predominantly agricultural community.
Even with the increase we have only seen a decline in council services and assists. No do not trust the present council to make the changes needed to operate a viable council! They have demonstrated that the rate payers see no be if it out of rate rises! To add a comment to go with the below options.. council doesn't need to spend more money to improve assets and maintenance they need to better manage the money the have like other councils have to do.
The council should consider rezoning land for subdivisions and selling it off (to give cash injection). The subdivided land will increase Council's long-term revenue by adding more ratepayers, instead of bleeding the existing ratepayers.
It sounds like the best option for the council
Our rates are one of the most costly in NSW. Volunteers maintain the parks and graves in Werris Creek, so that is one expense that should be saved and used in our town for further projects. Council needs to look at the white collar workers, do we require this many in the office? Pensioners and low income people will and are finding it hard to pay bills plus put food on the table at this time of Covid and inflation. Maybe a Forensic Accountant needs to be employed to find out where all rates and grant money is going. Werris Creek water project is one Grant that needs to be investigated. We need to amalgamate to a bigger Council.
The information provided for each option is not sufficient for the community to make an informed decision. Information on why the SRV will only be spent on roads is not provided, this information is integral for rate payers to make an informed decision – especially when the community are asking for improvement to more than just roads. The justification for the proposed permanent application of the SRV isn't sufficient, what efficiency and cost saving improvements have LPSC made since the SRV was first introduced to demonstrate that the permanent SRV will ensure the organisations functionality? It is difficult to see how any improvements have been made, especially as assets further deteriorate, public requests for improvements to services such as waste are refused. Several facilities didn't operate at full capacity over 2020/21 due to the pandemic, where have cost savings associated with that been spent? Has council considered other funding mechanisms available to them that would see the cost of road maintenance covered by the industries that cause the damage? E.g., a haulage plan that would apply to developments that generate heavy haulage vehicle movements from industries such as rail, quarries and agriculture? Council needs to explore other options open to it, and demonstrate to residents that it has done this, before seeking a permanent rates increase.
Less rates for council to WASTE
Council does not seem to spend ratepayers money wisely e.g. no need for library upgrade
All families, pensioners and retiree's are struggling! There would still be cost cutting alternatives for this council, without ratepayers being slugged again

We pay high rates and receive very little in return. Werris Creek Parks and Cemeteries are maintained by Volunteers, where are the funds being directed for this? There are no toilets at the Cemetery. When it rains water runs down and washes away the soil which is never replaced, I have been informed by the Mayor he knows the exact spot where this is occurring so why isn't the problem being resolved? Where is the funding for the Kakoda Trail to Quipolly? Why was the funding used for a pipeline to Quirindi which was allocated to the Werris Creek Water upgrade? Why are there so many employees at the Quirindi Shire Council? Why are the Council so lackadaisical with residents who don't look after their yards with their grass knee high and palm tree debris laying around, it is a breeding ground for vermin and fire hazards. When will the Council employ medical practitioners who will stay long-term?
Roads not getting worse
I agree there needs to be an increase in rates to continue to meet existing services. Cost burden to the rate payer is becoming severe so don't agree with an additional 5%
do not want to see roads get worse
Council needs to be sustainable for long term planning. Constantly going to the community to explain why council needs an SRV is detrimental to the public's confidence in councils' ability to operate and generally the public feels councils is either operating inefficiently or is too small a rate base to move into and survive in the future economic climate
The current council can't manage finances
We were told by a Councillor that the increase would be a one off. If this goes ahead the Councillor in question should resign.
Roads are important and more needs to be spent on them
We are being hit with very high rates already and are all feeling the pressure of the price of living. This huge increase needs to be stopped now .
Not everyone can afford extra increases in rates and also Council has done nothing with the road here for the last 12 months. It is in the worst condition since the road was ever built. Better management of budget would make a lot of difference
I am a rate payer and also a user of many council facilities in the town as I have a young family. Both my husband and I work locally. Both our children are educated and we plan to continue for them to be educated locally. Unfortunately, the financial wastage that is obvious from our council and the poor maintenance of our facilities is not encouraging. Council do not seem to have been able to make any substantial changes with the last SRV, I have no confidence in them being able to show change with another one. So many costs associated with council have increased substantially (e.g. Hire of sporting fields, hire of grounds for community events) that have made it unaffordable. Council need to be held accountable for where the money is being spent…… because unfortunately there are no upgrades let alone bare minimum maintenance.
new management is required to control spending and costs.
Reason for being against any rate rises is: Over the last 20 years July 2002 - December 2022 we have paid $398164.59 in rates. What have we received for this - very little Our roads are disgraceful (even before the current weather events) we get no water ,sewage etc and are charged to go to the tip when there is a tip levy in the rates. I would not mind an increase in rates if only we received services for the rates we already pay.

Appendix I – Summary of Emails received in response to the SRV proposal

Primary concern items/points raised:

Resident (de-identified)	Key items/points
1	• Opposed to the rate increase. • Considers the rates to be the most expensive in the state.
2	• Gave a synopsis and history of NSW political issues and historical issues that have created living pressure and cost increases. • Not in support of the rate rise, but doesn't consider it to be untoward.
3	• Opposed to the rate increase/SRV. • Of the opinion that only the Rate Peg amount should be applied.
4	• Opposed to the rate increase/SRV. • Concern regarding the impact of a rates increase combined with the increases to the cost of living. • Concerned that increased rates will be passed onto tenants. • Suggested that non-core services such as sport and recreation infrastructure no longer be maintained by Council and that Council focus Rubbish, Roads and Water. • Suggested that amalgamation with another Council be investigated.
5	• Opposed to the rate increase/SRV. • Concern regarding the impact of a rates increase combined with the increases to the cost of living.
6	• Opposed to the rate increase/SRV. • Suggested that the rates increases are not sustainable for the community and the size of the Council population base. • Suggested that it might be time for a "user pays" scenario to be considered for services given contributions that re being asked for from the community.
7	• Opposed to the rate increase/SRV. • Suggested that further work go towards obtaining grants and funding, and obtaining cost savings within Council prior to seeking to increase rates, particularly given current inflationary pressures.
8	• Opposed to the rate increase/SRV. • Concerned about the impact of the rate increase/SRV on pensioners, and noted that the impact is significant for this cohort given the other costs that are required to come out of the pension to live.
9	• Not supportive of the rate increase/SRV given inaction on another matter within Quirindi.

Appendix J – Summary of Letters received in response to the SRV proposal

Primary concern items/points raised:

Resident (de-identified)	Key items/points
1	• Disagrees with the SRV/rate increase. • Concern about the rates being high/too expensive currently. • Concern about grading of roads. • Concern about patching efforts on sealed roads. • Concern about poor customer service.
2	• Suggested that Council should invest in more staff and machinery to deliver works and not put works out to tender externally and save money through conducting projects in-house. • Concerned about the transparency and democratic processes employed by Council.

3	• Strongly opposed to the SRV.
	• Concern that funds are not used equitably or economically currently.
	• Consider the current rates excessive.
	• Raised specific local concerns as follows:
	  ○ Piallaway Rd from the T junction with Bulunbulun Rd to Sheedy's Bridge – drainage
	  ○ Piallaway and Bulunbulun Roads from Scott's Lane to Meyn's Lane – condition and lack of slashing
	  ○ Garbage – don't receive a domestic service, concern over the current Werris Creek facility.

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