

Author name: [REDACTED]

Date of submission: Saturday, 21 May 2022

Your submission for this review:

On behalf of the Bundarra Residents Association Inc. 2101222, I wish to submit our objection to the additional Special Rate Variation (permanent for 10 years) as submitted by Uralla Shire Council commencing 2022-2031 and request IPART disregard that increase in its entirety. I further elaborate in attachments to the following main points; Uralla shire Council have exhibited

1. No history of any productivity improvements or sustainable financing policy strategy
2. Lack of community awareness and consultation on the Long Term Financial Plan
3. Evidence of mendacity from council executives
4. Disproportionate regard to Bundarra residents' circumstances.

Thank you [REDACTED] President, Bundarra Residents Association Inc. 2101222

BUNDARRA RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION INC.

2101222

RESIDENTS STANDING TOGETHER

IPART

Re: Uralla Shire Council

Additional Special Variation for 2022-2023

Attention [REDACTED]

Key Contact for Public Submissions

I wish to lodge our objections to the above application by Uralla Shire Council for the following reasons;

No history of any productivity improvements or sustainable financing policy/strategy

- Provision of first draft 2022-2023 budget confirms operating budget loss of \$1.805 million. The Chief Financial Officer, [REDACTED] stated in the minutes Business Revenue and Finance Committee Meeting, 15th March Business paper, page 36 of draft budget "This is the fifth year in a row that Council has drafted an operating deficit before capital grants and indicates the Shire is not financially sustainable."

The CFO has held that position for the past 6 years, it was also noted in the minutes that "Despite the fixed cost increases exceeding forecast revenue increases, the draft version 1 operating budget loss of \$1.805 million forecasts a similar deficit to last year's budget loss of \$1.826 million before capital grants.'

- The council organization is not now and never has been big enough to support consultants and directors that chose to 'direct' behind a desk. Experienced 'hands on' directors are required in the 'field', as the only option.

Lack of Community awareness and consultation on 'Long Term Financial Plan'

- Submissions and petitions from residents are largely ignored
- A substantial income was generated by the application of a sewerage levy to Bundarra residents, which we believe was installed illegally and not gazetted under the guidelines of Local Government NSW Act Section 553 (b)
- Requests for explanations and resolutions have been ignored to extent that now, residents are drafting complaints to the Department of Premier & Cabinets Division of Local Government. We previously complained to the Ombudsman but received no resolution.
- The level of trust and confidence in this council by Bundarra residents has fallen to an extremely low level

Evidence of mendacity from Council executives

- A request from Bundarra Residents Association Inc. for confirmation of intent regarding Special Rate Variation resulted in a response that was clearly false and designed to distract!

- This correspondence from Uralla Shire Council regarding short term plans to apply for Special Rate Variation is misleading ratepayers and exhibits disreputable behavior. (copies attached of correspondence re: confirmation request & response from USC)

Bundarra residents are held in disproportionate regard

- Bundarra village has zero growth and job opportunities. Provision of services are not comparable to the main township of Uralla and yet the rating levies are the same.
- Processes of review, communication and recognition of community hardship obligations under the act are not apparent in Uralla Shire Council representation to Bundarra residents.
- We state that appropriate and extensive consultation with all relevant parties has not occurred.
- We request that IPART in their considerations reject the permanent SRV of 2.5% and apply the approved rate peg rise of 0.07%

Thank you



Responsible Officer: EA
In reply, please quote: UINT/22/1460

10 February 2022

To the Residents

Bundarra Residents Association Inc.

Dear 

We refer to your email of 4 February 2022.

Council does not intend to apply for a Special Rate Variation (SRV) for the year ended 30 June 2023.

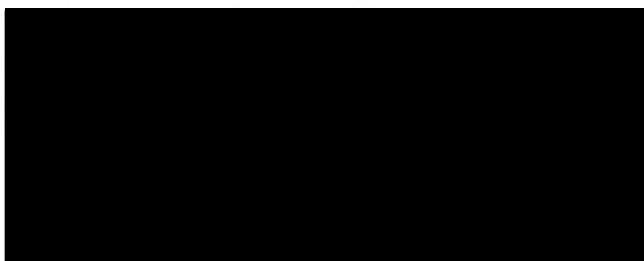
This process is quite detailed and lengthy with many steps to be undertaken. This process includes but is not limited to:

- appropriate and extensive consultation with all relevant parties,
- further modeling of alternative scenarios,
- necessary applications with supporting documentation to IPART, and ultimately
- IPART and Council approval.

Due to various reasons, the Budget for the 2022-2023 year is currently being prepared on the basis of the approved rate peg rise of .07%. It is up to Council to determine whether to undertake the SRV process and to make application to IPART for this in future years.

Please note that although rates are an integral and substantial part of the Councils income, it is only one of many avenues of income available to Council. To achieve a responsible and balanced budget, other forms and /or levels of income and/or operational and capital expenditure will need to be investigated and made available for consultation. Be assured that the consultation process will be informative, transparent and inclusive.

Please do not hesitate to contact Council should you have further enquires.



BUNDARRA RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION INC.

2101222

RESIDENTS STANDING TOGETHER

4th February, 2022

Dear Sirs, Mses,

We, the residents of Bundarra wish to know if Uralla Shire Council has or is intending to apply for a Special Rate Variation or a Minimum Rate Variation for the year 2022-2023, both of which are due to be submitted to IPART by 7th February 2022, which is next Monday.

We have previously contacted the GM who sent a reply via email from [REDACTED] stating that the summary from feedback to the 'Long Term Financial Plan' would be included at the council meeting on Tuesday 22nd February 2022 which is well after the closing date for applications!

We also note that the rate peg for Uralla has been set at .07% 2022-2023

Council	Change in population %	Supplementary valuations percentage %	Population factor %	Rate Peg (including population factor) %
Uralla	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.7

We need to know if USC are intending or have already applied as the timeline for public submissions also close in March 2022.

Could you please reply as a matter of urgency.

Regards

[REDACTED]